

**COPY**

Mr. Scott Peacock, Assistant Superintendent  
Snohomish School District #201  
1601 Avenue D  
Snohomish, WA 98290

October 21, 2016

Dear Mr. Peacock,

At the request of a number of parents, teachers, and administrators in the Snohomish School District, our organization submitted two public records requests with the District on October 11, 2016. These requests sought information regarding the District's ongoing relationship with Aidan Key, Executive Director of Gender Diversity.

Through the District's fulfillment of this request, we have learned that Snohomish School District made payments totaling more than **\$14,000** to Gender Diversity in exchange for a series of trainings and consultations on gender issues.

The aforementioned individuals indicated to FPIW that staff attendance at these trainings and consultations was mandatory, and that the trainings promoted very specific, scientifically unfounded<sup>1</sup>, and highly controversial positions on the issues of gender and sexuality – positions that a significant number of teachers, administrators, parents, students, and taxpayers in your District do not share.

It appears beyond dispute that the school district is using taxpayer dollars to promote a set of beliefs many in the district find offensive.

We have heard from numerous employees in the Snohomish School District, who were made to attend these trainings against their will, who feel that the District has created a hostile work environment by adopting these new policies, and that their jobs may be in jeopardy if they were to speak out in opposition.

We have also heard from parents of students in the District who feel as though the District's new policies and advocated points of view create an atmosphere of intolerance towards *their* children, and that their children may be bullied for their beliefs, whether religious or non-religious, as a result.

The District has failed to create an atmosphere that tolerates different beliefs on issues of gender and sexuality. To remedy this, and to ensure that all District employees

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<sup>1</sup> See McHugh and Mayer study in *The New Atlantis*;  
<http://www.thenewatlantis.com/publications/number-50-fall-2016>



[www.fpiw.org](http://www.fpiw.org)

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have access to all relevant information regarding beliefs and issues surrounding gender and sexuality, our organization is willing to offer non-partisan theological and philosophical diversity, and sensitivity training to all schools in the District.

These trainings would acknowledge that there are differing perspectives on these issues held by people of good will and emphasize the importance of respecting those differences without using shame or alienation. The presentation also outlines potential remedies so that School Districts may find effective ways to care for dysphoric students while also protecting the safety and privacy of others.

We are willing to offer this training to you and your district employees on how to tolerate differences of opinion on these issues without creating a hostile learning or work environment, should that be of interest to you.

We believe there is common ground to be found and are open to facilitating dialogue. I look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Backholm", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Joseph Backholm, WSBA #36877  
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CC: Dr. Kent Kultgen, Superintendent  
Jay Hagen, School Board President  
Leah Hughes-Anderson, School Board Vice President  
Shaunna Ballas, School Board Member  
David Johnston, School Board Member  
Josh Seek, School Board Member