

The Portland Public Schools Board of Education (board) established the Community Budget Review Committee (CBRC) to perform the following functions:

- Review, evaluate and make recommendations to the board on the Superintendent's Proposed Budget

- Monitor and advise the board on the allocation and expenditure of Local Option Levy funds

- Provide and strengthen the link between the district and school students and families.

The CBRC is a group of 12 volunteers representing a diverse group of parents, staff, community members and two students who give voice to the diverse interests of the PPS communities in the budget process. This year, significant budget reductions and a shortened budget review timeline has made it challenging to provide thoughtful analysis and feedback to guide the board,

Smaller classes benefit all students, but particularly those who need more learning interventions or are below grade level. The increase in class sizes is concerning and will make it difficult to make progress on all of the board goals. If it is not possible to maintain class sizes, which are in many cases not in alignment with the Quality Education Model (QEM)

CBRC acknowledges the limitations of the district to meet the pressing needs of all students with limited funds from the state and additional budget challenges due to contractual obligations. We recommend that PPS and all PPS supporters continue to advocate for protecting and increasing the K-12 budget for Oregon school districts to achieve the QEM.

This report identifies trends CBRC observed in the 2023-24 budget cycle and continuing into the future that will mean service cuts and impact the attainment of the board goals. CBRC

Based on projections for 2025-26 and beyond, which PPS's current trajectory would deplete reserves if no additional state funding is allocated. We recommend that PPS

HE Ö^~^!/^â Tæâ}c^}æ}&^ [- ÚÚÚ Ú&@ [[]•

PPS reports that deferred maintenance for all District buildings grew in excess of \$400 Million in FY 2022-23. The cumulative total for deferred maintenance now exceeds \$1 Billion.

Ü^& [{ { ^ } âæcâ [] •K

The district should analyze and address these maintenance needs more aggressively in the 2024-25 budget cycle and develop a long term plan to implement building upgrades. This plan could include options for leasing or selling properties not currently housing students to offset deferred maintenance costs on existing properties which house students.

The district should seek support from local and state agencies and program upgrades such as weatherization and air conditioning that will help prepare learning environments and mitigate the effects of climate change. With climate change we can anticipate more extreme weather and the district should prioritize addressing spaces that are too hot or cold to learn.

The district should prioritize repair, maintenance and upgrades to existing buildings over new construction in the upcoming bond proposals.

The district should reserve additional funds in the annual budget for repairs due to building failures especially in light of recent weather events. Budgetary challenges presented by the need to repair recent winter storm damage and resulting delays have directly and negatively impacted student learning.

*IE Ü^~ [] { • c [c@^ Ó ~â *^c Ú [] &^ ••*

CBRC supports the District's continued efforts to make the budget process more accessible and transparent to the general public, especially as we are faced with difficult decisions affecting class sizes and service levels. CBRC recognizes the efforts of central office leadership to begin this year's budget process by gathering input from school administrators in the form of a survey to guide budgetary decisions.

Ü^& [{ { ^ } âæcâ [] •K

We repeat our request from last year that PPS share individual school level summary budget documents to individual schools to increase transparency and encourage school-level stakeholders to engage.

CBRC and the public would benefit from additional time to review the proposed budget and provide analysis. Nine days to review and provide a meaningful analysis of a more than 500 page of budget content is a heavy lift for volunteers.

We reiterate that School Continuous Improvement Plans (SCIP) and outcomes should be shared publicly.

ÍÈ Ô [] câ } ~^â Æ []]â&æcâ [] [- Üæ&âæ| Ò ~ ~âc ^ Ú [] &âæ| R ~ •câ&^ Š^ } •

We encourage the district to continue embedding equity—through an intersectional lens—into budget creation and implementation, as we believe it allows room for students to feel represented in multiple aspects of their PPM report. We

fe
fee

to A

b

134.8 FTE, a 108% percent increase). Staffing also increased for student-facing positions critical to the attainment of the board goals, such as School Counselors (from 143.7 to 161.2, a 12 percent increase). FTE for library and media services will decline considerably with the new budget. Specifically, FTE for these services will decline by 31 percent in elementary schools (from 45.35 FTE to 31.30 FTE), 34.5 percent in middle schools (from 15.7 FTE to 10.3 FTE), and 24.6 percent in high schools (from 14.2 FTE to 10.7 FTE).

Recommendations:

Prioritizing student-facing positions and continued analysis of contracts for services that may be redundant to work assigned to district-funded positions. Analysis of all investments in indirect (not student-facing) services should preclude any further cuts to direct service, student-facing positions. Reconsider library staffing cuts at the k-5 level and maintain present hours and library services by reducing budgets elsewhere. See our evaluation of the Board goal for third grade reading for details. Allocation additional cuts to non-direct service Administrators to minimize cuts to student facing and instructional positions/ licensed staff.

