

Thank you, Judy. It's good to see you all; My name is Sabrina Gordon, president of Eugene Education Association. I'd like to offer a heartfelt welcome to new board members Loral and Maya, and gratitude to the entire board for the work you do to lead 4J. I also want to thank all of the parents and community members who signed up to speak tonight and did so respectfully. This kind of discourse is the only way we can really listen to and hear one another and it's so important that we have space to do that.

I don't have a lot to say this evening, as the members of EEA are not ready yet to start the new school year - many are teaching summer school and other enrichment opportunities for students; and we're all trying to squeeze every moment out of these last weeks of summer. The need to recharge and renew is felt by everyone this year like we've never felt it before.

That being said, I am happy to report that a sense of optimism and excitement for a new year is already building. Educators look forward to bringing some of the lessons learned last year into the upcoming school year - from new technology to an amplified focus on the importance of social/emotional supports, learning and growing together through difficult but critical conversations about race, the transformative power of smaller class sizes, and creating systems that include learners of all abilities and nurture the potential of all learners.

This list could go on forever because public education is a place full of possibility and potential. People who choose to work in public education are fueled and inspired daily by what is possible. Some of these possibilities to improve the educational experience for students are being discussed at the bargaining table during EEA/4J negotiations. As bargaining continues this fall, we would all do well to remember that last year the district and the association grew stronger as partners working through challenging times. I look forward to continuing that partnership in the year to come and to seeing the many ways we will work together to benefit our students.