



Sout East Guiding Coalition
Phase 2 Additional Engagement
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South East Guiding Coalition

Initial Feedback: July-August 2021

One-on-one executive conversations with 335 parents/guardians who have current or soon to be middle school-aged children in and reside within the southeast portion of the Portland Public School District helped provide us with initial insight.

RACE/ETHNICITY	COMPLETE INTERVIEWS
Asian	39
Black	40
Latino	91
Multiple/Asian/White	24
Multiracial	28
Native	3
Pacific Islander	1
White	109



RESPONSE	ASIAN	BLACK	LATINO	MULTIPLE/ ASIAN/ WHITE	MULTI- RACIAL	NATIVE	PACIFIC ISLANDER	WHITE	TOTAL
Quality of the school and their teachers	35.9%	50.0%	53.8%	50.0%	39.3%	33.3%	0.0%	54.1%	49.6%
Focus programs/ clubs/ opportunities	25.6%	22.5%	17.6%	29.2%	17.9%	33.3%	0.0%	22.9%	21.8%
Racial and economic diversity of classmates	7.7%	20.0%	6.6%	12.5%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	16.5%	12.5%
Safety/ security	15.4%	7.5%	14.3%	4.2%	21.4%	0.0%	100%	8.3%	11.6%
Quality of their education/ curriculum	15.4%	10.0%	11.0%	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	10.1%	10.4%
Proximity to our home/ walkability	10.3%	7.5%	8.8%	8.3%	10.7%	0.0%	0.0%	10.1%	9.3%
Don't know/ Refused	10.3%	10.0%	7.7%	0.0%	3.6%	66.7%	0.0%	5.5%	7.2%
Same school as they have attended. I do not want them to change	10.3%	7.5%	8.8%	4.2%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	5.5%	6.9%
Go to the same school as their nearby neighborhood friends	12.8%	5.0%	3.3%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.3%	6.0%

Full Initial Report: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qVT9idXnOChYH4tIMzQCaHI94dn9hB1z/view>



Ideas and Input: September-October 2021

To promote authentic engagement, a race-based affinity model supported hearing open thoughts and experiences from students and families in the Southeast impacted by the Phase 2 process throughout September 2021. Recognizing the impact of potential outcomes, we encouraged families from Lane, Creative Science, Harrison Park, Woodstock, and beyond to participate before early decision-making in the process.

- Lane Middle School
 - Black families
 - Asian families
 - Latino/a/x families
 - Staff of color
- General Sessions
 - Families of color one mile from Lane or Harrison Park
 - Spanish Language
 - Chinese Language
- Harrison Park
 - Black families
 - Chinese families
 - Latino/a/x
 - Russian families
 - Somali families
 - Staff of color
- Creative Science School
 - Families of color

Hopes and Aspirations

- Develop thoughtful long-term solutions instead of “quick fix” band aid approaches.
- The goal of increasing demographic diversity at the affected schools (including at the elementary level) should officially be part of the SEGC’s charge.
- Identify strategies for actively recruiting and retaining BIPOC teachers, administrators, and staff at PPS schools.
- Equalize distribution of programs, including providing age-appropriate elective options to middle grade students in
- K-8 facilities and expanding dual language programs across schools.
- Promote culturally centered schools that provide a sense of welcoming and belonging to all students and families, including immigrant communities.
- Invest in effective teaching and learning practices, such as project-based learning, to position all students for a successful transition to high school.
- Support the physical, social and emotional needs of all students by providing fairly distributed resources across schools to meet students’ basic needs and ensure that every student arrives ready to learn.



Doubts and Fears

- BIPOC students/families will feel devalued or excluded.
- Additional burdens will be placed on families that are already marginalized.
- Loud voices will threaten to derail the SEGC's work.

Key Themes from Listening & Learning Sessions:

<https://www.pps.net/cms/lib/OR01913224/Centricity/Domain/265/21-1007%20SEGC%20Key%20L%20and%20L%20Themes.pdf>

Action and Accountability: December 2021

Specific and targeted spaces that continue the race-based affinity model were made available for direct input on proposed scenarios.

- Black, Indigenous & Students of Color
- Spanish-Language
- Mandarin-Language
- Black, Indigenous, & People of Color
- PAT General Session
- Russian-Language
- Somali-Language
- Vietnamese-Language
- Cantonese-Language

As a result of this engagement, the Southeast Guiding Coalition split into groups to review the raw data and determine common themes, new information received, and who we are missing from at the December 16, 2021 public meeting.

