

# Public Comment:

Class sizes

## Matthew Blythe

Parent / Padre de familia

Salem

Our names are Rachael Federico and Matthew Blythe, and we would like your help in addressing circumstances when predicted enrollment in a school exceeds forecasts and results in overcrowded class sizes, and about class-size limitations in the long-term.

Our district prescribes outer limits for class sizes. The district makes initial predictions or forecasts in the spring as to how many students will be enrolled the following fall. Teaching staff is allocated accordingly. This process should result in class sizes across the district that do not exceed 27 students. This system breaks down when the prediction about enrollment turns out to be incorrect, as it was this year at Schirle Elementary School.

There are too many students per teacher at Schirle Elementary, and some other schools as well. Even 27 students is disproportionately large compared to other states, but the current first and second grade classes are at 29, 30, and 31 students. That is a full 15 percent above the prescribed size. We are not casting blame; however, we hope we can agree that that is too many children in a classroom, especially given the wreckage the pandemic has created of our educational standards.

Our daughter began her year with 29 students in her class and no instructional assistant. Surely that was foreseen at some stage in planning. But no prophylactic measures were taken (or perhaps no such measures exist). The district is aware of spots throughout the district where the enrollment forecasts were "off" enough to create over-crowded classes, but there is no procedure or policy in place dictating what the district must do in those circumstances.

We can all agree that class sizes go well beyond 27 students per teacher, but no policy exists for immediate remedies. We can only wait and hope that additional staff get assigned weeks later. In the meanwhile there is no relief for the teachers or students. And, at least in this case, the teachers at Schirle Elementary knew the forecast was awry and parents like myself were told by the district that our teachers were inaccurate. They were not inaccurate.

We fear that words like "budget" and "shortage" are going to short-circuit meaningful solutions. We need to move beyond collective doubt and denial that there is simply nothing that anyone can do. Please let us not be in this position again next year.

We believe you are all here doing this work because you care about education and about children. Reasonable class sizes were already ostensibly accounted for in the school district's budget. We ask you to draft a policy that does three things:

1. Enforces the student-to-teacher ratio set in Salem-Keizer schools;

2. Creates stop-gap measures for when classes unexpectedly exceed the student-teacher ratio; and

3. Requires the district to immediately place full-time teaching assistants in any class that exceeds the set ratio during the school year.

**Submitted:** 9/11/2022 16:10:56

# Public Comment:

General board meeting conduct

## Karen Heywood

Parent / Padre de familia

Salem

I want to offer my support for the decision to hold the future school board meetings virtually. While I had hoped that parents would act respectfully, I have not been surprised that it has turned out otherwise. The most disappointment, however, comes from school board member conduct -- Bethel and Heyen in particular. It was very evident in watching a few times the Aug. 10th board meeting that both Bethel and Heyen chose to "gaslight" the board chair by insisting that they had not been allowed to speak. It was clear that you were both upset by what Board Chair Cottingham had to say "after" the vote on the resolution went 4 to 3. Please be honest and simply asked to be acknowledged to comment instead of insisting dishonestly you were not acknowledged. I realize that "gaslighting" has become popular with those with more conservative values to show indignation at being "victimized" to misdirect the good work being done, create your own agenda and create chaos. Please do and be better.

i applaud the constructive work of other board members as well as the superintendent under these difficult circumstances.

I also want to say thank you to Superintendent Perry on the work of the school district staff who worked so hard to get the school year started. A special call out to Walker staff who helped my granddaughter in her first middle school year. Their support made a huge difference in her experience and our peace of mind. And kudos for the Edge staff meet and greet. Although a little hectic because a lot of families showed up (yah!) it was appreciated.

Thank you.

Karen Heywood

**Submitted:** 9/11/2022 16:15:05

# Public Comment:

Request for using SKSD school facilities for Neighborhood Association meetings

## Jake Krishnan

Community Member / Miembro de la comunidad  
Salem

Dear Board Members

INTRODUCTION: We, South Gateway Neighborhood Association, represent families whose children attend schools within the Salem Keizer School District.

