



**PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS & ENGAGEMENT**  
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**Date:** January 12, 2020

**To:** Superintendent Guadalupe Guerrero

**From:** Shanice Brittany Clarke, Director of Community Engagement

**CC:** Stephanie Soden-Back, Executive Chief of Staff  
Jonathan García, Chief Engagement Officer  
Dr. Shawn Bird, Chief of Schools  
Keeley Simpson, Regional Superintendent

**Subject:** Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School: Mascot Naming Process

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### **BACKGROUND**

Prior to the establishment of Administrative Directive 2.20.011 in June 2016, the PPS Board of Education adopted Resolution #5313, responding to members of the King School community to re-establish their school name to Martin Luther King Jr. School, honoring the man for whom the school was named and who envisioned an excellent education for all children. In the process of renaming the school, parent-driven community engagement began in the school community to reclaim their school culture and identity. Since 2015, Principal Sage supported parents, students, and community members through these efforts. Principal Sage and a former Communications staff member supported a naming process that completed in January 2019, but was not approved or adopted by PPS. On September 10, 2019, the PPS Board of Education adopted Resolution #5961, permitting a correction of the current school name to be Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School, where Principal Sage re-initiated a naming process with the newly hired Director of Community Engagement.

### **The D.R.E.A.M.**

Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was an activist and leader in the Civil Rights Movement. During the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in August 1963, he delivered a speech referred to as the 'I Have a Dream Speech'. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was later assassinated in 1968, and the school identified its name following this moment in history. The Dream Dr. King referred to in his speech called for liberation, freedom, hope, leadership, and transformation, which are ideals the school community actively wishes to center on to represent themselves.

Currently, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School's official mascot is the Lions. Dr. MLK Jr. Elementary School seeks to formally officiate the mascot to 'The Dream', in effort to create an intentional and transformative brand for the school community.

Additionally, the school chooses not to personify their mascot, in an effort to avoid referring to the mascot as 'The Dreamers'.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

In accordance with Portland Public Schools (PPS) Board Policy 2.20.010-P “Naming School Property,” the Board of Education is responsible for the naming of all school district properties.

As an accompanied administrative directive, **2.20.011-AD** “Procedures for Naming School District Property” describes the procedure to consider renaming of school **”Naming and Renaming School facilities, focus options, programs, conversions, mergers, reconfigurations, mascots”**, which is a two-part processing warranting a board approved name from a community engagement process, to be followed by a replicated community engagement process for the visual brand identity will be presented to the Superintendent for approval.

Task from AD 2.20.011	PPS Action
<p>At the direction of the Superintendent, the Community Engagement Department will establish a timeline for the naming process and will work with the school principal to form a naming committee.</p> <p>The committee will be facilitated by a member of the Community Engagement Department and shall include the school principal and representatives from the school’s community including current students, staff (at least one teacher and one classified employee), community partners, alumni, and any other key stakeholders. The Community Engagement Department will work with the principal to determine how representatives are selected for the committee.</p> <p>The charge of the committee will be to solicit input from the greater school community and to make a recommendation to the Superintendent for consideration. This will be a two-part process, to first establish a name, followed by the development of brand identity elements. Both steps will follow the same process.</p>	<p>After the Community Engagement Department received approval, the Director of Community Engagement worked with Principal Sage in September 2019 to re-establish a refined naming process timeline and committee. The committee consisted of student stakeholder groups, teachers, community partners, parents, and one classified staff. Previous advocates following the initial name change in 2015 were nominated for the committee by the Principal, among other school stakeholders to include additional staff. The committee chose to honor the previous work with engaging students, families, parents, and community members.</p> <p>Engagement took place with families in Fall 2019, and families engaged community with students again in January 2020. The formats the committee utilized were through community-based organizations, parent meeting visits, newsletters, events, and student presentations.</p> <p>The naming process was grounded in the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The engagement facilitated a larger inquiry of support or opposition to titling the mascot, ‘The Dream.’ No opposition was found within the school community during engagement.</p>
<p>The committee, working with the Community</p>	<p>With the leadership of Principal Sage in</p>

