

District Foundation & School-based Fundraising

Board Policy Committee

May 10, 2021

Our Approach

We believe that parent fundraising can be one of several ways to involve parents, businesses, and community members in our schools. Equity can be at the center of how we all operate, and we can improve on the current system.

We welcome Board and community input into how we can build a more equitable framework that genuinely welcomes all Portlanders who wish to contribute (time, ideas, resources) to a more excellent education for our students—rather than turning away philanthropists, volunteers, or thought partners.

Our state has chronically underfunded public education, and we must advocate for change at the political level; but we must also work together, creatively, to lift each other up rather than pitting groups against one another.



PPS Strategic Partnerships & The Fund for PPS

Strategic Partnerships Department advances high-impact involvement and investment to create meaningful transformation for PPS school communities. This is the team that also supports the strategic priorities of the 501(c)(3) fundraising entity, The Fund for Portland Public Schools, which is led by its own Board of Directors. All of the team's work is in service of advancing the district's vision and emerging strategic plan, and utilizes the Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) lens.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, impacting PPS students and families, this team *raised and distributed over \$1 million* via The Fund for PPS in direct support to PPS families.



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District Foundation 7.10.030-P

Let me clarify up front that the policy in question, 7.10.030-P, was initiated to give permission for the district to establish a foundation. Attached is a redlined version that delineates the governance structure between the school district and the district foundation, The Fund for PPS. Therefore, we recommend the following revised 7.10.030-P District Foundation policy for the Policy Committee to put to a vote. In a moment, we will turn to the policy that would allow us to address school-based fundraising.

Local School Foundations & Independents

Affiliated LSFs - Under Financial Management of The Fund for PPS

The PPS Parent Fund requires a 33% contribution from schools on:

- monies above the first \$10,000 their affiliated local school foundations raise

Independent School Foundations - 501(c)(3) Organizations

The PPS Parent Fund requires a 33% contribution from schools on:

- monies above the first \$10,000 independent school foundations raise *and* spend on FTE*

**Note: We do not currently have data on total dollars raised and the only monies we can directly account for are the funds spent on staffing.*

PPS Parent Fund: Current Practice

Grants from the PPS Parent Fund are awarded based on a two-criteria eligibility:

1. At least 40% students identified as Historically Underserved
2. At least 15% students eligible for free meals (Direct Cert.)

[In 2020 this resulted in awards to 53 schools and PPS programs.](#)

[In 2021 this resulted in awards to 61 schools and PPS Programs.](#)



New Guidelines	Incremental Improvements in Procedures
<p>LSFs and Independent Foundations must pay for actual position added, rather than the lowest paid staff.</p>	<p>Beginning 2021-22, School Administrators are responsible for ensuring that their school-based foundation dollars are paying for the <i>actual</i> FTE position that is being added to their staffing plan. This will ensure increased consistency and tracking of staffing positions supported by school-based foundation dollars.</p>
<p>Independents will need to pay before staffing costs are incurred, rather than an invoice at the end of the year.</p>	<p>Beginning 2022-23: Independent School Foundations will need to provide funding to cover staffing (FTE) <i>at the beginning of the school year</i>, rather than being invoiced at the end of the school year. The district is giving one-year's notice to the Independent School Foundations so they can plan accordingly for this change in financial practice.</p>
<p>Foundation funds should increase educational equity within school community.</p>	<p>Fall 2020: Created and shared a set of slides on Racial Equity and Social Justice as part of the asynchronous Local School Foundations Training, which outlines how LSF dollars should be used to increase educational equity within their own school communities.</p>

Case Study:

Using Parent-raised Dollars to Advance Equity

We are aware that some schools are considering the impact of their school's fundraising on equity. Bridlemile Foundation is one example. Using the RESJ framework, as their new principal, Jerome Townsend worked in collaboration with the Bridlemile Foundation to develop a plan to fit their school's needs. While the percentage of historically underserved students is relatively low in the school, the principal is relying on these foundation dollars to add an instructional specialist to his staff in 2021-22 that will work with all classroom teachers to better serve students who are not meeting benchmarks.

This is an example of how looking at aggregate data of student populations does not tell the whole story, and we have students in every school in PPS who need extra support, while we continue to work on system shifts on multiple fronts to address systemic inequities.



Data on Foundation Dollars

PPS Systems Planning and Performance has prepared some additional information for your review. They have taken school-level data used by the district for budgeting, and added the FTE positions funded by school-based foundations and PPS Parent Fund dollars.

The list of schools are sorted by type (K-5, K-8, MS, HS) and socio economic status as measured by Free Meals by Direct Certification.

On the last line of the table it shows that 42 FTE were paid for with school-based foundation dollars and the PPS Parent Funds.

While the schools with the lowest number of students qualified for free meals are also the schools who pay for the highest number of FTE with foundation funds, they are also the schools that receive the lowest dollars per student.

Please see: [2019-20 Budget Data by School + Foundation FTE](#) in the Policy Committee meeting materials.



Parent Groups & The Schools 7.10.020-P

Please note that 7.10.030-P District Foundation guides neither the spirit nor the operational aspects of parent fundraising that I believe are the focus of the community-proposed policy change.

Thus, we hope to begin a conversation about revising the policy that serves to guide parent fundraising in PPS: Parent Groups and the Schools 7.10.020-P, and recommend a community engagement process with a final policy recommendation coming to the Board in February 2022.



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Future Discussions for School -based Groups and Fundraising in PPS

Conduct a community engagement process to build on Portland's national reputation to advance equitable procedures for all school-based fundraising groups to follow, including applying the Racial Equity and Social Justice Lens. We drafted a starting point to discuss with a goal of a new policy before the Board by February 2022.



Examine the LSF Formula and Percentage to PPS Parent Fund

Racial Equity and Social Justice Lens

Propose: After the first \$10,000 raised annually, a minimum of 40% of the amount expended on staffing deposited in PPS Parent Fund-- a 7% increase from current rate of 33%.

Apply the Racial Equity and Social Justice lens to identify the FTE that will increase educational equity in the school community.

Provide opportunities for the whole school community to be part of these discussions, especially those whom the educational equity programs are meant to benefit.

Include all who wish to participate, regardless of ability to pay. If the group hosts paid events, they shall provide at least 10% of the total anticipated admission tickets free of charge to the school office for families who wish to attend but for whom the ticket price is a barrier.

Local School Foundations

REQUESTED:

Registration of ALL fundraising groups

[REGISTRATION FORM](#)

February 2021: School administrators requested ALL groups fundraising in schools complete an annual registration, so that we can gain a broader understanding of philanthropic/private dollars in schools.

This simple registration requests basic information of all school-based fundraising groups (name, leadership names, basic financial information).

Provide opportunities for the whole school community to be part of these discussions, especially those whom the educational equity programs are meant to benefit.

Fundraising efforts should not subsidize a subset of students who also have to pay to participate in the program, e.g. subsidize travel out of the area where only students who can pay participate.

Registration of all School - based Fundraising Groups



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What are you willing to give- ideas, time, resources- so that every student in PPS has an inspired, excellent PK-12 public education?

The Spirit of Portland has shown us again and again that Portlanders overwhelmingly support public schools, from passing Bond measures to, yes, parent-led fundraising. Rather than turning away from good intentions, volunteerism, and financial support, we seek instead to increase the broader community's connection to our schools and its sense of responsibility for our students as they shape their futures. Just like our vision states, we must be "Grounded in the Spirit of Portland" if we're going to be able to have communities all over this city rally with a new sense of purpose.



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