OUR FUNCTION: We provide the voice of the community to different civic resources of the city (City planning administration, Cherriots, Police Department, School Board etc.) and help in community participation in civic decisions by connecting residents, city officials and representatives.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION: We do this by meeting monthly, where members of the community have an opportunity to ask questions and seek clarifications of the Ward councilors, police officers and any/or other officials that may be considering critical decisions impacting the community. Examples of our community's participation include bond proposals, development proposals etc. that impact the livability and safety of the community, while ensuring there is a safe platform for two-way dialogue between the community and the proposal presenters. (Recent examples include Traffic safety plans, Our Salem comprehensive plan, Robins Lane development, Costco development, Kuebler gateway, Cherriots transit center etc.) Our neighborhood association is community focused, and we strive to place the long-term perspective of the residents and families, while providing inputs to the city on these matters.

IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETINGS: Prior to the pandemic, we used Battle Creek Elementary school for meetings at no charge, thanks to an agreement between the City of Salem and SKSD. During the pandemic, we started meeting virtually. We are now exploring the return to a hybrid model of in-person and virtual meetings. We recently understood, from both, the City and the School District Facilities department, that there is no longer an agreement in place, and we would be charged fees for using the facilities as well as provide Liability Insurance coverage. As a non-profit organization that is run by volunteer community members with no self-generated resources or assets nor any revenue generating commercial activities, this would not be tenable for us. In fact, it would hurt the long-term interests of the community at large by excluding some community segments who cannot participate virtually and providing inputs to civic matters of importance.

REQUEST: Our humble request to the Board of Directors of SKSD is to re-instate the policy of allowing Neighborhood associations to conduct our monthly meetings in the school premises that will facilitate a Hybrid meeting and ensure a broader participation, without insisting on payment of charges as well as liability insurance requirements.

We look forward to a favorable decision from you in this regard.  
I would be happy to answer any clarifying questions in this matter.  
Thank you

Best regards  
Jake Krishnan  
Chair, SGNA

**Submitted:** 9/12/2022 7:04:06

# Public Comment:

Neighborhood Association use of SKSD facilities

## Northeast Neighbors Neighborhood Association Lynn Takata, NEN Chair

Community Member / Miembro de la comunidad  
Salem

To: The Salem Keizer School Board

Northeast Neighbors (NEN) respectfully requests that the SKSD Board consider allowing neighborhood associations to meet once a month without charge at their neighborhood schools.

Partnerships between neighbors and schools can benefit the entire community. Neighborhood Associations are volunteer groups that can serve as a catalyst for neighbors to seek solutions for problems occurring in our community as well as organizing positive local events and programs.

NEN is an inclusive organization and welcomes the community to our monthly meetings. Programs and events NEN has organized include:

- A neighborhood watch that has helped prevent shootings in Englewood Park and the Englewood School campus after a young person was fatally shot in 2019 and another young person was shot in 2020.
- Sponsorship of the Englewood Forest Festival adjacent to Englewood School which had two booths supporting literacy. The Dolly Parton Imagination Library signed up 52 families to receive one free book a month. The Salem Public Library signed up children and adults for library cards.
- Staff from Englewood Elementary School participated in a Children's Reading hour at the Englewood Forest Festival.
- The Englewood PTC did outreach at the Englewood Forest Festival.
- We advocated for neighborhood volunteers to help maintain plantings at Englewood School.
- NEN organized a low cost or free Neighborhood Cleanup for disposal of large items. All Englewood School families were invited with bilingual flyers and in the newsletter.

NEN has also notified schools of potential safety and security concerns near their buildings.

Neighborhood Associations have few financial resources. We are all volunteers that dedicate our time to improving and supporting the community. Partnerships with schools can strengthen our neighborhoods.

We appreciate your time in kindly considering our request.

Respectfully,

Lynn Takata  
Chair Northeast Neighbors (NEN)

**Submitted:** 9/12/2022 10:53:21

# Public Comment:

School board meetings

## Deb Romano

Parent / Padre de familia

Salem

I would like to request school board meetings go back to in person. This is absurd that we are back to online. Every single person knows the reason for this. It is not the parents it is the unruly children that are allowed to act disrespectfully and violent towards those that they do not agree with. It is the responsibility of the district and the school board to keep the meetings orderly and respectful. You are trying to silence the parents that disagree with your woke agenda as usual. Open up the school board meetings to in person and stop this insanity.

