

South Kitsap School Board Student Representatives



**2021 -2022
Student Representative
Jesse La Cross-Lambert, senior**



**2021 -2022
Student Representative
Kai Wilson, sophomore**

The current Student Representatives will serve a one-year term. These first school board student representatives were appointed June 2, 2021.

SK School District's Core Value Statement

The Board recognizes the value of communicating with students and receiving their input and perspectives. To foster this relationship with the students, the Board will set up to two student representatives to sit with the Board as non-voting advisors.

Purpose of Student Representatives

The student representative(s):

- Will serve as a liaison between the Board and both student body associations and individual students; reporting to, and conferring with, individual students and with student councils as those councils deem appropriate.
- Will represent the South Kitsap School District in accordance with the following qualifications, selection procedures, and responsibilities.

Duties & Responsibilities of Student Representative

- Attend special meetings or study sessions if requested, but not Executive Sessions.
- Review the agenda and reading materials prior to all regular board meetings.
- Participate in discussion at regular board meetings when applicable. However, the student representatives **"will not" make motions or vote.**
- Provide reports to the Board during the agenda item titled "School Board Student Representative Report." The reports will include student activities, topics and concerns from the student body to apprise the Board.
- Report Board deliberations and actions to the student bodies as applicable.
- Orient a new student representative.
- Participate in board training session, when invited, such as WSSDA Conference, NSBA Conference, and Legislative Assembly. When these sessions occur on school days, student representatives will follow the established prearranged absence procedures at the high school.

Background on U.S. Student Board Representatives

Many state and local school districts throughout the U.S. have some form of school board student representatives. Education weekly based out of Bethesda, Maryland

published an article on this issue back on June 11, 2019 written by Associate Editor, Stephen Sawchuk. Interestingly enough, Mr. Sawchuk also interviewed Director Berg on his failed Critical Race Theory Resolution.

It is noteworthy to point out that only two states in the U.S. allow student board representatives to vote on school board matters. Washington State does not permit student board representatives to vote on any matters related to, or during any school board meeting. They also cannot bring motions before the board.

There are national discussions as to whether or not these students should remain serving in only advisory roles, or have full responsibilities and privileges of voting along with the elected school board members. Are public school students underrepresented in state and local school districts throughout the U.S. if they are not allowed to vote as though they were "equals" to our elected school board members?

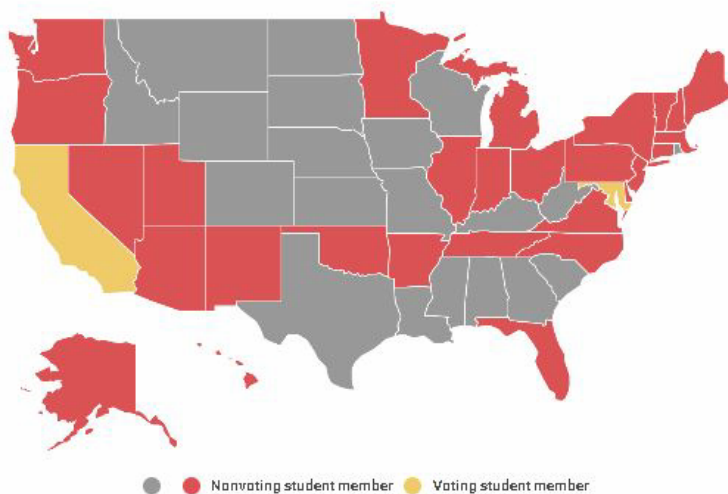
The map below reflects student representatives voting status throughout the U.S. as of June of 2019. Red - no voting, Yellow - voting allowed, Gray - not allowed to vote or no information available at the time this article was published.



Underrepresented?

When students serve on state and local boards of education, they most frequently fill an advisory role, rather than holding voting privileges. The maps below show which states permit students to serve; a gray color means either that students are either not permitted to serve or that the information was unavailable.

