

Dear Clover Park School District Board Directors:

I attended the monthly school board meeting this evening, and was hurt, appalled and disgusted with the comment “crack the whip” made by Paul Wagemann.

To make matters even more appalling, when Dr. Marty Schafer called out the expression to Paul Wagemann and gave a rather vivid description- Paul Wagemann responded with, “I know what it means and I meant it.” Dr. Schafer further said, “That is not a comment I am comfortable with”, and still Paul Wagemann did not retract the comment. In fact, he was unapologetic.

In context, the comment was made when talking about students who did not graduate from high school. Historically, the students are mostly Black and Brown and the most marginalized and subjected to the abuses and atrocities of institutional racism. According to OSPI, the demographics of this school district are approximately 70% BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color), making the comment even more offensive. Is this a comment or thinking we want the students and families to be subjected to?

Therefore as the Vice-President of the Clover Park Education Association for Diversity and Inclusion the following is being asked in remedy of the racist and public act: 1) A public apology issued by Paul Wagemann at the January Board Meeting, 2) Members of the Board take additional training on Microaggressions and other culturally responsive trainings (as the rest of the Clover Park District staff have been taking), 3) implement an ethnic studies curricula across the district beginning at the pre-school level so that Black and Brown students can see themselves represented in this educational system and 4) increase the racial diversity of the staff at all levels.

In closing, thank you again to Dr. Marty Schafer for calling out the comment. To many in attendance that comment was racist in nature. Thank you for acknowledging the inappropriateness of the comment.

We are in this journey together-

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This message is endorsed by the following Clover Park Education Association Executive Board members: Joe Clark, Brian Crowley, Deb Hansen, Mary Moser, Sarah Nainby, Jo Burke, Jim Schell, Tracey Johnston, Bobby de Grouchy, Miriam Robinson.