



Community & PARENTS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF PORTLAND

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September 13, 2016

To: Superintendent Bob McKean
CC: PPS School Board

From: Community & Parents for Public Schools (CPPS)

Re: DBRAC

Superintendent McKean, welcome to Portland Public Schools! We're writing to you about a time-sensitive topic: the work schedule of the District-wide Boundary Review Advisory Committee (DBRAC).

Last June, DBRAC developed a working timeline to complete its recommendations for the North and Northeast quadrants of the district by early January, so that they could be implemented beginning in the fall of 2017. The deliverables included:

- Establishing feeder patterns for the newly-created Tubman Middle School and Roseway Heights Middle School. The Board Resolution creating these schools calls for them to open in Fall 2017. Principals have already been hired for each school and students and families have already started planning for the transition next year. It is essential to decide on their feeder patterns now in order to ensure a smooth transition.
- Potentially reconfiguring other K-8s, with adjusted feeder patterns.
- Redrawing boundaries for all neighborhood schools.
- Potentially relocating ACCESS and reopening Rose City Park as a neighborhood K-5.
- Relocating the Vietnamese immersion program.
- Resolving collocation issues of the neighborhood and immersion programs at schools such as Rigler, Beach and Scott.

In addition, a related advisory group was slated to begin work on the Southeast quadrant, with scenario development and public engagement scheduled for the spring.

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DBRAC's work is currently on hold, ostensibly waiting for you to confirm their scope and timeline. We are concerned that some senior managers are advising that you delay the committee's work for a year.

We respectfully request that you direct staff to move full speed ahead on DBRAC's work for this year. The issues of overcrowding in some schools, under-enrollment in others, and mismatches in configuration have gone on for far too long. Now that PPS is finally addressing these issues, it is essential to keep the momentum and finish the job. Some examples:

- Scott School's middle grade students continue to be poorly served. This is a high-poverty school that needs to be converted to a K-5 so its middle grade students can have access to a full middle-school program at Roseway Heights.
- The same is true for King, which would feed to Tubman. The middle grades are caught in a downward spiral as parents withdraw their children in order to ensure they get decent course offerings.
- Rigler's neighborhood kindergarten has only 10 students enrolled this fall.
- George Middle School's feeder schools need to be adjusted so that George has sustainable enrollment for a robust program.
- There is unnecessary overcrowding at Chief Joseph, and underenrollment at Woodlawn and Peninsula.
- Beverly Cleary, which is spread over three campuses, has had overcrowding issues for a decade. Parents have been promised a resolution for years.
- Overcrowding at Harrison Park has also been a longstanding problem.
- It has been documented that at most K-8s, middle grade students have far fewer electives than at middle schools (documentation attached). While compacted math was added at all schools this year, there is still a wide disparity in offerings.
- DBRAC also discovered that at many K-8s, middle grade students were receiving 15 fewer minutes in instructional time every day. This has been corrected at most schools, but this year three high-poverty schools were granted a waiver, so students at those schools will receive a week less in instructional time this year.

An important dimension to boundary adjustments is the location of focus option programs and alternative schools. An internal Education Options Committee has been working on these issues. We have asked for an update on the committee's work and were promised a response several weeks ago.

DBRAC is already behind its schedule. It is essential that the committee has enough time to analyze issues, develop scenarios, and gather and take into account public input. There is no time to lose. Please act now. As the timeline below shows, these inequities have been festering far too long.

CPPS has a number of other issues we would like to talk with you about, and have requested that a meeting be scheduled. DBRAC, however, cannot wait.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact us if you have any questions.

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Katie Van Winkle
Craig Williams
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Background: CPPS has been a critical friend of Portland Public Schools for 18 years. Our members have led funding campaigns, including the 2012 Bond (Our Portland, Our Schools merged into CPPS) and the 2014 Local Option. We serve on district committees such as DBRAC, SACET, the Citizens Budget Review Committee, and have always endeavored to bring positive solutions to the table that engage all stakeholders and increase trust in the district.

DBRAC Timeline

- 2006-07 K-8 implementation begins; problems with implementation were immediate and widespread
- 10/2010 SACET members make a presentation at the CPPS Parent Leadership Conference demonstrating the need for enrollment balancing; several PPS Board members were in attendance
- 6/2011 Board Policy 2.10.010-P Racial Education Equity Policy (Resolution 4459)
- 2/25/13 Resolution 4718 - Jefferson PK-8 Cluster Enrollment Balancing
- 10/28/14 SACET Recommendations to Align the Enrollment & Transfer System and the Racial Educational Equity Policy for Portland Public Schools
- 11/12/14 First DBRAC Meeting
- 11/9/15-12/3/15 DBRAC conducts community meetings (15 in total) for a recorded 23 hours and 21 minutes
- 3/29/16 District-wide Enrollment Balancing Recommendations, Superintendent Carole Smith
- 4/5/16 Resolution 5246: Initiation of Ockley Green Middle School for the 2016-17 School Year
- 6/24/16 DBRAC Summer Guidance Memorandum
- 7/25/16 Resolution 5308: Intent to Open Tubman and Roseway Heights Middle Schools for the 2017-18 School Year