Local School Boards



[Download data](#)

Here is a link to that article that appeared in Education Weekly:

<https://www.edweek.org/leadership/few-student-board-members-can-vote-should-that-change/2019/06>

SKSD Board Policies for Student Representatives

- Participate in discussion at regular board meetings when applicable. However, the student representatives **"will not" make motions or vote.**

Is this fair? Could the students in South Kitsap Schools be better represented if student board representatives were allowed to bring motions and/or vote along with the elected members of the school board? Should this matter be brought up for debate on the school board? Should our legislators be contacted regarding this possibility? Moreover, does our community - 'The Stakeholders' - have anything to say about this current policy?

Another issue to come is the fact that Mr. Wilson, Kai's parent, is now an elected board member. Now we have two "Wilson's" on the board. Just how will this work as they both will say the same thing and will reinforce each other's comments? And what of Kai Wilson? What will teachers do knowing that Kai's parent is a board member as is Kai? Will there be preferential treatment given to Kai? Will other students become concerned that Kai has an advantage over them in regards to treatment at the high school? This situation is easily remedied by the elimination of any potential impression of preferential treatment, perhaps by the resignation of Kai from the board.

I believe this is presently a timely issue to be addressed. Why? Because during the November 3, 2021 school board meeting a vote was taken by the board on a motion made to vote on whether or not to return to in person board meetings. **(Note that the board currently has four board directors since the resignation of the board's prior school board chair, Eric Gattenby).**

The vote on whether or not the board should return to in person board meetings failed. Some have declared that it is just too dangerous to be in a room with 'angry' or 'frustrated' community members. They stated that they feel 'unsafe' to attend board meetings in person. Many folks in our community members believe this is untrue, that it is all about the school board not wanting to face our community and answer their questions in person. It has nothing to do with fear of being attacked, or possibly intimidated by community member's comments. During the last board meeting, an individual stated that it **was not** fear of Covid as the reason for not wanting to return to in person meetings.

The vote on this matter was tallied and recorded by Director Berg. Director Berg posted the results of that vote on his private educational website. Director Berg counted one vote to

return to in person meetings, and four votes to not return to in person board meetings. The official minutes of the board meeting have not yet been approved so they have not been published as of 11-07-21.

We pay \$1.1M for a SKSD Security Team who each are prior military and highly capable of restraining any individual at either a board meeting or at a school. However, we have no critical thinkers out there, despite it being one of our values. What would the national news say had they done anything at the board meeting. It would have read "SKSD security members tackle a black individual with a 18 month old baby in his arms and a 7 year old son at his side due to "fear" of board members." Can you imagine the lawsuit in addition to all the political fallout should they have done something? Perhaps this is another reason why school board is unwilling to return to in person meetings.

Our school board appears to lack either the will or training and experience to control any problems that might arise during a meeting. It should be noted that other school district in Kitsap County when faced with 'issues' during in person meetings, they choose to 'take a break', recess from the meeting and then return. And our school board, well, they just stand up and leave the meeting as they did on the meeting held in person on September 15th. But if they are using Zoom, they can just 'push some buttons' and take care of what they consider to be 'problems'. It is notable how the school boards chair smiles every time he tells someone they are done talking, and then tells the Zoom moderator to cut them off.

Here is what currently appears on Director Berg's 'private and educational' website as of November 7, 2021.

November 3, 2021

The Board considered revised Governance Policies and Board / Superintendent Relations Policies developed at October 8th workshop. The matter was postponed until the next meeting. Financial Planning policies were also discussed.

Director Daily's motion to have the Board return to in-person meetings failed 1-4.

It appears that the vote in question was proper in form. Perhaps Director Berg, who acts as the Board Chairman which is the spokesperson for the board, just plain forget that there are only four board members now since Director Gattenby resigned. On the other hand, perhaps something else is going on here. If you watch the video during the November 3rd 2021 board meeting when the vote to return or not return to in person meetings you will see the board chair bring the up motion, and then the vote. This is the vote which he documents failing with a vote of one to return to in person meetings, and four votes to not return to in person meetings.

