



## **Program Overview**

[Portland Public Schools](#) (PPS) and the [Portland Clean Energy Fund](#) (PCEF) have partnered to create and fund the *Climate Friendly Public Schools* program. This program gives students the opportunity to engage in real-world climate action, community needs identification, leadership development, and Project Based Learning that will allow for innovative and creative solutions to climate change.

**The program provides \$10,000 per school each year for student-led projects, with additional funding to support staff advising.** This is a five year program, set to conclude in 2029.

## **Eligibility**

All [middle schools, high schools, and K-8s](#) are eligible to participate in the *Climate Friendly Public Schools* program, and projects must take place in the City of Portland. This program is meant to be student-led, which means that youth share power and decision-making, and that actions are driven by youth interest and lived experiences. In addition, projects must have a PPS staff advisor who will support the project team, be accountable for project deadlines, and ensure funding is spent appropriately.

## **Connection to PPS Climate Crisis Response, Climate Justice, and Sustainable Practices Policy**

In March 2022, the Portland Public School Board, after years of direct student and community action and leadership on climate justice, unanimously approved the [Climate Crisis Response, Climate Justice and Sustainable Practices Policy \(CCRP\)](#). The policy sets far reaching and ambitious targets around energy use, waste reduction, curriculum development, green schoolyards, student health, and climate justice and resiliency.

The PPS CCRP explicitly begins with our commitment to climate justice:

"Climate change disproportionately impacts the vulnerable members of our community. Implementation of this policy will prioritize serving people with disabilities, communities of color, and other vulnerable populations...The District shall prioritize investments that achieve the greatest emissions reduction, while integrating climate action into our curriculum and developing a culture of environmental stewardship and climate justice throughout our organization."

Student empowerment and advocacy is critical to establishing a culture of climate justice. The PCEF Climate Friendly Public Schools program directly supports these goals. Learn more about the CCRP and how to get more involved at [pps.net/climatejustice](https://pps.net/climatejustice).

## Allowable Uses of Funding

Projects must address at least one the following categories:

1. **Clean Energy** - Projects in this category focus on renewable energy (like solar or wind) and reduce energy use in buildings (like turning off the lights, powering down appliances, or replacing old equipment with newer more efficient equipment).
2. **Transportation Decarbonization** - Projects in this category aim to reduce pollution (greenhouse gas emissions) from transportation through reducing how much our community is driving gas-powered cars.
3. **Regenerative Agriculture & Green Infrastructure** - Projects in this category help take care of the Earth and use nature to keep the environment healthy. For example, *regenerative farming* helps the soil stay rich and full of life, which is good for plants and animals. *Green infrastructure* means using things like trees, gardens, and natural spaces to soak up rainwater, clean the air, and give animals places to live.
4. **Workforce Development for Climate Action** - Projects in this category help students and community members learn about the diversity of jobs and skills that support climate action.

**Funding is available for purchasing Materials, Contracts, Travel, and Other:**

- **Materials:** Includes equipment, tools, construction materials, infrastructure
- **Contracts:** Includes guest speakers; paying for labor such as builders, artists, or other *people, organizations, or businesses* to help you with your project.
- **Travel:** Includes transportation costs for buses (e.g. field trips), Trimet travel, etc.
- **Other:** Includes food for meetings, overhead costs, supplies (e.g. items needed for events), communication, outreach

Student Climate Project Calendar 2025-2026	
Date	Key Activity
Early September	Student clubs or classes begin brainstorming project ideas
Sept–Oct 2025	PCEF Kick-off Events (Dates TBD)
<b>11/7/2025</b>	<b>Final Project Proposal Submission Due</b>
<b>12/5/2025</b>	<b>Additional Materials Due (Physical Improvement Projects only)</b>
Late December	Notification of Project Approval
1/6/2026	Project Implementation Begins; Funding Available to Schools
<b>5/15/2026</b>	<b>Deadline: All Project Spending Complete</b>
<b>5/22/2026</b>	<b>End-of-Year Reports Due</b>
TBD (Spring 2026)	District-wide Student Climate Project Showcase Summit

**For more information:** Visit [pps.net/studentclimateprojects](https://pps.net/studentclimateprojects)  
**Questions?** Reach out to the PPS Climate Action Team at: [studentclimateprojects@pps.net](mailto:studentclimateprojects@pps.net).  
We're here to help and support project teams throughout the entire process!