
First of all, thank you so much for your service, perseverance and work through the pandemic, racial justice struggles, unemployment and economic downturn and immigration changes.

These last couple of years have been challenging, disheartening and we have seen fractures in our communities in deep and troubling ways. It is public leaders that we turn to see there is a community, that there is hope, that these fractures will again become fused and we will move forward together again, **together.**

I had wanted to speak on education today. I couldn't find my link on my devices (drat!). I am publically educated from kindergarten to high school, with higher degrees of both a bachelor and masters. I am grateful to live in a country where this was affordable to me, and further where my family could afford to save for my higher education and planfully guide me. Each time I attended a public school. For a week I attended private college; however decided upon reflection, that the cost and my distance from natural supports was not inline with my values. I swiftly made a decisive choice and I have never regretted it. The only thing I think it would have given me is a louder, firmer, more confident voice...perhaps.

I have been saddened in the time and conversation of equity to see how Free and Public Education is administered. I have struggled to mentally think of a reasonable solution. My child is struggling immensely in public school. He is "failing" all subjects despite strong attendance. He is struggling despite attending one of the best local elementary schools with the talented, tenured teachers who battle to inspire these youths. This has resulted in countless school meetings, behavioral referrals, concerns of drop out and battles at home. My husband and I are both intelligent, savvy, engaged, lifelong learners and have immersed ourselves in understanding the complexity of our child and the systems. We work diligently and routinely at home to support a forward positive trajectory.

What I have learned: teachers are not taught the science of reading. Teachers are not taught the science of writing. These MUST be taught in colleges and universities to share the intricacies of what science is known. The master of education is a master of science...the IEP for a student should be evidenced based to show and demonstrate skill acquisition. It must be measurable. And students behind grade level must have access to equitable services!

Anecdotally, I have watched people I respect pull their kids from public schools to send them to private school. I have seen countless people receive tutoring. I adore Barbara Steinberg, owner of PDX Reading Specialist, LLC and have been inspired by her courses and community teaching. However, I ethically feel upset at the number of organizations for tutoring. How do struggling families afford this? People with multiple children? People with non-traditional work hours? People with whom their language, cultural or systematic fears of oppression operate barriers? When would my son's school day end with all the catch up he needs? How do I balance this with life has joy and play?

Please fund LETRS (<https://www.voyagersopris.com/professional-development/letrs/overview>) and programs essential to supporting teachers in skill acquisition. An investment in teachers is an investment in our future!

Thanks for your time and consideration,
Rene Hendricks