

(Teacher Appreciation 28 April 2021 – BoE agenda F.1: comments pertaining to items on action agenda)

President Gullixson, Board Directors, Dr. Thomas

“The world is all messed up. The nation is sick, trouble is in the land, confusion all around... but” National Teacher Appreciation Week is next week. We have a chance to celebrate something constructive and good. Teachers go above and beyond, and **they have done that so consistently and for so long**...it’s now expected. It’s good that that’s appreciated... but what does appreciation *LOOK* like?

Teachers **choose** to be here—choose to be here every day—every day for kids. D11 teachers choose to be *HERE*

- not grooming the privileged boys of Dead Poets Society
- not cultivating the society of *selective* schools
- *FORGOING* a path of monetary enrichment

to focus on a mission of building the future, of championing lives and potential, of pursuing equity so that the American dream can be a reality for all students *every day*. District 11 teachers **carry out** the D11 mission **every day**.

**Teachers are essential.** We say so; we believe so; the state labels teachers essential so they get vaccinations before many, and as professionals report to work in person. Teachers are indispensable to **Education**, and we’ve seen that individuals and *the American **ECONOMY** as a whole* depend on teachers.

- Asked to turn on a dime and adapt to new modes of instruction, teachers respond.
- Needed to nurture students to whom they can’t even give a hug anymore, teachers find a way.
- Expected to take up the slack in finding ways to guide students in that messed up, sick, and confused world, teachers continue to press ahead relentlessly and purposefully.

**Teachers believe in the work because they believe in their students.** To do that work, to perform the D11 mission as they do every day, they **also** must invest in their *own* education and obtain & maintain *professional* licenses, so they can become experts...**under constant scrutiny**. Teachers focus on OTHERS, not on themselves.

To do the quality job expected of us, to maintain that focus on students, teachers need to be able to **TRUST** that the appreciation we *HEAR* about **also** exists in *ACTION*. **Action is what appreciation looks like.** Concerns about contract stability and threats to workplace rights are **distractions**, not **supports**. Trust comes *not* from others’ seeking *LEVERAGE* over you but from being **welcomed** as professionals into the decision-making.

On behalf of all the teachers whose rights are secured by the Master Agreement, I thank the Board of Education for its recognition and support of the dedicated and hard-working teachers of District 11. Thank you.