

## Addressing Misconceptions Regarding District Equity Training

Nathan Roberts, School Board Member, Director District No.4

Recent school board elections across the country illuminated a growing concern among parents about Critical Race Theory (CRT) and rumors of its implementation in K-12 public education. Locally, we have received many questions about how CRT relates to the mandated equity training for school district personnel recently implemented in Washington state. The confusion between these two items—one based in law and the other based on an intellectual argument—is understandable, but it is worth examining their fundamental differences.

CRT is an intellectual concept stemming from the 1970s meant to provide a framework to view race in America. It is loosely defined in a collection of academic and legal writings that seek to identify and examine the presence of racial bias in existing cultural, social, and legal systems. CRT theories hold that the biases embedded within our laws, institutions, and public policy impact all of us in different ways and that embedded racial biases are primarily responsible for the unequal outcomes seen in systems like education. In short CRT holds that race is the determining factor in unequal education outcomes for students.

In April 2021 the Washington legislature passed ESSB 5044, which created a new section of RCW 28.345 focused on “Increasing equity, diversity, inclusion, antiracism, and cultural competency training throughout the entire public school system by providing training programs for classified staff, certificated instructional staff, certificated administrative staff, superintendents and school directors.” ESSB 5044 requires professional development for adult employees of the district and supports training in cultural competency, diversity, equity, and inclusion, none of which are solely based in or defined by a solely racial perspective.

ESSB 5504 defines these concepts as follows:

“Cultural competency” includes knowledge of student cultural histories and contexts, as well as family norms and values in different cultures; knowledge and skills in accessing community resources and community and parent outreach; and skills in adapting instruction to students’ experiences and identifying cultural contexts for individual students.

“Diversity” describes the presence of similarities and differences within a given setting, collective, or group based on multiple factors including race and ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, age, educational status, religion, geography, primary language, culture, and other characteristics and experiences.

“Equity” includes developing, strengthening, and supporting procedural and outcome fairness in systems, procedures, and resource distribution mechanisms to create equitable opportunities for all individuals. The term also includes eliminating barriers that prevent the full participation of individuals and groups.

“Inclusion” describes intentional efforts and consistent sets of actions to create and sustain a sense of respect, belonging, safety, and attention to individual needs and backgrounds that ensure the full access to engagement and participation in available activities and opportunities.

These intentions laid out in law and quoted verbatim here are not meant to consider student success through only the lens of race, but to try and determine how best we can help all students succeed by understanding them as individuals, with unique histories and lives. It is no secret that nationally, in Washington State, and in Pullman schools, gaps exist between different student populations. In our district we have significant disparities in outcomes with students from low-income households, students of different races and ethnicities, students with disabilities or who are second language learners. ESSB 5044 provides professional development to help acknowledge these imbalances to better understand the entire context of our students in need and determine what support we can provide.

*The opinions expressed in Board Reports are those of individual school board members and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of the board as a whole or of Pullman Public Schools.*

## DISABILITY AWARENESS MONTH



Marci Sontgerath's 1st grade class at Franklin got to visit virtually with the author of *All the Way to the Top* and the main character!

*All the Way to the Top* is an inspiring true story of Jennifer Keelan, the activist whose participation in the Capitol Crawl at just eight years old encouraged Congress to pass the Americans with Disabilities Act.

## Being Thankful

Cameron Grow, Lincoln Middle School Principal

As we are near Thanksgiving, Lincoln Middle School is thankful for many things during this 2021-2022 school year. First and foremost, the kids are back in the building. For us, there is nothing better than a loud hallway in the morning as students are rushing to class. It's something we had missed for many, many months during this pandemic. We are first...thankful for our kids and families. It's great to be back.

Our kids and families are the top “thankful for” for all of our staff. But this article is about those who keep our building running, even when we all don't see or notice. It's who does all the things that are so important in what we call “school”. Our custodial staff at Lincoln have gone above and beyond during the pandemic as well as during all of our construction.

