

SUPERINTENDENT'S BUDGET MESSAGE

Dear PPS Community,

Our district sits at an inflection point. We have a [community vision](#) for who we want to be, a [strategic plan](#) outlining the steps we'll take to realize it, and a set of [student outcome goals](#) we aim to achieve. Unfortunately, enrollment continues to decline - here and across Oregon. State revenue is not keeping up with the cost of operating our schools, and our students' needs continue to grow. This presents a set of real constraints requiring us to prioritize how we'll invest the available resources to accomplish our goals.

The critical steps we take in the coming school year and the decisions we make regarding how to best support and serve children and youth will help to determine how quickly we improve educational outcomes, and become the district our students and staff deserve. Given rising costs of doing business, this proposed budget attempts to be efficient in how we integrate and leverage all our available revenue sources. It builds on our shared successes and continues our objective of providing a joyful and high-quality teaching and learning experience for every PPS student next year.

Shared Success

We are on the road to becoming a school district where every student and educator thrives and achieves excellence.

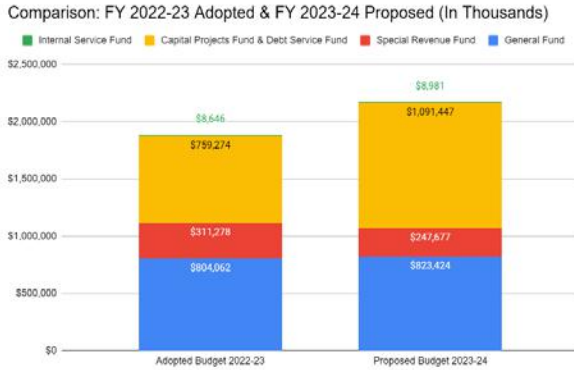
We continue aligning our dollars, time, and effort with our community vision, and we're seeing encouraging signs. Unlike state and national downward trends, our standardized test scores indicate that [we have mitigated adverse impacts on student learning](#). As another key indicator, our [graduation rate continues to steadily improve](#), higher than and increasing faster than the state's posted averages. We are also narrowing gaps for historically underserved student groups. For the Class of 2020, our graduation rate for Black students was twenty times greater than the state average growth rate.

Our systems are strengthening and extending student learning. We invested significantly in a robust menu of [summer programming](#), which has helped mitigate pandemic-related gaps, provided enrichment opportunities to students, and offset typical summer slides. In addition, we have made sure students requiring the most support have access to more personalized interventions, including access to learning acceleration specialists and high-dosage tutoring. We know that foundational literacy skills are pivotal to long-term success, so we have continued to place an emphasis on early literacy. Our investments in professional learning, instructional materials, and assessments are narrowing gaps and receiving praise in [Oregon](#) and [nationally](#). Social workers and counselors are helping address post-pandemic social emotional, mental, and behavioral health needs, and we're proud to have been able to increase access to these vital supports.

We also continue to find multiple ways to positively engage students in their school experience. We continue to expand career technical education (CTE) courses, arts education pathways, and out-of-school programming. Over the last five years, we've doubled student enrollment in CTE courses and strengthened [our nationally-recognized dual-language immersion programs](#), which have [tripled the number of graduates earning the Seal of Biliteracy](#).

The 2022-2023 school year has been marked by growth in how we respond to the climate crisis. We've begun implementing last spring's Climate Crisis Response policy - a series of bold commitments that garnered a National School Board Association Magna Award. Construction is underway on Benson Polytechnic High and the Multiple Pathways to Graduation building, which will become our most sustainable buildings, and we opened the LEED-Gold-certified Lincoln High School. We purchased our first electric buses, continued to expand our reliance on local farmers and vendors, and increased green spaces and gardens across our schools. Not only will we continue this work next school year, but we expect to celebrate more and more success.

2023-2024 Budget Proposal



Our proposed budget for next year totals \$2.17 billion.

This includes a projected \$823.4 million dollar general fund. These dollars are used for day-to-day operations of the District and include the local option levy (\$114.7 million), which supports over 850 teacher positions; the Arts Education and Access Fund (\$4.5 million), which supports high-quality arts education; and our proposed reserves (\$43 million), which maintains a minimum reserve target of 5-10%, per our Board's policy.