**Submitted:** 9/12/2022 10:53:22

# Public Comment:

5.a Hispanic Heritage Month and Welcoming Week / Mes de la herencia hispana y semana de bienvenida, 5.b Resolution No. 202223-3 Suicide Prevention / Resolución N.º 202223-3: Prevención del suicidio, 5.c Appointment of Educational Equity Advisory Committee / Designación del Comité Asesor de Educación Equitativa, 8.b Board Goals and Operating Agreements / Metas de la Junta Directiva Escolar y Acuerdos Operativos

## Elizabeth Swan

Community Member / Miembro de la comunidad

Keizer

In accordance with the commitments you will make in passing the Hispanic Heritage Month and the Suicide Prevention resolution, the district should commit to being police free as students have long known that policing is harming Hispanic students and families through punitive measures, fear tactics, and constant surveillance which both pushes students into the school to prison/deportation pipeline and harms students' mental health. The Equitable Process for Equity Committee should be postponed if possible, and in the creation of it, it should center the voices of those Black and Indigenous students and their families who are currently being treated inequitably in their attempts to advocate for themselves and their communities. The new superintendent should have a demonstrable--through past actions and upcoming plans--commitment to justice and equity centering students living at many intersections such as trans Black and Indigenous students.

An example of inequity in our schools right now is which schools have functional heating and cooling systems in classrooms. Some schools only have this in the office which is frankly offensive to all our teachers and youth in stuffy, hot classrooms often year-round.

**Submitted:** 9/12/2022 12:20:28

# Public Comment:

8.b Board Goals and Operating Agreements / Metas de la Junta Directiva Escolar y Acuerdos Operativos

## Mike Slagle

Parent / Padre de familia

Salem

Since I know that your random selection process for choosing speakers is suspect, I instead will write it so it will be public record. Sup Perry You are trying to silence me and others in our community. Your statement about not wanting in person meetings has you not taking responsibility for what happened to me at the Aug 9th Board meeting at Miller Elem. How can you with a moral conscience put the blame on adults in our community for me being racially attacked by a known activist group? This same activist group is supported by chair Carson-Cottingham, directors Hinojos-Pressey, Avila and Guzman-Ortiz. The chair aligns with them, has pictures taken with them and even has tagged them in social media posts. Does this mean that you approve of this group attacking me with racial epithets and with physical violence? I have not heard from the head of security about the outcome of the investigation of my complaint and you Sup Perry came out with this statement blaming "adults" in our community while protecting the activist group who have been disrupting meetings for the last 2 years. Does this mean you know the result of the investigation before i did? For half of the parents and community members we feel vilified for your statement about "adults" in our community. I know you are trying to protect the district administration. Blaming us who have NOT disrupted meetings with disrespectful behavior towards others. We ONLY WANT TO BE HEARD. The board and administration is bent on pushing an agenda, political in many views that you say shouldn't be in the boardroom. You are doing what you blame others are doing. The DEI model for instance is not equity when it promotes unequal treatment based on Heritage. That is definitely political. Traditional training and education programs to combat racial and sex is being supplanted by programs that PROMOTE discrimination by replacing the American ideal of equality with the progressive ideal of equity- which in practice means unequal treatment based on group identity. The 202122-2 resolution has wording in that promotes the behavior the activist group that attacked me with words like "white supremacy" these are the words they used on me: "You don't belong here because you're Caucasian" "I will kick your a\$\$" "you a racist" "a homophobe" a white supremacist" how can you condone this behavior by this group attacking my character unprovoked. You blaming us "adults" is further weaponizing this group to continue to try to silence us, like using umbrellas outside the meeting to intimidate me from entering the building. So many of us just want a board that doesn't use identity politics to vilify people who really do care about education and the well being of ALL students. No one should ever experience what I and others did at that meeting ever. With your Board Operating Agreement is stating that the chair to have control over us. I want to remind that you were elected by the people and your duty is to work for ALL people

**Submitted:** 9/12/2022 12:43:01

# Public Comment:

Use of public schools for Neighborhood Association Meetings

## Susan Napack

Community Member / Miembro de la comunidad

Salem

Grant Neighborhood Association (GNA) joins Salem Neighborhood Associations (NAs) in requesting that they be able to meet at community schools for their monthly meetings free of charges or restrictive liability insurance requirements. Previous to the pandemic Grant Neighborhood Association conveniently met for many years in the library of Grant Community School. We are lucky to have a board member who has provided us with a free place to meet for now, but we are sorry to hear that our previous agreement with the school would not be the same if we wished to return. Schools play a crucial role in linking the community to our residents. GNA is intrinsically linked to Grant school. We have supported school programs and look forward to maintaining and enhancing that connection. Salem NAs have a limited amount of funds provided by the city for promotion of our volunteer work on behalf of our neighborhoods. It would be a detrimental to our missions if we have to diminish those funds to pay for meeting places. Kindly reconsider the current restraints on allowing Salem NAs free access to our public schools for meetings.

