



April 11, 2019

Joint Committee on Student Success
Oregon State Legislature

Chairs Roblan and Smith Warner and Members of the Committee:

First of all, I want to thank you for your tireless efforts over the past year crisscrossing the state visiting communities to learn about the challenges and opportunities facing our public schools. Like you, we in Portland Public Schools believe it is long past time that the state made meaningful, equitable, culturally responsive investments in our K-12 system, and we are encouraged that the legislature understands the urgency to take action this legislative session.

There is no doubt that an investment of \$2 billion in Oregon classrooms is a promising first step in reversing almost three decades of disinvestment in our schools. And, in particular, we appreciate the flexibility that the School Improvement Fund (SIF) would allow our district to meet the needs of our diverse student population.

At Portland Public Schools, we serve more than 49,000 students in 78 schools. Our district values making wise and prudent investments to support the achievement and equitable outcomes of every one of our students. With the proposed new revenue, our district would receive approximately \$39 million for the 2020-21 school year and would prioritize investments in 3 SIF areas:

Well-Rounded Education:

To ensure that students have equitable access to a comprehensive, rigorous, and supportive learning experience, we will expand the development and implementation of core curriculum across science, health, and physical education content areas. Additionally, we will enhance and expand arts education and other elective offerings. We will also build the skills and capacity of our instructional staff by engaging in meaningful professional learning and leadership development in topics around curriculum and instructional practice, so that we may better individualize support for our diverse learners.

Student Health & Safety:

We will more fully support both the academic success and social emotional well-being for every child. We have piloted Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum in 12 schools and are interested in supporting more schools to implement research-based SEL curriculum. We also plan to address the over-identification of students of color and

English Learners for special education by strengthening our wraparound supports and adoption of a Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) approach to ensure that there are systemic processes within each school to identify students who need additional supports and provide targeted interventions.

More Learning Time:

We are interested in expanding learning time, focusing first on students not yet meeting grade level expectations, by providing additional learning opportunities and supports, both after-school and during the summertime, to improve their outcomes. We would like to extend these summer learning opportunities to create a more robust set of options for all students in areas like visual & performing arts, STEM, and project-based learning.

This is just a short list of improvements that we have identified as both high-leverage and immediately actionable. We have no shortage of other ideas for using new investments to benefit our students. We remain hopeful that this is the session when we will turn the corner and finally put our money where our mouths are and invest in our kids and our collective future. I urge your support of the Student Success Act.

Thank you for your service to our State,

Rita Moore
Chair
Portland Public Schools Board of Directors