



Good morning Senators and Representatives,

My name is Oom Marquardt. I'm a parent of two young girls and PTA Co-President at Richmond Elementary School, a Japanese Dual Language Immersion Public School in Portland.

I'm here to voice my support for increased State School Funding and early literacy investments.

I moved here from Thailand 12 years ago, started a family and now have 2 hardworking kids in 4th and 1st grade. My husband and I decided to lottery our kids into Richmond because we heard it's a good school with a large BIPOC population. At the time we didn't know Richmond is the oldest and largest elementary school in PPS, and also the one with the least funding from the District. To put it in context, **this year we received about 7,000 dollars per student, when in reality, our school needs close to 9,000 dollars per student to be able to have enough staff to support our 540 students.**

Over the past 5 years, we've experienced budget cuts that have resulted in fewer and fewer teachers and larger and larger class sizes. In the last 3 years alone, we've lost 5 classroom teachers. Richmond has to consolidate classes and will end up with 30 or more kids per class in all grades. Because our kids learn in English half the day and in Japanese the other half, that means in the next school year, most of the teachers at Richmond, **mainly people of color**, will be responsible for **60 or more kids every day**. That's ludicrous. That's unfair. There's no way the teachers can deliver a 'Quality Education for All' that PPS has promised to provide.

What about the emotional support and wellbeing of the students? Last month my first grader came home with a lot of blood stain on both her sleeves because she had a nose bleed at school but didn't tell anyone because the teacher was too busy with other kids. I can't imagine how many more of those incidents will happen if there are even more students in one classroom.

I'm asking you to allocate more money to public education so our schools will have the staff they need. My kids are here with me today so I can teach them when there's a problem, you should speak up and be heard. I sincerely wish that you all, you who represent the people, will make the right decision. This decision to more properly fund our schools has the ability to make a positive impact on the lives of our future Oregonians.

Thank you very much.