

West Linn Alliance for Inclusive Community

COMMUNITY NEWS LETTER

City Government - Community Outreach - West Linn Schools

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Facebook at: Facebook.com/WestLinnAlliance/

Email: westlinnalliance@gmail.com

The West Linn Alliance for Inclusive Community (WLAIC) brings together a diverse, non-partisan group of West Linn neighbors working to ensure that all members of our community have equal opportunities to participate in the quality of life that our town offers; that all of our neighbors are safe from hate crimes, abuse or harassment; and that no person or group is subjected to discrimination, bigotry, or prejudice.

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DON'T FORGET TO VOTE BY MAY 21st

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May 11th: Race and Adoption: with Astrid Castro - West Linn Library 2:00 to 4:00 pm ([Web Link](#))

July 23rd: "Why Aren't There More Black People in Oregon? A Hidden History" - Presented by Walidah Imarisha.



Gail Greenman - Chelsea King Martin - Jordan Ferris - Christy Thompson

WLWV School Board Elections

By William House

School Board elections are underway for the West Linn - Wilsonville School District. Ballots need to be filed by 8:00 pm on May 21st.

Positions 2 & 4 are both contested with two candidates running for each position. WLAIC contacted all the candidates and requested their views on five issues that are relevant to WLAIC goals and objectives.

The two candidates for Position 2 are Gail McSpadden Greenman and Chelsea King Martin. The candidates for Position 4 are Jordan Ferris and Christy Thompson.

The candidate's responses are covered in full on the WLAIC Website ([Election 2019](#)).

WLAIC encourages everyone to study the candidates' positions and be sure to vote.

The full candidate responses are more than can be covered in this newsletter so selected quotes are provided from the candidates on one of these issues.

Issue 2: Please provide a statement concerning your views on equity within our schools, and the critical barriers to equity that you would seek to eliminate as a school board member.

WLAIC strongly supports the district's integration of equity as a fundamental concept in school programs at all levels. Equity-focused education supports students who face barriers as a result of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, physical or

WLWV School Board Elections (Cont'd)

mental disability, income level, or other factors. Every child needs the opportunity to receive maximum benefit from their school experience. WLAIC supports a school board with a broad view of equity and a commitment to eliminating systemic bias and discrimination in our schools. With these barriers gone, children can focus on the excellent education that our schools have to offer.

Ferris - "Equity is at the heart of my campaign and messaging." ... "When looking at racial equity I want to make sure that we do a deep dive into our performance measures and find out why our non-white students are performing differently than our white students." ... "In terms of gender equality, our girls' sports teams deserve the same treatment as our boys' sports teams."... "Socioeconomic equity is another facet I promise to look at. Ideally, I would love to offer free breakfast and lunch to ALL students, regardless of income status. Kids cannot learn when they are hungry."

Greenman - "All children deserve and are entitled to a quality education, it is also important to recognize that same quality education doesn't look the same for every child. We must ask how and why things are occurring for each individual situation. If we don't ask why something is happening,

we can't begin to find a solution. I have had an outpouring of calls and conversations from parents that I hadn't had the pleasure of meeting before, parents that I know casually to friends all who have entrusted me with their story of their own child. No two stories have been the same. In some cases, parents have shared that equity for their child is allowing them to be in a special needs classroom environment. In other cases, it was the desire to provide alternative accommodations within a general education classroom environment."

"My own daughter has classroom accommodations"... "My husband and I worked with the school and school district to determine what those accommodations should look like." ... "I too had accommodations as a child...I understand what it is like to feel different. The only sport my doctor would sign off on was swimming"... "I found peace in the pool. The school waived my PE requirement provided that I participate on the swim team. I have to think that is why even to this day, the pool is my safe place and the place I go to clear my head."

"No two situations will look the same. We must provide parents the ability to work collaboratively with the school, think outside the box and try different approaches while also empowering our teachers with classroom resources and

continuing education."

King Martin - "We know that students from diverse backgrounds are all capable of learning, growing and achieving. What some of our students face is an opportunity gap rather than an achievement gap. We close that opportunity gap by first being aware of the barriers we erect, and then decidedly removing the barriers."

"There are two barriers that I would work to eradicate during my second term as a school board member. The first is the barrier to family-wage jobs. We know that not all students are on a college track, either due to their interest in academics or their family income, or both. I am interested in expanding opportunities for Career and Technical Education in our district high schools, so that all students can graduate with a diploma AND the skills they need for a family wage job. The second barrier to opportunity is access to professional care, such as mental health and medical professionals. During my second term I hope to create the conditions by which our district could open its first School Based Health Center. Access to medical and mental health professionals will reduce barriers to access, such as transportation and making time to attend an appointment when a student's parent(s) work full time."

