



PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
OFFICE OF CHIEF OF STAFF

501 North Dixon Street / Portland, OR 97227
Telephone: (503) 916-3214

Date: March 30, 2022
To: School Board
From: Courtney Westling, Director of Government Relations
Kate Wilkinson, Assistant General Counsel
Subject: School Board zone rebalancing

BACKGROUND

Following each decennial U.S. Census, all local governments are required to apply new demographic data to existing electoral boundaries, attempting to ensure that there is no more than a 10 percent deviation in population between the largest and smallest districts.

ORS 332.132 provides that, if a school district is zoned, it “shall divide the district into the necessary number of zones as nearly equal in population, as shown by the latest federal census, as practicable, taking into account attendance areas where possible.”

Portland Public Schools (PPS) requested from the Population Research Center (PRC) at Portland State University (PSU) a proposal for two scenarios for new boundaries for its board member electoral districts (“zones”) that meet the legal requirements. Oregon law requires the use of the latest federal census data, which motivated the use of the “Public Law 94-171 Redistricting Data File from the 2020 Census, released August, 2021”.

ANALYSIS

Under current boundaries, the 2020 Census found that Zones 1, 2 and 3 grew more quickly than average, and as a result would need to contract. Zones 4, 5, 6 and 7 grew less than average and would need to add population to allow for the zones to have a nearly equal population. The total population of the PPS district is 519,967; translating to a target population (average) of 74,281 persons per district.

FISCAL IMPACT

None

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Board discussed zone rebalancing at its meeting on February 22, 2022. The Board Elections Task Force met and discussed the issue during its February 7, February 28, and March 14 meetings.

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION / EVALUATION

Once approved by the School Board, PPS will provide revised and adopted maps to the Multnomah County Elections Office so they may add the new zone maps to their systems for future elections. The next PPS Board election is scheduled for May 2023.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board adopt Option A.2 as that option will result in nearly equal school board zones and attempts to minimize changes to existing board zone boundaries.

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

_____ *(Initials)*

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Resolution 6474
- B. Portland Public Schools Board Member Zones 2020 Census Redistricting Proposal A.2