*HÈ V@^ Ô [] cã } ^ã Þ^ã ~ [! Öã~^/ ^ } cãæc^ã Ûcæ~ã } * Æ|| [&æcã [] Óæ•^ã [] Q } & / ^æ•^ã Ûc ^ã^ } c Þ^ã*

The equity allocation of 8% of the staffing model at targeted schools has held steady since FY16-17. CBRC continues to support this investment and notes that the visibility in the Budget Book, Volume Two, is a valuable tool to demonstrate a base level of transparency to the community. For the 2024-25 budget the equity allocation has been cut in half, from 8% to 4%. If not bolstered by support in other forms this is a significant change that will impact the schools who serve the highest percentages of Combined Underserved Students.

The equity allocation basis allocations to the schools with the highest needs based on MAP testing data is an important change. In past years, school administrators were able to determine how to use the equity allocations. This provided flexibility to address needs at the school level. Especially in schools with lower enrollment, school administrators sometimes used equity funding to decrease class sizes or eliminate blended grades sections. Sometimes they used equity funding to address cuts to core enrichment programs. Reducing the equity allocation will decrease the level of responsiveness the school administrator will have to their school’s needs in any given budget year. as well as the revision to the equity allocation in high schools so to be based solely on students directly certified by the state to receive free meals is also an important change.

Û^& [{ { ^ } ãæcã [] •K

CBRC reiterates the need for more accurate data on returns on investments of the equity allocations to determine the impacts of such investments over time, allowing for course corrections in how these funds are spent to respond to changing student needs and improve outcomes for students. providing school-level staff allocation lacks the transparency into intended uses and accountable outcomes that we wish to see. We recommend that PPS track and assess how the allocation of school-based interventionists to the schools with the highest needs based on MAP testing data impacts

outcomes.

We recommend that the district work closely with school administrators during the time of transition from an 8% equity allocation to a 4% equity allocation to ensure that schools serving the highest populations of combined underserved students do not incur staffing cuts because of the shift in equity allocations.

*IÈ Ù~ { { ^É æ-c^/ •&@[[[æ}å •] ^&âæ|â : ^å | ^æ/ }â } * • ~ }]] [/c •*

We applaud the district's continuation of summer programs to support students with lagging skills which were formerly supported by ESSER funds. We support efforts to close educational opportunity gaps during summer or other intercessions and continued investment in this area. We recognize the importance of providing Summer Acceleration Academy (SAA) for our students with the highest learning needs, not just those scoring above the 10th percentile on certain academic tests.

We acknowledge this year's Community Based Organization (CBO) requests for increased funding or the continuation of funding lev e them in support for BO rew o of in

M eer o o Ñ AO rcontd s unitV á

BOnâpercf SERem o uSSiPm o wtit ontc

as this supports a foundational competency and direct board goal.

Û^&[{ {^}âæcâ [] •K

Similar to other public school systems, PPS was unable to address all the educational and social-emotional needs of all PPS students which have exponentially increased since the pandemic. We commend the investment so that all comprehensive middle schools have a position to support behavior and climate and the expansion of the rapid response team.

We request clarification if there is a minimum counselor FTE for K-5 and 6-8 schools. In past budget years a minimum allocation was shared. This year, the allocation shared only mentions that counselors are determined on a 0.2 FTE basis. (pages 213 and 215)

Û^&[{ {^}âæcâ [] •K

Maintain current levels of targeted investment in direct educational supports (primarily teaching staff, counselors, and educational assistants) in 2024-25, especially in direct educational supports (teaching staff) to make progress toward academic recovery.

If possible, reduce the counselor to student ratios to no more than 1 counselor per 100 students at all K-5s, K-8s, and middle schools serving the highest percentages of CU students.

Û^&[{ {^}âæcâ [] •K

V[{ ^c c@^ â ~â *^c /^â ~câ [] • } ^^â^â ~[! GEG IEG / ââ •c /â&cË , ââ^ æ} â â} & [/] [/æcâ } * c@^ } ^ , & [/æ&c /^ ~â /^ { ^ } c •É c@^ /^ @æc^ â^^ } • [{ ^ & @æ } * ^ • â } c@^ •] ^ & âæ / ^â ~æcâ [] • cæ~â } * æ || [æcâ [] •É V@^ • ^ & @æ } * ^ • æ / ^ / ^ • ~ |câ } * â } æ } â } & / ^æ • ^ â } • & @ [[]] • ^ & @ [[] * â • c ØVÔÉ Û] ^ ^ & @ Šæ } * ~æ * ^ Úæc@ [[] * â • c ØVÔÉ æ } â c^æ&@^ / ØVÔÉ

ÓÓÛÔ æ [• [] [c^ • /^â ~câ [] [~ & |æ • • â - â ^ â • cæ ~ ~ [/ Û] ^ & âæ | Òâ ~æcâ [] É

Û^&[{ {^}âæcâ [] •K

Review reductions in special education staff to assess whether current levels meet highest needs under the new model. Assess benefits of reducing FTE increases for school psychologists and speech language pathologists to offset reductions in classified staff for special education. Monitor the shift towards the “neighborhood model” of services from the “regional model” to determine how students’ needs are being met and the impact of the changes in the model to the whole system.

