



January 26, 2021

Seattle School District  
Board of Directors  
P.O. Box 34165  
Seattle, WA 98124

RE: Resolution 2020/21-18 - Transition Seattle Public Schools to 100% renewable energy

Dear Seattle Public Schools Directors:

AIA Seattle strongly supports the Board's proposed Resolution 2020/21-18 to transition Seattle Public Schools' operations off fossil fuels and toward clean, renewable sources of energy. Architects have expertise around the design and construction of buildings that run on clean energy, and we will speak to the sections of the resolution that deal with the District's built environment here.

**AIA Seattle**

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Seattle's buildings are responsible for a third of the city's greenhouse gas emissions – second only to the transportation sector – and buildings are our city's fastest growing source of climate pollution due to population growth. Seattle and Washington state have made commitments to address emissions from buildings by mandating greater energy efficiency and building electrification measures over time, including an executive order signed by Mayor Durkan in 2020 mandating that all city-owned buildings operate without fossil fuels and the city's existing goal to reduce emissions to zero by 2050. This resolution highlights the important role that Seattle Public Schools can take in contributing to Seattle's fight against climate change.

But reducing greenhouse gas emissions is about more than meeting targets. Committing the District to operate free of fossil fuels makes another important commitment by prioritizing the health of students, staff, and parents while positively impacting student outcomes. The health impacts of indoor air pollutants caused by the use of fossil fuels to operate buildings are clear and disturbing. Air pollutants released from fossil fuels harm student respiratory and cardiovascular health, negatively impact mental health, and cause related declines in educational performance. Because these impacts disproportionately impact low-income and BIPOC communities, a commitment to healthier school buildings further centers the District's commitment to equity.

Architects are uniquely positioned to confirm that the technology to build or upgrade buildings to be fossil free, or "zero net carbon," is readily available today. Our members have designed zero net carbon schools in other Washington jurisdictions and have the skills to appraise existing buildings and create healthier solutions for students and staff alike. Typically constructed using heat pump technology, zero net carbon buildings operate at a much lower cost than traditional buildings while offering heating, built-in air conditioning, clean air, and significantly healthier outcomes.

Thank you for your work on this resolution and for considering the role that healthy buildings can play in student lives and performance across the District. We urge you to support it so that the District can begin to plan for a cleaner, healthier future.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brendan Connolly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Brendan Connolly, AIA  
President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Richmond". The signature is cursive and stylized, with a prominent initial "L".

Lisa Richmond  
Executive Director