On multiple occasions this fall, our custodial staff came through when we needed them. Construction has made things a challenge, but they were always around to help. Our custodians came in on Saturdays to help move furniture into the new classrooms. They have come in to help move tables into our new common area in the building. They didn't do this after their shift...they did this on a Sunday night to make sure things were ready for our kids.

During the first few months of the school year, we didn't have access to our common area for lunches. Instead, our custodial staff rolled the tables out to our blacktop area in the front of the building. They then rolled them into the building in the evening. They did that every day for the last two months. This is a lot of work, but their focus is always on the kids. It showed this fall.

There are many words that can describe Rolos, Kent, Thurman, and Bliss. I focus on these two words... Dedicated and Caring. They continue to go the extra mile for our building. I know the same is true for all of our district custodians and maintenance staff. Lincoln Middle School just wanted to show how “thankful” we are for their hard work.

National Life Group

# LifeChanger OF THE YEAR NOMINEE

**The LifeChanger of the Year program recognizes and rewards K-12 school employees and educators who make a positive difference in the lives of students all across the country.**



You can join us in supporting Michelle's nomination by leaving on a comment on her profile on the LifeChanger of the Year website about how Michelle has changed your life too!

Visit Michelle's profile at [LifeChangeroftheyear.com](https://www.lifechangeroftheyear.com) or scan the QR code to leave a supportive comment or share a story about how she has changed lives in the district by December 31st!



**Michelle Hyatt**  
District Nurse  
#PROUD2BEPSP



## John Naranjo named 2021 “Excellence in Education” Recipient

John Naranjo, Pullman School District Maintenance Supervisor, has been named the recipient of the “Excellence in Education” honor from our school board! Each year, the board selects one classified employee to receive this recognition. John was recommended for this recognition by Pullman School District's Executive Director of Operations, Joe Thornton, who was so inspired by John's commitment to the Pullman School District, his hands-on approach as a leader, and his willingness to go above and beyond to serve our students, staff, and families.

John has served the Pullman School District for 14 years! Joe Thornton, shared “John is nearly always the first one at the shop and the last to leave. It is very common for John to come in after hours or on weekends to deal with an alert he received about a freezer that is above safe temperature or a boiler that is not working. It is not unusual for John to come into work at 4:00 a.m. to make sure that a building's heating system is working correctly. During snow events that require lots of snow removal, it is common practice for John to come in at midnight with the rest of the crew, help with snow removal, and then when the school day starts, work his regular shift to deal with issues that pop up and need to be addressed immediately. This is also a great example of John's style of leadership; he is always willing to demonstrate to his crew that he will jump into things and work side-by-side with them to get the job done. He does not just sit back and direct people, he will jump in and get his hands dirty along with the crew.”

Congratulations John and Pullman School District thanks you for your many years of service!

### 2021 Excellence in Education Nominees:

- **Claudia Bishop-Haynes**, Special Education Paraprofessional at Franklin Elementary. Claudia has served the Pullman School District for 8 years!
- **Margee Dahmen**, Building Paraprofessional at Jefferson Elementary. Margee has served the Pullman School District for 18 years!
- **Mei Clark**, Special Education Paraprofessional at Pullman High School. Mei has served the Pullman School District for 5 years!
- **Carmen Roberts**, Secretary at Sunnyside Elementary School. Carmen has served the Pullman School District for 11 years!

## PHS Booster Christmas Tree Sales are on NOW!

We are excited to offer Christmas tree sales to our community to raise funds! We are teaming up with Pullman Building Supply at Pullman Building Supply (400 SE Fairmount Dr).  
Sales will begin Thursday, December 2nd and will continue every day through Wednesday, December 22nd.

Christmas Tree Sales Hours  
Monday-Friday: 3:00pm-6:00pm  
Saturdays: 8:00am-6:00pm and Sundays: 9:00am-6:00pm  
Make your Christmas Merry & Bright and purchase your tree from PHS Boosters and Pullman Building Supply!  
Student Groups, Clubs, Activities and Sports Teams will assist with sales during various hours and will offer excellent choices of trees and service to assist you with choosing your tree.