Group 1 Themes (Clackamas)

- Continuing to hear impact of disruption to school communities, especially now
- Kellogg has faced upheaval and is concerned about further change to Spanish DLI, community feels let down and that change is disrespectful
- People share resistance to change in a clear way
- Hesitation from families who may possibly move to a lower performing school
- Dominant narratives are strong, and there is a hesitancy to voice unpopular opinions



- Communities may struggle from a mismatch in program movement, impacting kids of color and low SES kids significantly

Group 2 Themes (Columbia)

- Middle school consolidation is welcomed but limits access to programs due to location
- Lack of understanding around transportation accessibility, and how they will be affected by feeder patterns
- Creative Science needs clarity from PPS moving forward
- The feeling in the room seemed that most affluent schools are being protected from disruption, and there is a concern on “who isn’t impacted” by the process
- Harrison Park seemed more engaged in Phase 1, but neighborhood families are feeling heard from their advocacy on remaining together
- Lent and Harrison Park voices need more representation

Group 3 Themes (Willamette)

- What is meant by “equity”?
- Presence of frustration and mistrust with the process, with the open house seeming contentious
- Need to hear from Lent and Harrison Park families
- Arleta community is invested in staying together
- Community wants to understand why inner Southeast schools are not being heard
- Voices at Woodstock Chinese DLI prefer program co-location
- Difficult to make judgements without community knowledge of high school implications
- Excitement that Bridger could have multiple neighborhood strands

Phase 2 Additional Engagement: Late January 2022 to Present

The engagement elicited feedback from roughly 60 community members regarding draft proposals to balance enrollment in South East Portland schools, and took place through focus groups, phone calls, and text messages. Phonebanking continues with families in early February.

Languages

Engagement opportunities were offered in Vietnamese and Mandarin.

Schools

More participants indicated they were associated with Harrison Park (22 participants) than any other school, followed by Lent School (38), with (9) completing each question regarding the proposals. Engagement for Bridger specific families is in progress.



Summary of Additional Engagement

To incorporate more representation of voices, especially those who are disproportionately impacted by the proposed changes, additional community engagement was conducted with targeted school communities. A focus was on neighborhood program family input, including those who are at schools with a co-located model.

Question 1: How do you define success? What are barriers to success? How does school play a part in that?

Lent, Harrison Park

- Experienced administrators who set learning outcomes set by the school help my child's behavior
- Language is a barrier to success at school. Parents still need a lot of support from school
- Friends and teachers have a big influence on children. Family and kids need attention from staff.
- Access to after school activities like chess club and social activities help support success
- Concern about diverse kids going to Kellogg without the support they need

Bridger, Marysville

- Science, reading, and arts curriculum
- A strong support system and social encouragement of students
- Strong support of Bridger becoming Creative Science School
- Teachers and Marysville principal caring for each student is recognized

Feedback on DLI Impacts in Scenarios

- Whole school model is okay if the diversity of students in co-located models is maintained
- "It would be awesome" (to have a whole school DLI at Lent)
- Strong support of whole school DLI at Lent
- Some disagreement with whole school model from neighborhood Lent families
- A large amount of parents express a preference for DLI programs remaining at Harrison Park
- Neighborhood Families are feeling heard at Harrison Park, and express value in multiple options
- Enrollment forecasts aren't capturing the new construction & open homes waiting to be purchased or rented in the neighborhood--it feels like the projection might be overly conservative especially once the HP facilities have been refreshed.
- Preference to have one DLI program at Harrison Park so school isn't too populated and administrators can build more relationships with students
- Both great support for whole school Spanish DLI, and resistance other families from this option



South East Guiding Coalition Phase 2 Community Survey Summary

Report by our Research, Assessment and Accountability Department

This memorandum summarizes 408 responses to the Phase 2 Community Survey for the South East Guiding Coalition. The survey elicited feedback from 408 community members regarding draft proposals to balance enrollment in South East Portland schools.

Languages

This survey was translated in all five languages supported by PPS (Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Somali). There were 408 responses to the English language version of the survey, two responses to the Chinese version of the survey, one response in Somali, and zero responses to the surveys in Spanish, Russian, or Vietnamese. The three individuals who responded to surveys in languages other than English did not complete the survey beyond the first item or submit any comments about the proposals.

Racial and Ethnic Identity

Survey participants were asked to provide their racial and ethnic identity prior to submitting comments about the proposals (Table 1).

A disproportionate number of White, non-Hispanic community members responded to the Phase 2 survey: over 83% of participants responded that they identify as White compared with under 56% of students in the district (Table 1). Nearly 17% of PPS students but under 5% of survey participants identify as Hispanic – Latin/x/a/o. No participants identified as African American or Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.

Table 1. Participant Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Survey Participants		PPS Students
	<i>n</i>	%	%
Asian	17	4.2	6.0
Hispanic – Latin/x/a/o	19	4.7	16.7
Native American or Alaska Native	4	1.0	0.5
Multi-Racial	16	3.9	11.8
White, non-Hispanic – Latin/x/a/o	340	83.3	55.8
Other	12	2.9	NA
Overall	408	100.0	100.0

Note. No participants identified as African American or Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.



