

Portland Public Schools Goals for Our Students

2022-2027

June 28, 2022

Introduction

It remains the core mission and responsibility of our school system to ensure that every student has opportunities to thrive and experience success. Unfortunately, too many students have been historically underserved, and there has not been evidence of racial equity in PPS as revealed by persistent gaps in student outcomes along the lines of race. We are dedicated to the continuous improvements necessary to drive the system shifts that will better support our students, educators, and leaders and result in improved student performance. This will include a focus on building our individual and organizational capacity through ongoing professional learning and differentiated support for teachers, leaders, and central office staff.

We understand that this work will require focus and intentionality to interrogate how we serve the unique needs of our students, especially for students of color and other students who need us to accelerate their growth so that they are able to demonstrate both grade-level proficiency and the skills and dispositions described in our Graduate Portrait.

Included here are a set of academic milestones along the pre-K to 12 continuum that we intend to progress monitor and hold ourselves accountable to achieving. Since students of color currently demonstrate the greatest gaps in achievement and performance, our goals reinforce an explicit expectation of accelerated growth and gap closure for students of color. **To be clear, the gaps in student performance along the lines of race are persistent, generational, unacceptable, and at odds with our belief that all students can learn. Here at PPS, we intend to eliminate gaps in opportunity and outcomes completely.** We will begin this work with a focused effort on narrowing the persistent gaps in student outcomes in order to eventually eliminate these gaps completely.

Third Grade Reading

We must accelerate achievement for students of color in order to eliminate persistent gaps. Our goal is to close the opportunity and outcome gaps in third grade reading between students of color and their white peers by the metrics set forth, as measured by the Oregon State Assessment System (OSAS)

- African - American Students by 5.5 percentage points per year
- Pacific Islanders by 5.0 percentage points per year
- Native - American Students by 6.1 percentage points per year
- Latino Students by 3.9 percentage points per year
- Asian Students by 2.6 percentage points per year

Reading is arguably the most important and critical skill we teach in school. Therefore, a first and critical step along the Graduate Portrait continuum is preparing all students to read to learn by the end of Grade 3. During the early elementary years, students transition from learning to read to reading to learn. They move from learning alphabetic principles and decoding site words

to making deep meaning of text to which they are exposed.

Foundational reading skills unlock the pathways for all the learning in which students will engage for the rest of their lives. Disciplinary literacy—the ability to read, write and reason across a variety of content areas such as science and social studies—begins with the ability to independently and fluently read for information with great understanding.

Reading is a civil right and it is our responsibility to ensure that all students can read. The data on reading are clear: students who do not read proficiently by 3rd grade are four times more likely to leave high school without a diploma than are proficient readers. We must ensure that all students are reading on grade level by the end of their 3rd grade year.

Fifth Grade Mathematics

We must accelerate achievement for students of color in order to eliminate persistent gaps. Our goal is to close the opportunity and outcome gaps in fifth grade mathematics between students of color and their white peers by the metrics set forth, as measured by the Oregon State Assessment System (OSAS)

- African - American Students by 4.4 percentage points per year
- Pacific Islanders by 4.1 percentage points per year
- Native American Students by 3.5 percentage points per year
- Latino Students by 3.2 percentage points per year
- Asian Students by 1.2 percentage points per year

Fifth grade mathematics is a critical touch point for a number of reasons. It is important for students to have a solid grasp on the foundations of mathematics established in elementary school in order to be effectively prepared for the rigor of middle school mathematics. As students enter middle school, the connections between mathematical areas of conceptual understanding becomes more complex, indicating a necessity for procedural fluency. Procedural fluency builds from an initial exploration and discussion of number concepts to using informal reasoning strategies and the properties of operations to develop general methods for solving problems.

Without a solid foundation in mathematics, students are at risk of falling into a mathematics gap of conceptual understanding as they may experience greater challenges as they grapple to understand concepts through middle school mathematics and beyond. Successful completion of advanced high school coursework in mathematics is predicated on having a solid foundation established in elementary school. It is imperative that students receive grade-level high quality instruction every year in mathematics in order to realize the characteristics of the Graduate portrait, specifically as critically thinking problem solvers.

Eighth Grade Readiness

We must accelerate achievement for students of color in order to eliminate persistent gaps. Our goal is to close the opportunity and outcome gaps in eighth grade readiness between students of color and their white peers by the metrics set forth, as measured by the Oregon State Assessment System (OSAS)

- African - American Students by 3.2 percentage points per year
- Pacific Islanders by 2.7 percentage points per year

- Native - American Students by 1.1 percentage points per year
- Latino Students by 2.6 percentage points per year
- Asian Students by - percentage points per year. Asian students are already on track for this goal.