### Board of Directors

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Jim Evermann<br>Director, District 3<br>jfe@psd267.org        | Allison Munch-Rotolo<br>Director, District 2<br>Amunch-rotolo@psd267.org |
| Nathan Roberts<br>Director, District 4<br>nroberts@psd267.org | President Susan Weed<br>Director, District 1<br>Sweed@psd267.org         |
| Amanda Tanner<br>Director, District 5<br>atanner@psd267.org   |  |

## Child Find Screening

Age: 5-21

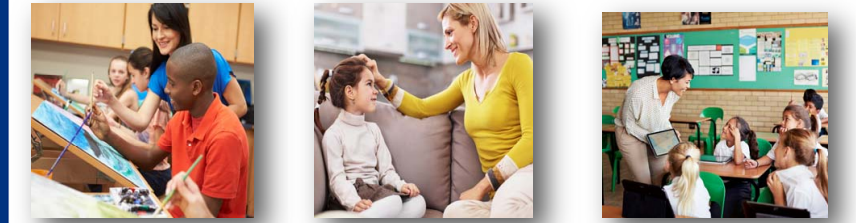
PULLMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Ensuring Learning While Challenging and Supporting Each Student to Achieve Full Potential

**WHO:** All children ages 5-21 who are suspected of possibly having a disability and reside within the Pullman School District boundaries, and are enrolled in public school or are being home schooled, are enrolled in a private school located in the district (even if they reside in another district), or live in a temporary situation within the district.

**WHY:** Whether or not children are enrolled in the public school, the local school district is responsible to locate, evaluate, and identify children with a suspected disability who may be in need of special education and related services, regardless of the severity of the disability. The Pullman School District is responsible for children who are enrolled in a district school, home schooled children who reside in the district, students who attend a private school located in the district, and students living in a temporary situation within the district boundaries.

**WHEN:** Any time a parent or teacher has a concern.



For more information or to schedule an appointment please contact:


Instructional Programs Office  
Pullman School District  
Phone: (509)332-3144



The Pullman School District Board of Directors and the Pullman School District shall provide equal educational opportunity and treatment for all students in all aspects of the academic and activities programs without regard to race, religion, creed, color, national origin, age, honorably-discharged veteran or military status, sex, sexual orientation (including gender expression or identity), marital status, the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability, participation in the Boy Scouts of America or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. The district will provide equal access to school facilities to the Boy Scouts of America and all other designated youth groups listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society. District programs will be free from sexual harassment.

The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination: Civil Rights Coordinator and Title IX Coordinator, Assistant Superintendent, (509) 332-3144, and Section 504 Coordinator, Director of Special Services, (509) 332-3144, 240 SE Dexter Street, Pullman, WA 99163. Applicants with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations in the application process by contacting the Personnel Coordinator at (509) 332-3584.

## PULLMAN HIGH SCHOOL BOOSTER COMMITTEE



### THANK YOU PULLMAN!

The PHS Booster Committee wants to thank the amazing team it took to pull off an incredibly successful PHS Booster Auction on October 28th! A group of volunteers organized the event - thank you Jim Harbour and Southfork and Fork in the Road for the delicious dinner, Christopher Chandler and Mitch Chandler at Neil's Flowers and Gifts for the fun decorations, To Amy Tull, Jenny Fluter-Harder, Amy Rogers, Miranda Chandler and Karen King who made it all go off so smoothly. To Lenore Turman, Karen Johnston, Jill Elbracht, Marcus Crossler, and Chip Tull - thank you for all your help. To Erin Willy, Ashley Whitefoot, PHS Cheerleaders and ASB members - you all were a huge help, thank you! A BIG thank you goes out to all of the community members and businesses that so generously donated items, teams and clubs that donated desserts, and a HUGE thank you to everyone who came out and purchased items. We hope we didn't miss anyone, but if we did - thank you too! Together, we brought in over \$35,000 - imagine all of the amazing things the Boosters can now help fund through grants for PHS student clubs, activities and athletics. Our hearts are full with the generosity of our community. Thank you!

Danielle Kallaber & Phil Honeywell, PHS Booster Committee Co-Presidents

GO HOUNDS!

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