



PORTLAND
Public Schools

2025 ADVOCACY AGENDA

The Portland Public Schools' advocacy agenda calls for policies and investments that make our schools safe, welcoming, and equitable spaces for learning. The 2025 Advocacy Agenda is aligned with PPS's Strategic Plan and [Board Goals](#). In addition to the issues identified below, the Office of Government Relations supports and advocates for legislative proposals, technical fixes, and initiatives that are consistent with the Strategic Plan and will pursue necessary actions in 2025 as new issues arise.

LOCAL PRIORITIES

The Office of Government Relations, in collaboration with other district departments, will partner with local municipalities and organizations to:

- Collaborate with the regional partners to advance PPS's literacy campaign.
- Support efforts to reduce gun violence, combat the synthetic opioid crisis, and increase community safety in Portland.
- Support Multnomah County in expanding early learning programs.
- Strengthen partnership with Multnomah County to provide consistent behavioral health services for schools and communities in high-need areas.
- Increase resources to support safe routes to and from schools.
- Strengthen intergovernmental collaboration to support and enroll school-aged children who are not enrolled or attending school, including disadvantaged populations such as homeless, foster, and newcomer students.

STATE PRIORITIES

The Office of Government Relations will pursue the following budget priorities and statewide legislation during the 2025 Legislative Session.

- **Invest in high quality education for our students.** Our Legislature must take bold steps to modernize the Quality Education Model (QEM) and fully fund the QEM with a State School Fund (SSF) investment of \$12.705 billion, combined with an \$822 million Student Success Act Transfer, for a **total of \$13.526 billion**. The Governor's Current Service Level (CSL) budget, while moving in the right direction, will still require PPS to take cuts. We believe that every student deserves high quality educational opportunities that prepare them for college and the future workforce. Our teachers deserve adequate resources and support to serve our students.
- **Pass the Governor's recommended changes to the Current Service Level (CSL) budget** while making it clear that this is a floor and not a ceiling.
- **Fully Fund Recent Mandates and New Initiatives:** Ensure that any new requirements for schools are tied to a statewide roadmap for student success, evidence-based, and come with funding and support to meet the legislative intent. Provide funding to support school districts with the



costs of recent laws including summer unemployment benefits for school-year workers and Paid Leave Oregon. Provide funding for school districts to offer Talented and Gifted programs and implement the new financial literacy curriculum.

- **Fully Fund Special Education Services:** Provide funding and resources for schools to address needs of students with disabilities. Remove the 11% cap on weighted funding for students receiving special education services. Increase the High Cost Disability Fund to fully reimburse districts' costs to meet more intensive student needs. Fully fund Regional Inclusive Services and the Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) Services.
- **Funding for Student Supports:** Students today are dealing with a range of challenges that are impacting their mental health including social media, the lingering effects of the pandemic, and the synthetic opioid crisis. Our schools have been going beyond providing academics, and schools need support to meet students' mental health and social emotional needs.
- **Streamline grant distribution processes:** Alleviate administrative burden on school districts to access new grants. Targeted investments should be distributed to school districts and ESDs by formula rather than through a competitive grant application process, so that **all** schools in the state can equitably benefit from statewide investments.
- **Maintain sustainable funding in school nutrition programs, extended learning opportunities, and early literacy:**
 - **Maintain funding for school nutrition programs** to ensure that PPS can continue serving free school meals for **all students** through the community eligibility provision. Continue removing barriers to achieve free breakfasts and lunches for **all** students in Oregon.
 - **Identify sustainable, added funding to maintain the Early Literacy Success Initiative.**
 - Invest in **extended learning opportunities, including summer learning and after-school programs**, for all students in Oregon. Pass this budget priority early in the legislative session so that school districts and ESDs have adequate time to plan programming.
- **Establish a 21st century Statewide Accountability System that centers Student Success**
 - Ensure that the state adopts a long-term plan and roadmap for student success. The plan should emphasize a cohesive, not piecemeal, approach to improving student outcomes. The roadmap should include realistic timelines and adequate resources for school districts to improve student outcomes.
 - Improving accountability of high school graduates - ensure that we are measuring the future-ready skills our high school students should have to be successful in their post-secondary endeavors. Ensure that school districts have effective ways to determine student achievement at the high school level.
- **Improve Student Engagement and Attendance**
 - Provide school districts with tools, best practices, and resources to meaningfully engage families, ensure students feel welcome, and cultivate a statewide school-going culture.
- **Strengthen teacher and School Leader pipelines**
 - Provide investments in professional learning for teachers and school leaders.



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- Develop workforce by breaking down barriers like reducing costs for teacher education programs.
- Continue efforts to diversify the teacher workforce, so that students have teachers who look like them.
- **Technical fixes to ensure smooth implementation of recently passed legislation**
 - PPS will call on the Legislature to increase or remove the statutory cap on local option levy collections.
 - PPS will be pursuing technical changes to different statutes to ensure smooth implementation of recently passed legislation.

Additional K-12 Investments

- **Facilities Improvements:** Fund capital improvements and maintenance costs to address school districts' and ESDs' significant needs to address deferred maintenance and modernize and weatherize schools. Ensure there are specific funds available for school districts that cannot pass bonds.
- **Modernize School Curriculum:** School districts across the state pay for curriculum in various ways, as the state school fund has historically not provided enough funding for school districts to provide up-to-date curriculum. Most recently PPS has paid for its curriculum through bond dollars. The state must provide additional funds to support school districts in purchasing up-to-date curriculum in core subjects to set our students up for success.
- **Electrify School Bus Fleets and improve student safety:** Invest in school bus fleet electrification by offering school districts and ESDs funds to pay for electric buses, electric bus chargers, and associated infrastructure. Provide funding and enable revenue sharing opportunities for school districts to purchase stop-arm cameras for buses. Invest in safe routes to and from schools, including funding for crossing guards.
- **Green Schoolyards:** Provide funding to school districts and ESDs to transform asphalt-covered school grounds into park-like green spaces with covered playgrounds that improve children's well-being, learning, and play, while contributing to their communities' ecological health and climate resilience.
- **Ensure Safety and Security from Cyber Threats:** Invest in statewide school cybersecurity plan and infrastructure that protects student data and privacy. Include expertise, guidance and resources across the preparedness continuum that will strengthen safety and security of schools across the state.
- **Improve students' access to healthcare.** Provide funding for school districts to open more school-based health care centers. Expand medicaid-billing opportunities by investing in software and technical assistance for school districts.

FEDERAL PRIORITIES



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The Office of Government Relations will continue to advocate for the following issues at the federal level:

- Fully fund IDEA to increase spending for special education to the full 40 percent financial commitment.
- Increase connectivity funding to provide students and teachers access to devices and internet services for off-campus use and support changes to the E-Rate program to use funds to strengthen IT security infrastructure.
- Protect and increase appropriations for Title I, Title II, Title III, English Language Acquisition Grants, Title IV, and other education funding programs.
- Provide funding for school districts and ESDs to address substance abuse and recovery support services for students.
- Protect and support immigrant students and families, including support for permanent legal protections and a pathway to citizenship for undocumented youth.
- Continue offering funding and flexibilities for school nutrition programs to enable continued free, nutritious meals for all children.
- Invest in school infrastructure to increase financial support for school facilities and greening projects.
- Funding to meet the mental health needs of our students, school staff, and teachers by increasing the number of school-based counselors, psychologists, social workers, and other mental health professionals.