Here is a sound byte of that vote: https://youtu.be/wrgL62_4AsI

Listen to student representative Wilson's comments: <https://youtu.be/ZOb8Ma4j6BM>

So there 'in lies' the question. Did Director Berg willfully or intentionally post false information on his website about the actual vote, or was it just an honest mistake on his part. Where did he come up with this 'phantom' board members vote? Is it possible that he has counted a student representatives vote. Just what is going on here.

Posting the incorrect vote count on his is private and educational website may not rise to a level of high crimes and misdemeanor, but it clearly demonstrates that he is inconsistent with what he claims are facts, truths, or false statements. Director Berg prides himself on always be right, always telling the truth therefore he believes himself to be untouchable regarding claims by others that he is committing slander, libel, cyber bullying, and even what some might consider to be cyber stalking by his posts on his 'educational' website. In fact, he continues to claim that none of what he prints or says has yet to be proven false. My advice to Director Berg: review the standards of proof used in civil actions. Look up 'by the preponderance of evidence', as applied when attempting to prove innocence or guilt, truth or mistruths, or just plain lies.

How one may 'feel' about claims they may make regarding the voracity of their words, website posts, do nothing to prove fact or for that matter fiction. Mr. Berg seems to forget that when he speaks, he is the chairperson and now the voice of the board to the community; so he get's no free pass as to "it is only my personal opinion". He is the one who tried to censure Director Daily for saying the exact thing that he now does at every opportunity.

And although his website may not be considered official school board actions, his private posts do have an effect on the school board as a whole, on not only the board's reputation but also Director Bergs. If he were truly making an effort to educate our community 'stake holders', why would he post this false vote on his website? Why post any false narratives? So here 'in lies' the question: Does Director Berg willfully and intentionally post false information on his website, or is what he posts just honest mistakes?

Director Berg also made claims (which resulted in yet another food fight between directors) that 'his' changes were developed with the assistance of one other board member. Here are those exchanges: <https://youtu.be/q0v7uCng-Y>

During the November 3rd, 2021 Director Berg stated that the Aspen Group fully supported and was essentially 'totally onboard' with all of the board policies and governance rule changes he proposed to the Aspen Group. For some, Director Berg's efforts look like a rush to

push through changes he wants, changes that he drafted absent the entire board of directors having knowledge of his proposed changes. Fortunately, these changes were set off to be discussed/decided at the next board meeting. Sadly, the Aspen Group does not share the same account of Director Berg's account of what happened between the parties.

About Director Berg's Proposed By Laws and Policy Changes

Many of the proposed changes to policies and bylaws created by Mr. Berg appear designed to further restrict free speech of school board members. One such change is that there will be no further debate on consent items. Consent items include warrants for work (bills) and details of how much was or will be spent, which the takes responsibility for when they approve them to be paid. Would you not want to be able to discuss/debate payments you were making with public money if you were being held responsible? Just who would not want to know or be able to discuss/debate the proper or impropriety of such billings.

There is a separate page on this website titled: 'Another Berg Failure' at this link:

<https://citizensupportingsouthkitsapschooldistrict.com/another-berg-failure.html> There you will find more details regarding the problems that the Aspen Group is experiencing with the current school board chairperson.

Conclusion

The fact that Director Berg again attempted to mute Director Daily is actually another violation of the public meetings act. When directors violate this act, they are held individually liable thus; school legal protections do not apply. They are and would be responsible to pay fines and of course all of the legal fees they might incur. The remainder of the school board learned from the last time Director Berg violated the open public meetings act when he and the other board members voted to mute Director Daily. Apparently burning their hands on the stove the first time was enough for the other board members the first time. Thus, Mr. Berg's motion to again mute Director Daily failed. Some may consider this a 'second strike' for Mr. Berg with this specific Open Public Meetings Act violation.