



## South East Guiding Coalition

Updated April 28, 2022

### Initial Feedback: July-August 2021

One-on-one executive conversations with 335 parents/guardians who have current or soon to be middle school-aged children in and reside within the southeast portion of the Portland Public School District helped provide us with initial insight.

RACE/ETHNICITY	COMPLETE INTERVIEWS
Asian	39
Black	40
Latino	91
Multiple/Asian/White	24
Multiracial	28
Native	3
Pacific Islander	1
White	109



RESPONSE	ASIAN	BLACK	LATINO	MULTIPLE/ ASIAN/ WHITE	MULTI- RACIAL	NATIVE	PACIFIC ISLANDER	WHITE	TOTAL
Quality of the school and their teachers	<b>35.9%</b>	<b>50.0%</b>	<b>53.8%</b>	<b>50.0%</b>	<b>39.3%</b>	33.3%	0.0%	<b>54.1%</b>	<b>49.6%</b>
Focus programs/ clubs/ opportunities	25.6%	22.5%	17.6%	29.2%	17.9%	33.3%	0.0%	22.9%	<b>21.8%</b>
Racial and economic diversity of classmates	7.7%	20.0%	6.6%	12.5%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	16.5%	<b>12.5%</b>
Safety/ security	15.4%	7.5%	14.3%	4.2%	21.4%	0.0%	<b>100%</b>	8.3%	<b>11.6%</b>
Quality of their education/ curriculum	15.4%	10.0%	11.0%	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	10.1%	<b>10.4%</b>
Proximity to our home/ walkability	10.3%	7.5%	8.8%	8.3%	10.7%	0.0%	0.0%	10.1%	<b>9.3%</b>
Don't know/ Refused	10.3%	10.0%	7.7%	0.0%	3.6%	<b>66.7%</b>	0.0%	5.5%	<b>7.2%</b>
Same school as they have attended. I do not want them to change	10.3%	7.5%	8.8%	4.2%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	5.5%	<b>6.9%</b>
Go to the same school as their nearby neighborhood friends	12.8%	5.0%	3.3%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.3%	<b>6.0%</b>

Full Initial Report: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qVT9idXnOChYH4tIMzQCaHI94dn9hB1z/view>



## Ideas and Input: September-October 2021

To promote authentic engagement, a race-based affinity model supported hearing open thoughts and experiences from students and families in the Southeast impacted by the Phase 2 process throughout September 2021. Recognizing the impact of potential outcomes, we encouraged families from Lane, Creative Science, Harrison Park, Woodstock, and beyond to participate before early decision-making in the process.

- Lane Middle School
  - Black families
  - Asian families
  - Latino/a/x families
  - Staff of color
- General Sessions
  - Families of color one mile from Lane or Harrison Park
  - Spanish Language
  - Chinese Language
- Harrison Park
  - Black families
  - Chinese families
  - Latino/a/x
  - Russian families
  - Somali families
  - Staff of color
- Creative Science School
  - Families of color

## Hopes and Aspirations

- Develop thoughtful long-term solutions instead of “quick fix” band aid approaches.
- The goal of increasing demographic diversity at the affected schools (including at the elementary level) should officially be part of the SEGC’s charge.
- Identify strategies for actively recruiting and retaining BIPOC teachers, administrators, and staff at PPS schools.
- Equalize distribution of programs, including providing age-appropriate elective options to middle grade students in
- K-8 facilities and expanding dual language programs across schools.
- Promote culturally centered schools that provide a sense of welcoming and belonging to all students and families, including immigrant communities.
- Invest in effective teaching and learning practices, such as project-based learning, to position all students for a successful transition to high school.
- Support the physical, social and emotional needs of all students by providing fairly distributed resources across schools to meet students’ basic needs and ensure that every student arrives ready to learn.



## Doubts and Fears

- BIPOC students/families will feel devalued or excluded.
- Additional burdens will be placed on families that are already marginalized.
- Loud voices will threaten to derail the SEGC's work.

