



PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
OFFICE OF CHIEF OF STAFF

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**Date:** September 25, 2023  
**To:** School Board  
**From:** Kat Davis, Advisor for Climate Justice  
**Subject:** Climate Crisis Response Committee–Recommended Student Candidates

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## **BACKGROUND**

In March 2022, the PPS Board of Education (the Board) unanimously adopted the Climate Crisis Response, Climate Justice and Sustainable Practices Policy (the Policy). One Policy objective is to establish a Climate Crisis Response Committee (CCR Committee). The CCR Committee will bring together a diverse group of individuals with unique perspectives, insights, expertise and lived experiences to monitor the effective implementation of the District's Climate Action Plan, and to track progress of the Portland Public Schools' (the District) Policy goals. The CCR Committee informs and advises the Board, but does not have decision-making authority.

The Policy mandates that the CCR Committee is composed of no more than nine volunteer members appointed by the Board to initial staggered terms of one and two years with all subsequent terms being two years. At minimum, the majority of members (5 of 9) will identify as people of color. Two members will be current PPS students and each serve one-year terms. All non-student members of the CCR Committee are to be either members of the community or current or former PPS parents. No persons directly employed or in contract with the District may participate on the CCR Committee.

The Board approved the list of 9 members to serve on the CCRC on August 9, 2022. On February 28, 2023 the School Board voted to extend the term limits for the three committee members that had been selected to serve one-year terms for an additional two years. Therefore, for the school year 2023-2024 the only open positions for the CCR Committee are the two student positions that serve one-year terms.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The District created the CCR Committee application and shared this opportunity with the community. The application closed on September 8, 2023, resulting in a total of 30 applicants. The applicant pool is a representative group of diverse racial identities, lived experiences, grade levels, and school communities. The applicant pool included each of the high schools and middle schools, with a total of 14 different schools represented from grades seventh through twelfth.

## **TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION / EVALUATION**

The selection for this committee is to be voted on by the Board on October 10, 2023.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

The selection process for the CCR Committee included reviewing applications based on:

- completeness of applications,
- relevant skills and knowledge - including volunteer, educational, and lived experience,
- expressed enthusiasm, interest, or passion for the role,
- articulated goals, and
- expressed ability to listen to and value differing perspectives.

Additional considerations included consideration of the policy criteria and racial equity and social justice lens, as well as which complementary skills and experiences would best support the CCR Committee's work, charge and responsibilities.

## **BOARD OPTIONS WITH ANALYSIS**

The review panel and the Advisor for Climate Justice recommend the following individuals for membership on the CCR Committee:

Diego Romero (Senior, Lincoln)  
Tess Nestel (Sophomore, Grant)

These two candidates represent the PPS community with a diversity of backgrounds, interests, knowledge and experiences that will add substantial value to monitoring of the implementation of the Policy. This recommended slate includes a wide variety of interest and experience, representing an interest in science and engineering as well as social justice and climate activism. These two candidates are deeply committed to their culture and their community, engaging in affinity groups, mentorship of younger students, and have clear yet distinct visions for what equitable climate action should look like in the district and at their schools. These recommended individuals also fulfill the Committee representation goals set in the CCR Policy.

## **CONNECTION TO BOARD GOALS**

The approval of the CCR Committee is progress towards the Policy goals, laying the foundation to set milestones and metrics that will continue to move forward the work of meeting our net zero greenhouse gas emission goals and integrating climate change and climate justice into PPS operations, engagement, curriculum, and community engagement.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

It is my recommendation the Board approve these candidates for the CCR Committee.

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

  JG   (Initials)

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Resolution