

The Week in Review

Suspended for Blackface

In a statement condemning all expressions of racism, Newberg Public Schools placed one of its elementary school teacher aides on administrative leave Friday after showing up for work in Blackface. The employee was protesting a vaccine mandate for all school district staff, calling herself Rosa Parks in disguise.

No Show for School Buses

A shortage of school bus drivers caused Portland Public Schools Monday to cancel 13 bus routes to Benson and Lincoln High schools and 16 routes with different pick-up or drop-off times for the foreseeable future. The district said it will offer financial help to families whose routes are canceled.

Thefts Ground Reynolds Buses

Someone stole about 20 catalytic converters from school buses in the Reynolds School District transportation lot just as the school year began, causing roughly \$70,000 in damage. The district said it would make adjustments to meet transportation needs while repairs are made.

Police Surveillance Illegal

A Multnomah County Circuit Court judge Monday held that the Portland Police Bureau violat-

ed Oregon law by livestreaming protests. A representative of the American Civil Liberties Union called the decision a victory, "Protest is fundamental to democracy. Protest is not a crime. Period."

Nabisco Strike Settled

Against the will of Portland Nabisco workers who voted otherwise, co-striking union members across the country voted to accept a new four-year collective bargaining agreement Saturday with Mondelez International. The ratification ends a walkout that began last month.

Worst COVID-19 Surge

Oregon was in the midst of its worst COVID-19 surge since the start of the pandemic last week — which health officials say is fueled by unvaccinated people and the highly transmissible delta variant. The new forecast predicts that hospitals across the state will remain under severe strain for the next two to three months.

Rabid Bats Discovered

A rabid bat was discovered last week in northeast Portland, marking the first time an animal has tested positive for the disease in Multnomah County since 2014. Another rabid bat was found in Beaverton a few days earlier.



Annette Majekodunmi, a parent and community engagement supervisor at POIC + Rosemary Anderson High School works side by side with parents in a Community Healing Initiative.

Help with Parenting

Community healing program offers support

Raising and caring for young lives can be complicated and require steadfast patience and resolve. Parenting, even during the best of times, is tough. But factor in financial, emotional and general uncertainty, as well as the strains of the COVID-19 pandemic — and the layers of challenges grow and grow.

Tamika, a single mother of two, also has to account for gun violence that might unfold near her north Portland home. Or worse, gunfire that may claim the lives of her children.

"My son's best friend was shot and killed in front of his mother's house last March," she shares. "And it was devastating. My son could have also been right next to his friend."

Parenting for Tamika has never been a walk in the park. At a young age, she was a single, hard-working mom raising two kids. Her son, in particular, struggled.

"There was myself, my daughter and my son," she said. "There was no male figure in my household. My son missed out on a whole lot."

From preschool through his first two years in elementary school, a school administrator called her nearly every day with concerns. Also troubling, she found people telling her she would never get help for her son until he was the juvenile justice system.

Fast forward to today, and Tamika's son is now unfortunately involved in the justice system. He also struggles with a disability. The past 18 months have been a rollercoaster of emotion and stress as the family, as they navigate the impacts of COVID-19, violence and the court system.

Tamika is not alone. She finds solace among other parents through POIC + Rosemary Anderson High School's Community Healing Initiative parent group. The group offers support and resources to parents whose children may be involved in the

justice system, as well as parents whose lives have been impacted by community violence that has harmed, or even killed, their children. The program works in partnership with Multnomah County and the County's Department of Community Justice.

"I have been struggling with my son ever since he got into public school," said Tamika. "The work and the help that the Community Healing Initiative is giving us today is work I wish I would have had when we started out on this journey."

Since the beginning of the year through August, preliminary data show that there were more than 800 incidents of gunfire in Portland alone. More than 260 people have been hurt by gun violence — a number that does not account for other types of violence that can wound, seriously injure or kill in some other way.

Many communities across the country experiencing sharp increases in violence are looking for ways not just to curtail the harm, but also to lift up struggling community members who have been, or are most at risk of being, affected.

In Multnomah County, the Board of County Commissioners allocated funding to bolster programs like the Community Healing Initiative and its companion Elevate program to provide support systems for youth and parents impacted by gangs, like Tamika and her son.

Annette Majekodunmi, a parent and community engagement supervisor at POIC + Rosemary Anderson High School who works side by side with Tamika and other parents participating in the healing initiative.

How quickly the community moves on from instances of violence is troubling, said Majekodunmi.

Do you care for a family member with dementia?

We're looking for volunteers to join our study that tests the benefits of our program.

All sessions and communications are done by phone, videoconferencing or email.

- Participants must care for a family member with dementia for at least four hours per week.
- You do not need to live together.
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