



OREGON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

November 2, 2023

Dear Portland Public School Board Members,

As fellow Portland elected officials who care about education, we are asking you to directly engage in the bargaining between Portland Public Schools and the Portland Association of Teachers.

We were surprised to hear accusations that the Oregon Legislature did not adequately fund schools this past legislative session. In fact, we listened to and worked with school districts (including PPS), educators, labor, and other advocates to fully fund schools at the amount they requested, funding at an unprecedented \$10.2 billion, \$10.3 billion total, after a \$100 million windfall increase in local tax revenue, as well as funding early literacy and SIA funds. In total, Oregon's K-12 schools have a budget of \$15.3 billion when including local property taxes. This is the most money ever allocated to Oregon's kids and teachers in a two-year budget cycle, \$800 million more than state budget experts said was necessary to meet current service levels, and a 10% increase over total school funding last biennium.

As Portland Public Schools Superintendent Guadalupe Guerrero testified to the Joint Ways and Means Committee in March: "To us, the choice is clear. You must fund the State School Fund at \$10.3 billion." We were excited to be able to fulfill this request.

When we look at spending, we see PPS spends about 48% of their budget directly in the classroom, while comparable districts spend 55-56%; and PPS spends about 6% on administration, while comparable districts spend 2-3%. There is a path here to address the issues at the bargaining table.

Two things are clear:

First, PPS needs to right size its priorities, refocusing on classroom and student learning investments, and cutting superfluous administration spending.

Second, it is time that you, as the elected leaders of the school district, take the reins of this situation. What our students need now is leadership that shows them you will do what it takes to invest in their futures, and that starts with coming to the table now. As educators say, their working conditions are student learning and living conditions. We all need to work together to support resolution with a contract that builds the schools our students deserve.

Sincerely,

Representative Travis Nelson
House District 44, N/NE Portland

Representative Dacia Grayber
House District 28, SW Portland

Senator Kayse Jama
Senate District 24, Portland

Representative Mark Gamba
House District 41, SE Portland




Representative Hoa Nguyen
House District 48, East Portland



Representative Maxine Dexter
House District 33, Portland



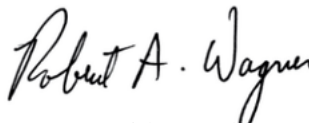
Representative Lisa Reynolds
House District 34, NW Portland



Senator Elizabeth Steiner
Senate District 17, NW Portland



Representative Khanh Pham
House District 46, Outer SE Portland



Senate President Rob Wagner
Senate District 19, S/SW Portland




Representative Daniel Nguyen
House District 38, SW Portland



Representative Tawna Sanchez
House District 43, N/NE Portland



Senator Michael Dembrow
Senate District 23, Portland



Representative Andrea Valderrama
House District 47, Outer East Portland



Senator Lew Frederick
Senate District 22, N/NE Portland



Senate Majority Leader Kate Lieber
Senate District 14, Southwest Portland