

Public Comment on Draft Policies

Please provide your comments on policies currently proposed for revisions or rescissions, or new policies. Policies are open for public comment for a minimum of 21 days between the First Reading and the Second Reading, when a adopt the policy.

Email *

[Redacted]

Name *

[Redacted]

Email *

[Redacted]

Your School Community *

Buckman Elementary

Do you provide permission to post your comments on the PPS website? *

- Yes, with name
- Yes, without name
- No. Share only with Board and District staff

Policy you are providing comment on *

Revision: Districtwide Advocacy and Fundraising 7.10.020-P (Formerly Parent Groups and the Schools) ▼

Please provide your comments below *

Dear Dear PPS Board of Directors,

I am writing today to express my opposition to the Policy Committee's draft School Foundation Policy that came before the full board for a first reading on April 2, 2024 and vote at a future meeting. We are asking you to reject this harmful proposal and send it back to the Policy Committee for further consideration.

There are several flawed assumptions with this proposal. One is that you are all making assumptions that parents that are hard-working and don't make a great deal of money will have the time, money, and energy to spend on a general foundation. This is false, and I even cut my donation to PPS Foundation this year due to this specific policy proposal. I focused all of our money and time on our local school foundation.

Second of all, I am a public employee and not a rich parent (as some of the Board members want to assume about focus schools). I have to make choices where I spend my time and money in order to pay our bills. One of the areas that we focus on is our daughter's school.

I have been placed on a waitlist and not able to make public comments at your board meetings. Apparently, now I have been waitlisted for 3 or more meetings. As a public employee, I was frankly surprised and disappointed in your board and policies for limiting public testimony, which appears to be a strategy to avoid dissent. Further disappointed and frustrated by Juila Brim-Edwards comments that the controversy must mean you are doing the right thing, which is a very short sighted approach to a publicly held office and contradictory to your Board's own expressed values on community engagement.

You are approving this policy in a horrible budget year without a strategy or analysis on how your board and the district will overcome the shortfall in the decrease in funding. Your values on equity are in the right place, but your approach is significantly lacking in foresight and an impact analysis. We should be focused on increasing funding for schools that need more support, but we should NOT be doing that by punishing other schools. I have yet to see ONE PPS Foundation event held at my daughter's school in the last 5 years (NOT ONE!). The Buckman School foundation has been an incredible way to build community within our district, and we have been able to meet new friends and families through our joint volunteer and fundraising efforts.

Also, the majority of my daughter's friends don't even live in our elementary school district and live out in the eastern Portland area. So, you will also be taking an arts focused program away from these transfer students that are receiving an incredible experience.

There are three key reasons for this request:

1) This is not how you create policy, or build trust.

Now more than ever the district, and PPS Board, needs to build trust. A scheme to pass this proposal - hatched while parents and community members were distracted by a strike, school closures, budget cuts and lost superintendent - is the absolute opposite of how a board leads its community.

2) This proposal does nothing to help a single PPS student and it is clear it will actively harm many.

This proposal advocates for the elimination of critical funding that thousands of PPS students rely on. Additionally, it offers no immediate replacement funding source or executable plan to shore up a

districtwide fund. We are already facing a painful budget crisis, and this is absolutely the wrong time to impose further cuts that will cause harm to our students.

3) Hope is not a plan. Creating an effective districtwide foundation that replaces the millions of dollars currently raised at the local school level will require significant time, staff and resources. This proposal contains zero details of how or when such a difficult task will be accomplished. Importantly, there is no consideration given to how the district will convince the thousands of parents who currently give at the school level to switch to a districtwide foundation. Most of those parents have never even been asked.

Policy changes on such a complex and sensitive topic - like school foundation fundraising - deserves a thoughtful, collaborative process that includes all impacted voices in the community. Pursuit of this policy will only alienate community members and cause more division in an already fragile district.

The policy should at least be delayed to implement community engagement efforts in focus schools with a detailed impact analysis before it's adopted. Another option would be to consider a phased approach by allowing school foundations to utilize their funds up to a cap of \$100,000, and then the remaining funds go to district-wide efforts. A phased approach would be like implementing a pilot of the program to determine potential unforeseen consequences before full implementation.

We expect the PPS board to prioritize what is best for all PPS students, and to responsibly implement policies that do not leave any student worse off. Our children do not have the luxury of affording any more cuts to their education.

Respectfully,



Proud Buckman Parent

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