**Submitted:** 9/12/2022 13:26:13

# Public Comment:

8.b Board Goals and Operating Agreements / Metas de la Junta Directiva Escolar y Acuerdos Operativos

## Joelle Camillo

Parent / Padre de familia

Salem

I would like to say how disappointed I am at the board's decision to shut down public meetings. I am calling on the board bring in an outside unaffiliated agency to investigate the 'facts' as claimed by Superintendent Perry. I attended my first school board meeting in August of 2021 to talk to the board about their decision to mask the kids. I was horrified to find out how our meetings were conducted. Outside the building I was screamed at and called names. Then later doxxed on the internet by the same group. This is crazy and unacceptable behavior that has been allowed, even encouraged to continue. Bring order back to the meetings. Have consequences for outrageous behavior. Please do an investigation! Concerned parents and grandparents are not the problem.

**Submitted:** 9/12/2022 13:39:43

# Public Comment:

Use of Salem Keizer facilities by neighborhood associations

## Victor Dodier

Community Member / Miembro de la comunidad  
Salem

September 12, 2022

To: Ashley Carson Cottingham, Chairperson  
Board of Directors  
Salem Keizer School District

From: Victor Dodier, President  
South Central Association of Neighbors (SCAN)

Re: Neighborhood Association meetings at SKSD facilities

South Central Association of Neighbors (SCAN) respectfully requests that the Salem Keizer School District renew its cooperative agreement with the City of Salem to allow neighborhood associations to use SKSD facilities free of charge.

The SCAN board members are all volunteers. The SCAN board has met in the South Salem High School library without facilities rental payment for decades under a cooperative agreement between the District and the City.

That ended during the pandemic, when SCAN, like everyone else, moved to virtual meetings. When planning to return to in-person meetings, we found that the cooperative agreement had expired and had not been renewed.

Despite its years of service in the community, SCAN, like many neighborhood associations, is not a private non-profit nor does it have any organizational status beyond being an advisory committee to the City. SCAN does not have a source of income beyond the small amount that neighborhood associations are allowed to claim based on volunteer hours.

While SCAN is able to use its small reserve of City of Salem Communication Funds to pay to rent the SSHS library this year, this is not sustainable.

We urge the School District and the City of Salem to renew the cooperative agreement to allow neighborhood associations to use district facilities free of charge.

Victor Dodier  
SCAN President

**Submitted:** 9/12/2022 13:58:54

# Public Comment:

5.a Hispanic Heritage Month and Welcoming Week / Mes de la herencia hispana y semana de bienvenida, 5.b Resolution No. 202223-3 Suicide Prevention / Resolución N.º 202223-3: Prevención del suicidio, 5.c Appointment of Educational Equity Advisory Committee / Designación del Comité Asesor de Educación Equitativa, 5.d Nomination to OSBA Board of Directors / Nominación a la Junta Directiva de OSBA

## Iron Patriot

Parent / Padre de familia

Salem

Salem-Keizer Schools Superintendent Christy Perry sent out a “Message to the Community” today to point the finger for the security failures at the two, count ‘em TWO public school board meetings since resuming in-person meetings at the “disruptive behavior by adults.” Anyone who’s watched knows full well that the disruptive behavior has not been the “adults” in the room. Unless she’s admitting that LUS is not a youth-lead organization, and is, in fact, just a bunch of adults impersonating students, but I highly doubt that. She blames the adults a total of six times throughout the message. And never once points any blame at the activist children who have been disrupting the board meetings for years. I’ve witnessed it personally myself many times. The only ray of sunshine is that she carves out that parents deserve a safe environment, along with “staff, board members, and all who attend board meetings.” That’s all they’ve been asking for: a safe environment.

I am calling for an investigation by an outside organization into the real facts of the situation. It’s clear they cannot be trusted. Make Perry prove the facts of her findings. We cannot simply take her at her word.

She says all this as if the board didn’t create their own policies to govern the behavior that is allowed at the board meetings but then subsequently held no one to account for breaking those policies. You can see the changes to the policy governing public comment by looking at the initial reading of the policy that was then passed in May.

