



April 26, 2021

***Salem-Keizer NAACP Rebukes School Board Candidate
Statement on Race Appropriation***

The Salem-Keizer NAACP rebukes the recent comments made by School Board Candidate Linda Farrington whereby she claimed that although she is a White woman, she feels Asian. These inappropriate comments come at a time when violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) is front and center in the national conversation and cultural awareness is as critical as ever.

During the April 14, 2021 South Central Neighborhood Association meeting, Candidate for School Board Zone 3, Linda Farrington, stated, "Actually, I'm not white like you are, I'm, I'm in my heart Asian because I was born and raised for 12 years in Thailand." We recognize and expect that some learning and appreciation for other cultures may be gathered from living with them; however, that experience does not allow one the ability to claim a different race than the one they experience. This harmful rhetoric actively marginalizes the trauma those in the AAPI community continue to experience in a system designed to work against them for the benefit of others.

We must hold ourselves, and especially our leaders, to a higher standard. Someone who is blind to the damage this rhetoric poses has no place leading the second largest school system in Oregon: A school system full of rich diversity in language and in culture. We expect the Candidate for School Board Zone 3 to apologize and learn from this incident or consider rescinding her candidacy so others, who have not made such egregious remarks, may have the opportunity to lead instead.