It also includes a \$247.7 million special revenue fund. These funds are assigned for specific purposes, such as the one-time restricted funds from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Act (ESSER) (\$36.3 million) or state Integrated Grant funds like the Student Success Act and Measure 98 (\$51.9 million).

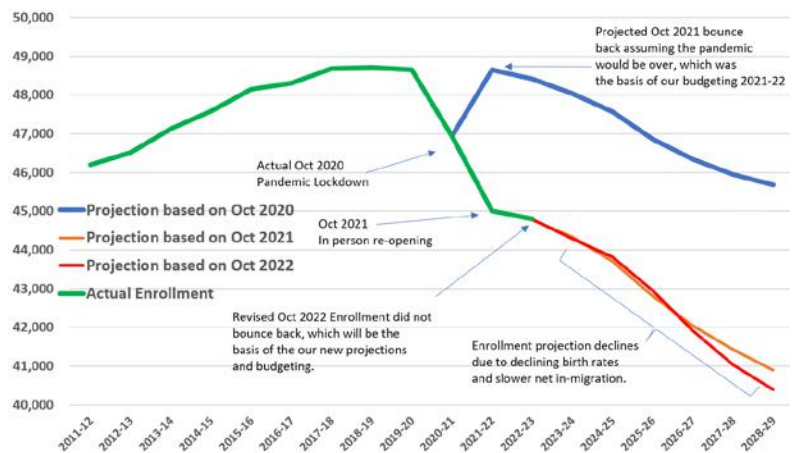
Our 2023-24 proposed budget includes \$1.09 billion in capital projects and debt service funds. We thank Portlanders for supporting our bond program, celebrating ten years of modernizing Portland schools. These vital dollars support us in modernizing our high schools, adopting new curricula, and updating technology in classrooms for the twenty-first century.

Constraints

We have grown as a learning organization. We understand that a high-performing school system fundamentally emphasizes high-quality teaching and learning. We remain committed to equitably supporting our schools and students to realize our graduate portrait.

Our challenge is to honor those commitments within the constraints of this moment. We face rising expenses, limited revenue, and declining enrollment. Our general fund has remained flat, and we have fewer sources of special revenue. We must make prudent decisions to continue building on our successes.

This budget accomplishes this objective and keeps us moving forward.



Meeting Growing Student Needs

Our educators and school leaders understand that our current students have heightened academic and support needs. They also understand the importance of meeting those needs with an attention to equity and inclusion that has, historically, been lacking across Portland Public School.

The 2023-2024 budget takes steps to institutionalize two forces for equity. Following this year's visioning process, next year's budget includes plans to *launch our Center for Black Student Excellence*. Despite gains, our system continues to see achievement gaps among our Black students, and we're hopeful the Center will help address these. We also intend to *hire a civil rights coordinator* to ensure students are provided school environments free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying.

And we remain deeply committed to providing multi-tiered systems of support. We will continue to fund increased mental and behavioral health services, school counselors, school-based social workers, school psychologists, and substance abuse support. We will continue funding work to strengthen safety and security and create school-based restorative justice systems that address conflicts in our learning spaces.

You'll also see sustained commitment to both strengthen and extend learning. Most broadly, this budget continues to prioritize Student Success Teams, which offer space and time to consider how we meet each student where they are. It funds student attendance coaches, systems to track early warning indicators, and coordination to ensure on-time graduation. We also continue to work on challenging academic transitions - particularly the shifts from eighth to ninth grade and between twelfth grade and post-secondary options. On the other end of the spectrum, we know that a student's reading proficiency will impact all other education - so we must continue robust early literacy and dyslexia support. This budget funds high-dosage tutoring, expanded credit recovery options, and instructional specialists.