They created this policy themselves. They can only blame themselves for CREATING the policy, and then not ENFORCING the policy. You don’t get to abandon your duties and then point the finger at the “adults”.

Shame on you Superintendent Perry. And shame on you Chair Carson-Cottingham for not holding people accountable to the policies you helped design and implement.

**Submitted:** 9/12/2022 14:38:56

# Public Comment:

[Return to virtual board meetings](#)

## Jenny Maguire

Community Member / Miembro de la comunidad  
Keizer

Superintendent Perry and Board,

I am both saddened and angry by your decision to, once again, sideline concerned parents in this community. Superintendent Perry, your recent letter to the community was nothing short of fiction. If, when you say “adults,” you are referring to the young activists who were recently students in SKPS then yes, you are correct in stating they have been responsible for “a steady escalation of disruptive behavior” at our virtual and most recent in-person board meeting. However, adults on the other side of the aisle had NOTHING to do with their disrespectful and disruptive behavior and should not be penalized for the behavior of the other group or the district’s inability to maintain safety and order. The July board meeting stands as proof-in-point that concerned parents and citizens are in fact safe, respectful and entirely appropriate toward the board and other members of the audience. They did not interrupt public testimony to scream about hate speech when they disagreed. They did not harass people after the meeting, follow them to their cars or take photographs of their license plates. These unsafe behaviors only returned in August when an opposing group showed up and did their best to intimidate, harass and slander people not sharing their views.

Instead of canceling in-person meetings you should be using your school security as intended, to keep things safe and secure for all community members. In August your “security” team stood and watched as parents were harassed on the way to their cars, doing nothing to prevent the opportunity of this happening or to de-escalate the situation. It would appear they were told to stand-down and not intervene, leaving those being verbally attacked and harassed to be victimized. Is it that you are afraid of standing up to this group for fear of being called racist for enforcing law and order, or is it due to personally agreeing with their beliefs and methods for intimidating those that differ? Whatever the case, board meetings are only unsafe due to your leadership and Chair Carson-Cottingham’s unwillingness to take any action to hold people to account for the rules that they violate. This only further underscores the reason for the recall of 3 sitting board members.

The broader Salem/Keizer community is tired of being intimidated, silenced and ignored for preferred special interest groups that you enable to bully the rest. Salem Keizer board meetings are anything but “safe and welcoming” and neither are our schools under your leadership. Our children deserve better than this!

**Submitted:** 9/12/2022 14:45:19

# Public Comment:

5.b Resolution No. 202223-3 Suicide Prevention / Resolución N.º 202223-3: Prevención del suicidio

## Juanita Reyes

Community Member / Miembro de la comunidad

Salem

It is with a heavy heart that I write this message to all of you. I am absolutely disheartened that Christy Perry has once again blamed all of the adults at the board meetings (seemingly to imply parents are the ones causing problems) & the progressive board members along with Perry, do not hold the student led activist group accountable for their abhorrent behavior. Now the whole community suffers because Perry, Chair Cottingham & Chris Baldrige fail to uphold the rules of the meetings & provide better security!

Chris Baldrige as the Director of Safety & Risk Management should be doing everything he can to make these meetings safe for everyone. He is NOT! He should take a major share in the safety failures. He failed to have his security team step in when a man was being chased out of the meeting & surrounded. This is unacceptable! Why hasn't he come up with an adequate safety plan, that includes law enforcement, to insure that everyone is safe at these meetings? Why does his security personnel fail to step in when things have gotten out of hand? The community deserves to be able to attend these meetings in person.

Why did the board come up with a list of rules for the board meetings if you aren't going to make anyone accountable & follow through with the consequences?! How is this showing a good example to the students?! It reinforces the idea that the rules don't matter & that they can get away with whatever they want (calling people white supremacists, & other hateful vile things.)

I guess that's par for the course though because that is what is happening in our schools also. NO consequences, increased safety issues, weapons brought to schools, fights, teachers and students being hurt, etc.

For anyone who doesn't know, there is a recall of three of the seven board members. Please sign the petitions today so we can rectify these situations & help our kids be safe & also get back to learning & not being indoctrinated. Go to [www.skeducationfirst.com](http://www.skeducationfirst.com)

**Submitted:** 9/12/2022 14:47:17