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Salt Lake City School Board
District Two

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Kristi Swett, President
Salt Lake City School District, Board
2256 South King Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84109

COPY FOR YOUR
INFORMATION

Re: Disparities in Teacher Staffing

Dear President Swett,

In accordance with board policy B-2 which states in part: *“Any board member may request that a topic be placed on an upcoming meeting agenda by contacting the board president or vice president”*. Accordingly, I am requesting that the issue: **“Equitable Distribution of Experienced Teachers”** be placed on the school board agenda within the next two meetings.

The serious disparity with west-side students’ access to experienced teachers is alarming. I am interested in learning why this situation was allowed to flourish and what steps we can take to rectify it.

When I raised this question in Tuesday night’s board meeting, it was met with an emotional rejoinder by one board member, and a retort of denial from the board vice president and superintendent in the form of ‘let’s move on’.

I submit that it is counterproductive for board members to malign students from my neighborhood with labels that communicate and foster low expectations. I believe that when a board member voices an attitude of low expectations, it can produce a negative self-fulfilling prophecy throughout the entire district. A student’s consistent exposure to low expectations can lead to the erosion of self-confidence, motivation, and academic success.

I echo the sentiments of Dr. Shaeffer, when she stated in Tuesday night’s meeting: “We need to do something to turn around that pattern that you can see”.

Current analysis of our district’s pattern confirms that the schools with the highest concentration of at-risk students in poverty are the least likely to be staffed by experienced, well-qualified teachers. At-risk students in poverty within our district are also more likely to attend schools with higher teacher turnover.

“Local school boards are the bedrock of our society, yet they are invisible to the public”

Señor Florez –Deseret News