Û^&[{ {^}âæcâ [] •K

Literacy is foundational for all other board goals and key to accelerate achievement for students of color in order to eliminate persistent gaps in reading achievement across the board. The board’s goal is “to close the opportunity and outcome gaps in third grade reading between students of color and their white peers. We are encouraged by the investment in early literacy coaching, but question the lack of high dosage tutoring and Learning Acceleration Specialists

for grades K-2 to help students reach proficiency and prevent achievement gaps.

With the additional revenue provided by the state’s Early Literacy Grant, this budget includes 6 added FTE for Instructional Coaching focused on Early Literacy and 7 added FTE in the form of Academic Interventionists to provide direct support to K-3 emerging readers across the district.

We would like to emphasize the importance of library services. The proposed budget implies that libraries at the middle and high school level will be closed for up to three hours a day; at the elementary level, this would mean libraries would be closed multiple days a week. Libraries’ responsibilities extend beyond just managing the library; they meet with teachers and collaborate with them on unit plans, they attend academic and administration meetings, in addition, with no assistants, they would be in charge of checking in and out all textbooks. This is a significant portion of their work; cutting library assistants means increased work loads and decreased library hours.

The library assistant cuts present significant equity concerns if some schools are able to fundraise for librarians and other schools are not.

Ü^&[{ { ^ } âæcâ [] •K

Maintain access to libraries at all schools full-time, by staffing libraries at the state’s QEM, which recommends one full-time licensed librarian and one full-time media assistant.

Ü^&[{ { ^ } âæcâ [] • ï- æââîcâ [] æ| ~ } âî } * à^&[{ ^ • æçæî/æà/ ^K

Allocate more direct service FTE to early literacy in grades K-2 to achieve the board goal to “ensure that all students are reading on grade level by the end of their 3rd grade year.”

Maintain or reduce class sizes from 2023-24 level for all kindergarten through 2nd grade classes.

Maintain 1.0 EA allocation for small group instruction and targeted early literacy support for kindergarten classrooms at schools serving a population of 40% or more Combined Historically Underserved students

Expand high dosage tutoring to serve students starting in the 3rd quarter of the kindergarten year, instead of starting high-dosage tutoring at grade 3.

Increase the number of Learning Acceleration Specialists and allocate the FTE at the schools serving the highest percentages of Combined Historically Underserved students with targeted intervention support in grades K-3 to address early literacy achievement gaps.

JÈ Pî *@ Ü&@ [[[Ö'æâ ~æcâ [] }

We recognize the district is trying to continue to improve on the budget’s goals, to reduce disparities, racial inequities, and inadequate funding of programs to our high school graduates. Based upon the district’s website, graduation rates in 2023 were down for underserved populations with American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiiin/Pacific Islander, and Black/African American students all trending down. We noted that Evening Scholars staff were funded on ESSER and will continue on the General Fund.

Ü^&[{ { ^ } âæcâ [] •

CBRC has welcomed the opportunity to work in concert with the district during this process. We recognize the difficult budgeting decisions and investments that the district needs to make in order to have a budget reflective of the overall PPS community. CBRC is appreciative of the district's efforts to continue growing and learning with students, staff, and community members to create a budget that is increasingly more reflective of its own mission of racial equity, inclusion, rigor and high quality academic learning.

The following CBRC members respectfully submit this report to the PPS Board of Education:

Karanja Crews
Aaron Cronan
Mo Damtew (Student Member)
Mariah Hudson (Co-Chair)
Dashiell Elliott
Tasz Ferguson (Co-Chair)
Paul Freese
Jen Gray-O'Connor
Grace Groom (Vice Chair)
Sonya Harvey
Roger Kirchner
Stephan Lindner (Vice Chair)
Adriel Person
Luke Susswood (Student Member)

*The committee began meeting virtually in November of 2023 and convened a total of seven times as part of 2024-25 budget development. The committee also met once in September to provide feedback on the 2023-24 budget amendment, as requested by the board. CBRC received presentations from Jonathan Garcia, former Chief of Staff, Myong Leigh, Interim Deputy Superintendent of Business and Operations, Darcy Soto, Director of Learning Acceleration, and Mary Kane, Senior Legal Counsel, among other district staff. The committee engaged in one work session with the board focused on 2024-25 budget development. Myong Leigh and PPS staff contributed greatly to the committee's preparation for the annual budget review. As in previous years, there are limitations around CBRC's ability to provide a comprehensive report and recommendations to the board, including the timeline for review.

**CBRC wishes to note that in the prior year budget conversations with staff we repeatedly asked a

to n a ocused oÄ / cs / Lke tim