**A message from BEA President Allison Snow**

**Your public educators have been sounding the cry for months. We have given our all to provide for our students, and we live daily with the heart-heavy knowledge that even that is not enough. We know that so many are suffering in the conditions the COVID-19 pandemic has created, and we have done all we can to build supports and provide resources to enable our kids to learn and grow in this unprecedented time.**

**Case numbers and infection rates have reached all-time highs, and nearly every one of us has lost family members or friends to the disease or the conditions we have created in our response to it. As we learn more about COVID-19, we also learn of new strains, new side effects, new impacts. In addition, we are confronting the deep seeds of racism throughout our systems and nation and have been forced to recognize the very inequitable impacts it has on the Black, Indigenous, and people of color in our community — staff, students, and families alike. Public fear, exhaustion, and demoralization are at record highs.**

**It is in this context — complex and fraught with uncertainty — that we have sought to establish parameters for the safe and sustainable functioning of public education – a system that cannot exist separate from the people who run it. People with human needs and human fears. As a Union we have worked to voice these needs and concerns and seek collaborative ways to address and resolve them. Although we may disagree on what should be cause for concern, we must understand that to dismiss, belittle, or ignore it is dehumanizing behavior — something that should never be acceptable in a profession committed to shaping and nurturing the hearts and minds of our children.**

**I call on the leaders of the Bellevue School District to acknowledge the humanity of the staff who work for them. Though you may disagree with their perspective on our current situation, please seek to understand them. Please remember our shared interests and commitments, and please reject the hateful, divisive rhetoric that would have us view each other as enemies. Your educators want to do all they can to support our students, but they should not be asked to needlessly risks their lives — or their human dignity — to do so.**

**We remain committed — as we have been from the outset of this pandemic — to finding collaborative solutions to the complex problems before us. We invite the BSD leadership to do the same.**

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[**Message in Japanese - 日本語のメッセージ**](https://washingtonea-my.sharepoint.com/file_viewer.php?id=42931)

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