## Key Themes from Listening & Learning Sessions:

<https://www.pps.net/cms/lib/OR01913224/Centricity/Domain/265/21-1007%20SEGC%20Key%20L%20and%20L%20Themes.pdf>

## Additional Feedback from Atkinson:

- “The Immersion program at Atkinson is tremendously successful for the students in the Immersion program, as well as those in the neighborhood program. It offers all students the chance to be in a school with a very strong sense of community where they are exposed to different cultures and perspectives. It would be a shame to end these benefits of the co-located program at Atkinson.”
- “My family and child have started to build relationships and community at Atkinson after a rough year of isolation. To hear parents discuss making the difficult choice to discontinue participation in the dual language immersion if it moves to another school breaks my heart. I know it will break our children's hearts to lose those relationships. The benefits of keeping this community together, of keeping diversity within this neighborhood and the value it brings MUST outweigh the reasons PPS has given regarding resources. There are other ways we can solve that problem”
- “Our native Spanish speakers are loud and clear in their opposition to a move to a whole-DLI model. Their are concerns about segregation and safety and loss of community. To continue with such a plan leaving our community unheard would be paternalistic and harmful and racist. Please listen to our families.”
- “Community is the heart of our program. It's not possible to simply package it up and move it somewhere else. What makes Atkinson successful will not be the same somewhere else. I fear that the District will realize their mistake too late - and our community will be the one that suffers.”
- “I appreciate that the district wants to have improved utilization of their resources, but I can't imagine that it outweighs the benefits that exist today in thriving schools with neighborhood+DLI, and the major impact that this has on all of the families, segregating to a single location, away from rest of neighborhood programs.”

## Action and Accountability: December 2021

Specific and targeted spaces that continue the race-based affinity model were made available for direct input on proposed scenarios.

- Black, Indigenous & Students of Color
- Spanish-Language
- Mandarin-Language
- Black, Indigenous, & People of Color
- PAT General Session



- Russian-Language
- Somali-Language
- Vietnamese-Language
- Cantonese-Language

As a result of this engagement, the Southeast Guiding Coalition split into groups to review the raw data and determine common themes, new information received, and who we are missing from at the December 16, 2021 public meeting.

#### Group 1 Themes (Clackamas)

- Continuing to hear impact of disruption to school communities, especially now
- Kellogg has faced upheaval and is concerned about further change to Spanish DLI, community feels let down and that change is disrespectful
- People share resistance to change in a clear way
- Hesitation from families who may possibly move to a lower performing school
- Dominant narratives are strong, and there is a hesitancy to voice unpopular opinions
- Communities may struggle from a mismatch in program movement, impacting kids of color and low SES kids significantly

#### Group 2 Themes (Columbia)

- Middle school consolidation is welcomed but limits access to programs due to location
- Lack of understanding around transportation accessibility, and how they will be affected by feeder patterns
- Creative Science needs clarity from PPS moving forward
- The feeling in the room seemed that most affluent schools are being protected from disruption, and there is a concern on “who isn’t impacted” by the process
- Harrison Park seemed more engaged in Phase 1, but neighborhood families are feeling heard from their advocacy on remaining together
- Lent and Harrison Park voices need more representation

#### Group 3 Themes (Willamette)

- What is meant by “equity”?
- Presence of frustration and mistrust with the process, with the open house seeming contentious
- Need to hear from Lent and Harrison Park families
- Arleta community is invested in staying together
- Community wants to understand why inner Southeast schools are not being heard
- Voices at Woodstock Chinese DLI prefer program co-location
- Difficult to make judgements without community knowledge of high school implications



- Excitement that Bridger could have multiple neighborhood strands

## Phase 2 Additional Engagement

### Late January 2022 to Present

The engagement elicited feedback from roughly 60 community members regarding draft proposals to balance enrollment in South East Portland schools, and took place through focus groups, phone calls, and text messages. Phonebanking continues with families in early February.

#### *Languages*

Engagement opportunities were offered in Vietnamese and Mandarin.

#### *Summary of Additional Engagement*

To incorporate more representation of voices, especially those who are disproportionately impacted by the proposed changes, additional community engagement was conducted with targeted school communities. A focus was on neighborhood program family input, including those who are at schools with a co-located model.