When students exit Grade 8 ready for the complexities and rigor of high school, a world of possibilities and coursework opens for them. Eighth grade students should be prepared to navigate and adapt to high school's complex challenges and reading, writing and performing mathematics on grade level is one of the key ways by which we can ensure that they are adequately prepared.

Entering high school with grade level proficiency in English language arts and mathematics positions students for more advanced coursework. That advanced coursework, in turn, creates and strengthens college and career readiness of students. Grade 8 readiness can be considered a gateway to postsecondary success.

Conversely, students who enter high school without mastery of core academic knowledge face barriers to a successful high school experience and experience lower-level coursework. If we want every student to have the opportunity to experience the full range of high school coursework – CTE, arts, AP, IB and more—we must commit to adequately preparing them for such by ensuring that students are proficient in English Language arts and mathematics by the end of Grade 8.

High School Graduation

We must accelerate achievement for students of color by eliminating the graduation gaps.

Our goal is to eliminate the opportunity and outcome gaps in graduation rates for our students of color while setting higher graduation requirements for all our students, by the metrics set forth, measured by the four-year cohort graduation rate.

- African - American Students by 2.4 percentage points per year
- Pacific Islanders by 3.0 percentage points per year
- Native - American Students by 7.6 percentage points per year
- Latino Students by 2.6 percentage points per year
- Asian Students by - percentage points per year. Asian students are already on track for this goal.

There are persistent and predictable gaps in graduation rates among groups of students and while our graduation data certainly looks a fair bit better than our assessment data, there are still achievement gaps that demand our attention. Therefore, instead of halving the graduation gaps here in PPS, we are proposing that we eliminate them completely.

Successful completion of high school leaves students prepared for wherever their future might take them— college, military or career. We want our students to have infinite possibilities for their future based on following whatever dreams they might have. This often cannot happen without successfully completing high school with a diploma.

Failure to complete high school creates a future earnings gap that cannot be bridged later in life. What's more, in addition to the opportunity to earn a higher income, high school graduates also gain access to better living conditions, healthier foods, and better health care services. High school graduation unlocks endless possibilities for students. We must ensure that all students graduate from high school.

Reporting

Post-secondary Readiness

We must accelerate achievement for students of color in order to eliminate persistent gaps in post-secondary readiness. Every student needs to have the core academic knowledge and opportunity of experience that will prepare them for post-secondary success that are reflective of the diverse skills and interest that our students have pursued through their high school career, including but not limited to, successful completion or achievement of: (a) Career Technical Education, (b) Visual & Performing Arts pathways, (c) Dual-Credit coursework, (d) Advanced Placement, (e) Seal of Biliteracy, (f) International Baccalaureate or (g) college readiness.

We will annually report – in a disaggregated form – the high school students who are successfully completing one or more of the following post-secondary indicators.

1. Successful completion of Career and Technology Pathway (2 or more courses in the same path).
2. Successful completion of Visual & Performing Arts pathways (2 or more courses in the same path).
3. Successful completion (C or Better) of 3 or more Dual Credit courses.
4. Successful completion (C or better) of 3 or more International Baccalaureate courses.
5. Successful completion (C or better) of 3 or more Advanced Placement courses.
6. Successful achievement of the seal of biliteracy
 - a. AP foreign language: 3 or above
 - b. IB foreign language: 4 or above
 - c. SLIP: 6 or above in both Writing and Speaking
 - d. STAMP: 6 or above in all of Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking

Summary

The proposed Board Goals represent a rigorous set of benchmarks along the Pre-K to 12 academic continuum that will allow us to gauge student progress towards realizing the promise of the Graduate Portrait. These goals and targets strongly and transparently signal our need to double down on our equity work on behalf of our students to realize the promise of eliminating persistent, generational and unacceptable outcome gaps along the lines of students' race and ethnicity. The time is now. Our students deserve no less. We have an urgent need to accelerate achievement and performance for students of color here in PPS as we have a series of critically important instructional benchmarks and indicators such as reading, mathematics, high school readiness and graduation, among others, that demonstrate chronic underperformance of students of color. In order to eliminate these gaps, we will leverage systemic investments and supports through high quality, standards-aligned curriculum materials, a unified vision of teaching and learning via our instructional framework, and ongoing, job-embedded professional learning for all educators in order to improve systemic instructional practices.