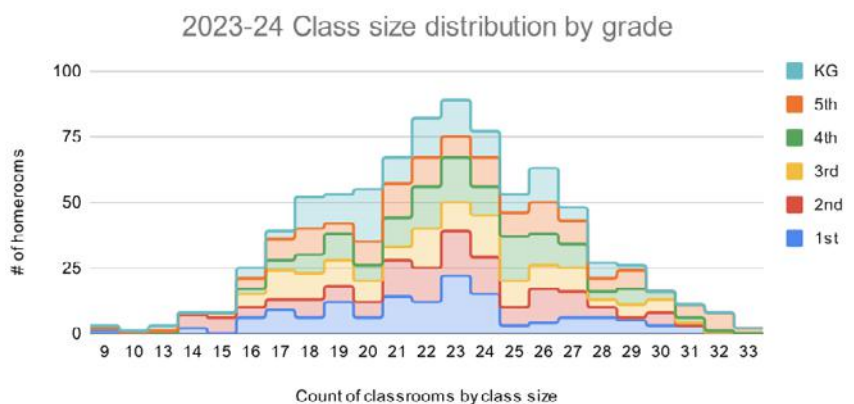
This budget also continues to fund a transformative racial equity agenda. That agenda includes partnerships with culturally-specific, community-based organizations on work such as summer programming, SUN services, and violence interruption. Through programs like [Coach to Classroom](#), we will continue to develop our workforce so that our students have teachers and staff who look like them, share their lived experiences, and speak their languages. As we continue implementing our instructional framework, this budget ensures that equity remains a cornerstone of curricula selection and professional learning. Targeted learning acceleration for Black and Native students will continue during the school year and the summer as we strive to close persistent, generational, and unacceptable achievement gaps. We also continue to support student affinity groups and leadership opportunities for students of color.

School-Based Supports

To reach our lofty goals, we must increase instructional leadership capacity across the school system. That is why this budget proposes to invest in full-time school-based instructional coaches in every elementary, middle, and K-8 school, and to continue ensuring that principals receive professional learning sessions on instructional coaching.

In addition, each school will be awarded a site-based school improvement grant, ranging from roughly \$100,00 to \$120,000.

These site-based grants, offered in direct response to school leaders and educators, will enable principals and their communities to make specifically-targeted investments to close student performance gaps. We're planning to align classroom staffing with our student population, and we'll continue using Integrated Grant funds to keep class sizes among the lowest in the state.



This budget continues to build the capacity for our educators and school leaders to do their best work. Investments in high-quality professional learning help school leaders and educators maximize the impact of our new curricula and instructional framework, and to teach with best practices. We focus on professional learning at our Comprehensive and Targeted Support and Improvement (CSI/TSI) schools. Educational assistants and paraeducators represent the additional capacity for our licensed educators, so we have preserved funding for those positions and their professional learning. We're also funding release time so educators have dedicated capacity for Student Success Teams, and we're continuing investments in full-time educational assistants for Title 1 kindergarten classrooms.

Teaching and Learning Excellence

As an educational institution, our core mission is to provide a high-quality teaching and learning experience to every single one of our students. Amazing educators, strong learning materials, and a [cohesive instructional framework](#) are at the heart of that. This year, we began operating with our new instructional framework and newly aligned curricula that are rigorous and standards-based. This budget continues that critical work in earnest and funds professional learning opportunities to bring that framework and our new curricula to life.

Closing

The most recent budgets I've submitted all reflect a need to address the COVID-19 pandemic. The previous three (20-21, 21-22, 22-23) have largely reflected direct impacts - but in this budget (23-24), we begin to see a shift. My proposal is informed by the impending end of one-time relief funds, students leaving public education and our district, and the shift in students' exhibited needs. These trends necessarily influence the direction of this budget and how we will manage our resources in coming years. As a broader community, we will need to keep a critical eye on our shifting enrollment and, perhaps, consider additional enrollment balancing, school consolidation and/or programming cuts in the near future.

But whatever complications we encounter, I believe in the brilliance of our students, and I'm continually inspired by the dedicated educators and staff with whom we work to realize our vision for PPS. Our school leaders, support staff, central staff, families, Board members, and community buoy the amazing work happening in our classrooms. Together, we can continue to meet the real challenges in front of us. We will continue to be guided by an equity-centered approach, one that strives to provide high-quality educational opportunities and the support needed for every PPS student to experience success.

To Board directors, I offer this proposed annual budget for your consideration. I believe it represents a comprehensive and coherent set of investments and activities that will keep our school system moving forward and on-route to accomplishing our shared goals.



Guadalupe Guerrero
Superintendent