



“Challenging People to Shape a Better Future Now”

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Special Election 2015 The Skanner Endorsements

The May 19th, 2015, Multnomah County Special Election is all about education, with candidates running for school boards, the Multnomah Education Service District, and the Portland Community College Board.

While some voters might think these positions are not as important as city councils, state legislatures, and Congress, it's local school boards that shape the future of our communities because they have such an impact on the pipeline of leadership for our future governance.

The recent conflict over pay raises for top administrators at Portland Public Schools, as well as upheaval at the MESD – and the fact that so many incumbents for both are leaving their posts rather than try for re-election — means this ballot could have a long-range impact on Portland K-12 schools.

Ballots are already out. Look for yours, and weigh in on these important issues.

The Skanner News endorses:

For Portland Public Schools Board

Position 1, Julie Esparza Brown. A professor at Portland State University with expertise in special education, Brown is also a third-generation Chicana and expert on multiculturalism. She is endorsed by a long list of city and civic leaders, as well as the Portland Association of Teachers PAC, and the nonprofit edu-

cation advocates Stand for Children.

Position 2, José Gonzalez. While he has not spent his career as a professional school teacher, Gonzalez is the perfect example of a citizen board member who would use his experience in the nonprofit arts world to inform the decisions made at the top of Portland schools. He is organized, he has a vision that dovetails with the ways our community demographics are changing, and his wide-ranging endorsements reflect that: Gonzalez is supported by parents, lawmakers, movers and shakers in our local community who hail from all over the world.

Position 3, Bobbie Regan. This is perhaps our most controversial endorsement. Regan has been on the board already for years, and those years have included some votes that we have disagreed with. But at the same time we see Regan's passion about this nonpaid – and largely thankless – position. With new blood coming to the board, we believe Regan might prove the perfect complement to an influx of new ideas there.

Multnomah Education Service District

Position 6 Stephen Mark Beaudoin. Over the years we have watched Beaudoin evolve from an alternative newspaper reporter to a leader in arts education for people with disabilities. He is the perfect

choice to help build the troubled MESD into a top-notch education agency.

Position 7 Siobhan Burke. Burke bills herself as a mom, but her skills are wide ranging and geared towards the future. With roots in labor union organizing and grassroots campaigning, Burke's current day job is in providing special education services for children. She has a grasp of how the system works from the bigwigs down to the little kids.

Portland Community College Board of Directors

Director Zone 2 Kali Thorne Ladd. As the incumbent candidate, and running unopposed, we do not need to endorse Ladd. But of all of the community leaders in our region, few individuals are as capable of laying out an educational vision for our children's future, and then actually taking the time to build that vision out. Her ability to connect the dots makes Ladd a leader to watch.

Director Zone 3 Michael Sonneleitner. The candidate is a full-time teacher at the community college — so his many years there have given him experience and knowledge for the position. He is endorsed by other rank and file PCC employees, as well as a handful of past presidents including former PCC Cascade President Algie Gatewood. We can't wait to see what it will happen when he gets on the board.

Baltimore: Another Horror Movie Re-run

The movie we are watching in Baltimore is a re-run and a sequel. The price of admission has always been too high, but we continue to pay the exorbitant price, anyway. As the opening line in the old TV show, “Dragnet,” proclaimed, “The story you are about to see is true. The names have been changed to protect the innocent.” In today's society, that second line should say, “The names have been changed to protect the ‘guilty.’”

My 11-year-old nephew, since the age of five or six, has been reciting, verbatim, the words from his favorite movies. He knows the directors, the release dates, and the bios of the stars in those movies. He has seen his favorite movies many times over. He reminds me of Black people, as we watch the same movie over and over, except we do not remember the vital information contained in the movie, and we even forget who the main characters were and the roles they played.

The latest movie being run in Baltimore is a sequel to the ones we watched in Ferguson, Mo. and Staten Island, N.Y. It is a rerun of what we saw in Los Angeles, Cleveland, and North Charleston, S.C. How many times are we going to pay the price of admission to see the same movie without memorizing the lines and learning from them? How many times must we go through the same experience before we change



BLACKONOMICS

James Clingman

our response to it?

Some very interesting and pitiful responses (reviews) have come from some of the “leaders” in Baltimore in the aftermath of Freddie

before the looting and burning started in Baltimore? Were they busy teaching the youth that what took place in the 1960s was detrimental to their neighborhoods, as they now like to say to TV news reporters?

Some of the sanctimonious comments being made by my generation very strongly suggest that even though we have seen this movie many times, we are content to watch it again without having shared its lessons. Is it because we are ashamed of ourselves now? Do we think we are better than our

them. It's so sad to hear our adults crying out, “They need education.” Well, provide them with education. Our youth see many of us as weak and impotent when it comes to protecting them.

We have the resources to provide everything we say our youth need. What must they think of our words, our prayer sessions, our news conferences, our political speeches, and our tepid efforts now to stop and correct their behavior, when we have not used our resources to take care of them? Our answer is to run to those who don't care about them and beg for jobs, food, education, and everything else they need.

Frederick Douglass' words are clear regarding power, but as I always add, a demand not backed-up by power will not come to fruition; and the real power in this country is the almighty dollar. Just look at what happened in Indianapolis when the LGBT folks were upset. They did not burn anything down or throw one brick, because they know that dollars rule the day. Their threats to withdraw their dollars were immediately addressed by the politicians.

People whose families own storefront businesses are very unlikely to throw bricks through the windows and burn them down. Sgt. Joe Friday had another saying in Dragnet: “Just the facts ma'am, just the facts.”

How many times must we go through the same experience before we change our response to it?

Gray's death. The older folks, who decry the violence as “insulting” and “disrespectful” to Freddie's family, are even more disingenuous. They seem to have forgotten about 1968 when their generation, and maybe even some of them, burned down buildings and looted all across this nation, in the aftermath of MLK's assassination. Were their actions deemed insulting and disrespectful to King's family? If so, did that stop them?

The self-righteousness I hear from those in my generation about the youth who are doing the same thing they did in the 1960s is unfortunate. Where were they

youth today? We should be bringing the generations together rather than separating them and acting like we have not been where they are.

Amos Wilson said, “The violently oppressed react violently to their oppression.” He also said, “Just as power corrupts, powerlessness also corrupts.” This is the main plot of our 21st century version of the 1968 movie. Why do we only react to what young people do, rather than work with them every day by giving them alternatives? It irks me to see our grown men saying, “They need jobs.” Well, create some jobs to give