Thompson - Did not respond.



Senator Rob Wagner

Senator Rob Wagner, Working for Our Schools

By William House

Senator Rob Wagner spoke to over 50 of his Lake Oswego and West Linn constituents on Wednesday, April 17th, about two bills he is moving through the State Legislature. Senate Bill 664 will require school districts to provide instruction about the Holocaust and genocide, and Senate Bill 52 will legally require school districts in Oregon to adopt policies on suicide prevention. The meeting was hosted by the West Linn Alliance for Inclusive Community, Respond to Racism, and Mary's Woods Diversity Taskforce, and it was held at Cascadia Hall in Mary's Woods.

The Bill requiring Holocaust and genocide education was inspired by the late Alter Wiener and initially championed by Lakeridge High School student Claire Sarnowski. Mr. Wiener was a Holocaust survivor and has inspired many by sharing the story of his survival and perseverance during that dark time in his life. Senator Wag-

ner emphasized that the true value in this educational initiative is not just learning historical facts about past events, but understanding the social and cultural mindsets that lead to these acts of mass inhumanity.

"Education is our great social equalizer." This quote by State Senator James Manning Jr. addresses the fact that genocide continues today and that knowing why it happened is the only way to be prepared to recognize the danger and stop this type of collective social sickness before it begins again in the future.

Senate Bill 52 is a significant step forward in improving the health and safety of students in our schools. The bill recognizes that Oregon is one of three states that don't have suicide prevention plans in their schools. This bill would change that situation and, "send a clear message that all young people, no matter how they identify or who they love, should see a future for themselves in Oregon."

Small group discussions following Senator Wagner's presentation identified the clear need for resource allocation to schools for implementation of the Bill 52 mandate. One audience member reminded the

group that identification of a student thinking of suicide is not enough; you need to have the infrastructure in place to help the student. Simply recognizing their problem and sending them home is no solution.

Health resources in schools is an active topic in the current local school board elections. West Linn School Board candidate Jordan Ferris (Director, Position 4) has said "More than anything I want to create school-based health centers so that kids are able to access health care." She points out that children who are hungry, sick, mentally unwell, or feeling unsafe cannot focus on the educational opportunities schools provide.

Most importantly, both of these bills require not only a commitment from our State Government, but they also need a commitment from our local communities to fight for adequate resources and to ensure the implementation of meaningful curriculum.

Get involved in making our schools even better and let your voice be heard. Exercise your rights and obligation as a citizen and vote for school board candidates who will work for your vision of the future.

**Educate yourself on the issues
BE SURE TO VOTE
May 21st**

WLAIC MEETINGS ([Link to Website Calendar](#))

GENERAL MEETINGS:

Location - Cascade Summit Clubhouse at 3480 Chaparrel Dr., West Linn 97068
Time: 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm, May 22nd

SCHOOLS COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

Location - Contact WLAIC ([Email](#))
Time: 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm, May 28th

OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

Location - Market of Choice Meeting Room (West Linn)
Time: 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm, , May 13th, June 10th

GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

Location - Contact Kathy (kathy.selvag@gmail.com)
Time: 3:00 pm, May 10th

COMMUNITY EVENTS

May 6th: Good Citizen - A play reading - West Linn Lutheran Church 7:00 pm ([Web Link](#))

May 11th: Race and Adoption: with Astrid Castro - West Linn Library 2:00 - 4:00 pm ([Web Link](#))

July 23rd: Why Aren't There More Black People in Oregon? A Hidden History - Presented by Walidah Imarisha. - Mary's Woods 7:00 - 8:30 pm

Race and Adoption

The West Linn Alliance for Inclusive Community is pleased to partner with Oregon Humanities and the West Linn Public Library to bring a conversation to our community on Race and Adoption.

The decision to adopt across racial or cultural lines is a lifelong commitment to

exploring matters of race and identity. This conversation will be facilitated by Astrid Castro. The program is relevant to many of our West Linn Families and will raise questions on how we talk to children about important issues like race and identity, adoption, and cultural appropriation.



Good Citizen

by George Taylor

A Play Reading

West Linn Lutheran Church

Monday, May 6th

7:00 PM

Free Admission

The West Linn Alliance for Inclusive Community will present a staged reading of Good Citizen, a play by George Taylor, on Monday, May 6, at 7:00 pm in the West Linn Lutheran Church on 20390 Willamette Drive.

Good Citizen is a local story that resonates with contemporary citizenship and civil rights struggles. Director Heath Hyun Houghton describes the work as exploring “questions about what it means to be a citizen, and how that definition changes between individuals, populations, and communities.” The play investigates, according to Houghton, “how we need to constantly and rigorously explore, redefine and defend our relationship with our identity as citizens.”