

Parent Advisory Committee to the Superintendent (PACS): Key Communications

January 14, 2021

Each school has two representatives on this committee.

Samantha Dang and Elizabeth Walther are co-chairs.

- We are here to learn, have discussions and give input to the superintendent. Please take information back to each of your schools to share.
- Please work with your principal to arrange for a parent substitute to attend PACS if you are unable to attend.

Welcome and introductions

- Co-chairs Samantha Dang and Elizabeth Walther welcomed the group.
- Icebreaker via the chat function on Zoom: Given we have students learning at home, some attending in person, social interactions and social groups are dramatically changed and our children are really experiencing a different routine than usual. What are you learning about your own children watching them learn this year?

Superintendent's updates, questions and answers

- Superintendent Dr. Greg Baker welcomed the group and shared the following updates on the big picture:
 - Second graders returned today, Jan. 14. Other students currently receiving in-person instruction include kindergarten and first grade and some specialized or focused populations (e.g. special education programs, “internet café” model). Due to increasing COVID cases in our county, we are holding off announcing additional dates for bringing more students back, but planning continues. Look for an update soon.
 - Dr. Baker also shared draft schedules for middle and high schools, vaccine information and some ongoing challenges
- Dr. Baker facilitated an open Q&A. Topics included: timeline for more students returning to in-person school/activities, possible logistics of hybrid schedules and mask-wearing rules.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

- Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Jay Jordan; Sehome Assistant Principal Bethany Barrett; Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Janis Velasquez Farmer; and Executive Director of Family Engagement Isabel Meaker presented some of the different areas of focus related to the district's EDI work.
- Dr. Baker shared [The Bellingham Promise](#) and highlighted recent revisions to our strategic plan to include EDI as a key strategy and the school board's [executive limitation \(EL\)-10](#).

- Bethany shared information about an ethnic studies class being offered in our high schools thanks to a great partnership with Western Washington University.
- Janis shared her approach to EDI and what it means for our students and community in teaching and learning. She sends [monthly newsletters](#) to staff and families, which include information about holidays, heritage months and resources. Her goal is to create a strong framework to influence our district in a myriad of ways, including curriculum and policy. Janis updates [our EDI page with resources and a blog](#). Our guests helped facilitate a Q&A with PACS members.

Announcements and Celebrations

- Parkview planning a Zoom pizza and bingo night
- Shout-out to fourth grade teacher for talking to kids about EDI, different perspectives and mob in Washington D.C.
- Appreciation for in-person classes, access to iPads and great learning happening in kindergarten
- Love for the fifth grade assignment to “create your island,” which has been nice compliment to national conversations about democracy and government.
- Shout-out to Bellingham Family Partnership Program

Next Meeting: 10:30 a.m. Feb. 11