



Seattle City Council

September 21, 2015
Delivered via email

Board of Directors, Seattle School District
MS 11-010
PO Box 34165
Seattle, WA 98124-1165

Dr. Larry Nyland, Superintendent
MS 32-150
PO Box 34165
Seattle, WA 98124-1165

Dear Board Members and Superintendent Nyland,

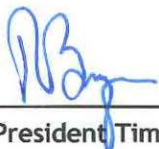
We understand that you may be considering the District's plan to close opportunity gaps along with a resolution related to school discipline at your meeting on September 23. Thank you for taking the time to address these important issues. We appreciate your focus in your work session last week on a high expectation mindset and an asset-based orientation to your students.

Recent community presentations from other jurisdictions have demonstrated the benefits of a Positive Behavior Intervention Support system. Some Seattle schools already implement this approach and we are excited to see it expand across the city. The City is pleased to be a willing partner in this formational work through the provision of Families and Education Levy funding for school-based health centers and the social emotional curriculum RULER.

As you know, young students of color are disproportionately disciplined in the educational system, one reason why the City mandated a zero expulsion and suspension policy for the Seattle Preschool Program. But this problem is not unique to our schools. Children of color are overrepresented in the local juvenile justice system and these inequities persist into adulthood.

Today, the City Council unanimously passed a resolution endorsing a vision of zero detention for juveniles our city. This will require the change of many societal structures for the better and will be hard but worthy work. In that resolution, we request that Seattle Public Schools endorses this same vision and enacts policies and practices that move our city down that path, including ending disparities in discipline and eliminating long-term out-of-class suspensions. Your upcoming meeting is a perfect opportunity to take some of these steps.

A healthy public education system is critical to a healthy future for our city. We all have a stake in ensuring that all of our children remain in the classroom and ready to learn. Please let us know how the City can continue to be a helpful partner in this effort, and thank you for your service to our children.



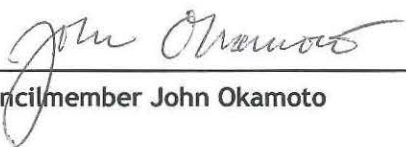
Council President Tim Burgess



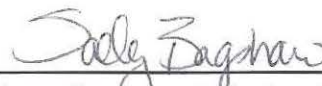
Councilmember Jean Godden



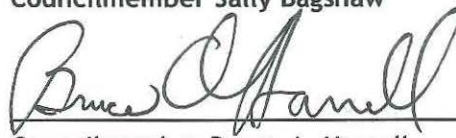
Councilmember Nick Licata



Councilmember John Okamoto



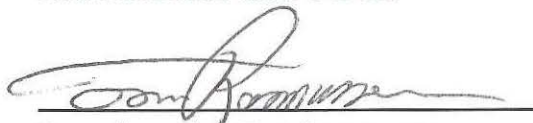
Councilmember Sally Bagshaw



Councilmember Bruce A. Harrell



Councilmember Mike O'Brien



Councilmember Tom Rasmussen



Councilmember Kshama Sawant