#### **Question 1: How do you define success? What are barriers to success? How does school play a part in that?**

Lent, Harrison Park

- Experienced administrators who set learning outcomes set by the school help my child's behavior
- Language is a barrier to success at school. Parents still need a lot of support from school
- Friends and teachers have a big influence on children. Family and kids need attention from staff.
- Access to after school activities like chess club and social activities help support success
- Concern about diverse kids going to Kellogg without the support they need

Bridger, Marysville

- Science, reading, and arts curriculum
- A strong support system and social encouragement of students
- Strong support of Bridger becoming Creative Science School
- Teachers and Marysville principal caring for each student is recognized

#### **Feedback on DLI Impacts in Scenarios**

- Whole school model is okay if the diversity of students in co-located models is maintained
- "It would be awesome" (to have a whole school DLI at Lent)
- Strong support of whole school DLI at Lent
- Some disagreement with whole school model from neighborhood Lent families
- A large amount of parents express a preference for DLI programs remaining at Harrison Park



- Neighborhood Families are feeling heard at Harrison Park, and express value in multiple options
- Enrollment forecasts aren't capturing the new construction & open homes waiting to be purchased or rented in the neighborhood--it feels like the projection might be overly conservative especially once the HP facilities have been refreshed.
- Preference to have one DLI program at Harrison Park so school isn't too populated and administrators can build more relationships with students
- Both great support for whole school Spanish DLI, and resistance from other families for this option

## April Phonebanking

To honor our commitment to continuous engagement with stakeholders across the system, phone calls were provided to the targeted groups of families at previously identified schools.

### Bridger Phonebanking

- Families work hard to transport children to school, and value the immersion program but they just can't have students far away. They think she might learn more only in English, so it is not too bad. Was aware of the convos happening in the community and had wanted to stay in the program, but understands decision are made "at the higher levels" and they will learn to live with it.
- One family expressed dislike of the proposal, but does not see another option. She would prefer to stay in the Spanish immersion.
- We have three generations that have graduated from the Bridger Immersion program. The big concern is the distance. if the school is too big, or the classes are too small.
- Important to remain at Bridger. Bridger is the neighborhood school for many families, and will likely stay there and be part of the new program.
- "Biggest concerns are that teachers and principal would travel with the program. Concerned that rumors are that principals at Lent do not remain more than 2-3 years. Rumors are that the PTA is not that involved as at Bridger. Wants kids to stay in the immersion program so this will be the priority. Wants the district to focus on making the new program a success and she will be involved in Lent. "
- "The district will make the decisions regardless of what I say, I do not want to program to change." She currently works close to Bridger and is concerned because she does not drive so wants to be close to the school. Her daughter is connected to the school because her sisters have been going there. Can't decide between the importance of staying with the immersion program and distance from the school and should not have to decide. Feels connected to the Bridger community, teachers and principal.
- Multiple families also expressed not feeling worried about the changes, said child was older and would not necessarily be affected by the changes
- Would like to stay at Bridger, has established relationships with students and teachers and the comfortability in the school as a whole and in the community.

### Lent Phonebanking

- Would like extra help--would like an IEP review so she can get extra help.
- Family indicated not be affected



- Family express interest in continuing to go to Kellogg

#### Lent Recommendation Meeting: Parent and Student Feedback

- Parents express high value for cultural learning and connections in a co-location program. “To me it’s better to have a dual identity at Lent”
- Kids should not have to go on a bus and go further, and we prefer this location
- “We are living in a country where we are so polarized, and our schools are wonderful breeding grounds to teach tolerance”. “Animosity between parents of both programs exists, as DLI parents are more active here”
- We are concerned this community is being left behind
- Does Bridger or Atkinson have 2 strands of each class, have we seen success in similar proposed changes?
- Students Speakers:
  - “I don’t want to switch because i’ve been here since kindergarten”
  - “We shouldn’t remove anyone based off of the language they want to speak”
  - “Teachers moving isn’t helpful, and it would make them unhappy”
  - We love Lent school because Lent is our community
- Parent expressed her child went to a similar co-located model school, and resulted in a high social benefit in their lives
- Stairstepping and phasing out English program was recommended by a parent
- “Its not an equitable solution at all. We care about where teachers would end up. “Why would we segregate and think that is an appropriate solution?” Neighborhood kids should be able to go to their neighborhood schools
- “Teachers and families bought their houses close to the school. I am against segregation, it should be all together.”
- Lack of support for admin leads to parents not wanting to enroll
- Most diverse school community doesn’t deserve to be shuffled around, we choose to be a part of this community, and PPS needs to know what they are doing when they ask people to uproot from a community they are a part of
- Teachers can collaborate regardless of DLI or Neighborhood
- Parents want better teacher retention
- “We have activities here that brings kids together”
- Kids love being in an inclusive environment of language, and encourages Neighborhood program students to learn
- Neighborhood program has majority of black and brown students, and moving them away is a detriment to this community
- Concern for students who are beginning Lent next year, and would have to change the next