<p>Engagement Department, will notify the staff, students, parents, and community groups of affected schools about the naming process. The committee will ensure a process for all interested parties to provide input. The committee will ensure that the name selected meets the criteria outlined in Board Policy 2.20.020-P. Consideration will be given to the historical background of the name to ensure that it is not associated with activities that are in conflict with the District's mission, goals, and policy of non-discrimination.</p>	<p>consultation with the Community Engagement Department, notification of the processes was delivered through newsletters, class visits, school group announcements, and events. The Dream of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. may empower the sense of self for many students, and aligns with the District's vision to prepare students to lead a more socially just world.</p>
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**TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION / EVALUATION**

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School has already begun a cultural shift by using language with the D.R.E.A.M. (Determined, Respectful, Empathetic, Accepting, Making a Difference), and would be prepared to immediately adopt the mascot title.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Fiscal impacts as a result of the mascot name change are the responsibility of the school, as outlined in AD 2.20.011.

**BOARD OPTION/STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

After a 5 year interactive naming process with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School community, the naming committee wishes to recommend changing the title of the mascot from the 'Lions', to "The Dream" to the Superintendent.

After approval, the second component of the process will initiate to develop brand identity elements, as outlined in AD 2.20.011.

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*As a member of the PPS Executive Leadership Team, I have reviewed this staff report.*

\_\_\_\_\_ (Initials)

**ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Dr. MLK Jr. School, Mascot Naming Process Packet



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# Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School Mascot Identification Committee

MARCH 3, 2020

# Background and Proposal



The Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School community has deep ties to the name of their school, and KGW also reported on the name being identified weeks

after the civil rights leader Dr. King was assassinated in 1968. The Oregon Department of Education initiated a change to shorten the name of in fall 2015, which resulted in some confusion in the greater community since the name serves as a legacy to many.

Students helped lead a process with various meetings and sessions meant to reclaim the name of the school, later joined by parents, staff, neighborhood groups, and community members. 'Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.' was confirmed as widely supported by Principal Sage in winter of 2018, and soon after, the former lead from Communications worked with the principal to support the process. In late 2018, a mascot naming process initiated with the same school community leaders, who came to identify their brand and mascot to be "The Dream". During a school event Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day in January 2019, the refreshed name was announced and celebrated.

## **Proposal/Recommendation**

After a 5 year interactive naming process with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School community, the school wishes to change its mascot from the 'Lions', to "The D.R.E.A.M."

## MASCOT COMMITTEE: A

NAMING PROCESS BEGAN IN 2015, PRIOR TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE 2.20.011. THE A.D. INDICATES THE COMMITTEE COMPOSITION SHALL INCLUDE STUDENTS, STAFF (AT LEAST 1 TEACHER AND 1 CLASSIFIED STAFF), COMMUNITY, ALUMNI, AND OTHERS.

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### Committee Members:

- Principal
  - Dr. MLK Jr. Students and Families
  - Community Members
  - Dr. MLK Jr. PTA Members
  - Current Dr. MLK Jr. Partners
  - SUN Site Manager/SEI Staff
  - Department of Community Engagement
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## NAMING COMMITTEE CHARGE:

THE CHARGE OF THE COMMITTEE WILL BE TO SOLICIT INPUT FROM THE GREATER SCHOOL COMMUNITY TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO THE SUPERINTENDENT FOR CONSIDERATION. THIS WILL BE A TWO-PART PROCESS TO ESTABLISH A NAME - FOLLOWED BY THE DEVELOPMENT OF BRAND IDENTITY ELEMENTS (AD 2.20.011).

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**Principal:** Meeting and Process  
Co-facilitator

**Community Members:** Uplift historical background in connection with school and district.

**Department of Community Engagement:** Assist Principal in adhering to District Policy, Administrative Directive, and creating materials as necessary.

**All Committee Members:** Collaborate and participate as resources for the school community during the naming process.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN:

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- ✓ Solicit input from the greater school, with the advisement of the Department of Community Engagement
- ✓ Conduct feedback at parent and community group meetings
- ✓ Outreach to community partners
- ✓ School-based events
- ✓ School community newsletters
- ✓ Student presentations in classes
- ✓ Student in-class activities

