



# STATEMENT

## LEGISLATIVE BIPOC CAUCUS

For Immediate Release  
Contact: Hannah Kurowski  
[Hannah.kurowski@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Hannah.kurowski@oregonlegislature.gov)

### Oregon Legislative BIPOC Caucus Condemns Actions by Newberg School Board to Revoke Anti-Racist Policy

SALEM, OR -- Today the Oregon Legislative Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) Caucus makes the following statement in response to the Newberg School Board's consideration of overturning the anti-racist [Every Student Belongs](#) policy, [previously known](#) as "All Students Belong:"

"We condemn the actions of Director Brian Shannon, Chairman Dave Brown, and board members who support removing the Every Student Belongs policy, which was a [Republican](#) chief-sponsored bill that passed with bipartisan support. The intent of the Legislature in developing this piece of legislation was to protect children in the classroom and create a competitive workforce prepared for the challenges of the future. Oregon businesses now and in the future will need communities that are safe for their workforces and potential clients.

"We are also extremely concerned by the board's undemocratic attempt to push through their politically-motivated agenda without input from the public. We can't let this spread any further.

"Inspired by the advocacy of Oregon high school students in 2020, the Every Student Belongs policy [recognizes](#) that 'student health and safety are the cornerstone of education and that all students are entitled to a high-quality educational experience, free from discrimination or harassment based on perceived race, color, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin, and without fear or hatred, racism or violence.'

"The policy also prohibits three of the most recognizable symbols of hate: the swastika, the Confederate flag, and the noose. These symbols traumatize students and prevent student access and success. As school board members, parents, and legislators, we are all responsible for keeping schools safe and doing everything we can to promote student success. Further, removing this policy would also be a disservice to all students and their families, who in a diversifying job market and world will not be as competitive as others who have the skills to work within and contribute to an inclusive environment.

"What is happening in Newberg shows the importance of running and voting in local elections across the country. Nationally we are seeing a trend of school boards rolling back anti-racism and anti-discrimination protections. This is unacceptable. After a difficult 18 months and with another school year just around the corner, we should be prioritizing a more welcoming and equitable education system. What the [data shows](#) is that we are not yet there, with BIPOC students experiencing racism in the classroom from a young age.

"As a Caucus, we remain committed to a more equitable education system that prioritizes student success and look forward to taking action during next year's session to hold districts accountable. We also call on state and community leaders to denounce the school board's actions. It is not 'partisan' to reject the type of hatred and bigotry Director Shannon and Chairman Brown are promoting. The goal of providing a quality education for all students should be nonpartisan, including addressing systemic barriers."

\*\*\*

#### Caucus Members

Senators: Lew Frederick, Kayse Jama, James Manning  
Representatives: Teresa Alonso Leon, Janelle Bynum, Wlinsvey Campos, Andrea Valderrama, Mark Meek, Khanh Pham, Ricki Ruiz, Andrea Salinas, Tawna Sanchez