Schools

More participants indicated they were associated with Woodstock Elementary School (82 responses) than any other school, followed by Creative Science School (78), Atkinson (52), and Arleta (47). Some participants were not associated with schools impacted by the proposals, including one participant who indicated that they homeschool their student (Appendix A).

Some survey participants indicated that they were associated with Dual Language Immersion (DLI) schools:

- Woodstock Mandarin Immersion: 18 participants;
- Atkinson Spanish Immersion: eight participants;
- Bridger Spanish Immersion: five participants; and
- Lent Spanish Immersion: two participants.

Reactions to Proposals

The survey asked participants, “Who might benefit or be burdened by the proposed changes? Please consider other school communities as well as your own school in your response.”

The following themes emerged from participants’ responses to this question.

- Combining DLI programs could help build community among people from different cultures¹
- Creative Sciences School would benefit from a new location, but some participants felt the burden on students in other schools was too great
- General concerns about how any change burdens historically underserved groups (students of color, students in special education, English Language Learners, students experiencing food insecurity)²
- General concerns about how any change during the pandemic adds stress to students, teachers, and families³
- Concerns about moving the Woodstock program out of a neighborhood with a large population of people who speak Mandarin, about transportation for Mandarin DLI students
- Concerns about how changes to Spanish Immersions impact the Latinx community⁴
- Concerns about how students in neighborhood programs are impacted⁵

¹ “The co-location of the DLI program will benefit the neighborhood community and the native Mandarin speaker community as it brings groups from different culture background together.” (Asian Woodstock DLI community member)

² “The individuals most impacted by these programs would be our immigrant, Latinx families that would be displaced from the school they have CHOSEN to attend, whether that is for reasons of proximity to their homes or work.” (Latinx Atkinson community member)

³ “This school disruption can wait until COVID is under control and people have their heads above water.” (Latinx Creative Sciences School community member)

⁴ “Our Latino community might be burdened for this change by separating the Spanish Immersion in such a distinctive way.” (White Lent community member)

⁵ “Neighborhood schools and their communities are being disrupted to benefit focus option students and their communities.” (Latinx Atkinson community member)



- Concerns about disrupting neighborhoods⁶

Conclusions and Next Steps

No clear consensus emerged from the responses to the Phase 2 Survey, as one community member remarked: “The burden is the impact that children being relocated would experience. The benefit is to those who get to stay at their existing schools.” (Latinx Woodstock DLI community member).

Many participants commented that they were concerned about equitable representation during the planning process.^{7,8,9} In response to these concerns, PPS conducted additional community outreach through intentionally designed focus groups and information sessions for members of the communities impacted by the proposed changes.

Summary of Additional Engagement

To incorporate more representation of voices, especially those who are disproportionately impacted by the proposed changes, additional community engagement was conducted with targeted school communities. A focus was on neighborhood program family input, including those who are at schools with a co-located model.

This engagement is in progress - but this update summarizes responses from January 27th to February 3rd. The engagement elicited feedback from roughly 60 community members regarding draft proposals to balance enrollment in South East Portland schools, and took place through focus groups, phone calls, and text messages. Engagement opportunities were offered in Vietnamese and Mandarin.

More participants indicated they were associated with Harrison Park (22 participants) than any other school, followed by Lent School (38), with (9) completing each question regarding the proposals. Engagement for Bridger specific families is in progress.

⁶ “We all might be impacted. We have built a community that we value and we don’t want that destroyed. The school is across the street from our house. We like our child to attend school with our neighbors. We don’t want to transport our child. We like the diversity. We oppose the proposed changes. If there is a change it should be done year by year rather than all at once.” (White Lent community member)

⁷ “I’m trying to figure out who is representing indigenous/Native American students and families in this proposal. I honestly am completely lost in what is happening and why. It’s not my first PPS close your school down rodeo but it is definitely the first one that I have not been represented at the table.” (Native American/Alaska Native Creative Sciences School community member)

⁸ “We must carefully consider how these changes will affect and be perceived by communities of color in Portland. The stated goals of the SEGC include a lot of lofty language about inclusion and equity, but that sort of language means little if the process, proposals, and outcomes are not supported by those communities. Said another way, PPS and the SEGC might have reasons to make changes that they believe would benefit communities of color, but if the affected communities don’t agree with or know about those reasons, then forcing those changes harms those communities and makes your motives and reasons meaningless and untrustworthy.” (White Atkinson Spanish DLI community member)

⁹ “Get in the school and talk to the parents. Get in the different neighborhoods that help never goes to and find out what the families need for their students to learn and be successful. We are struggling so much in this community. The recent awareness brought by protests is only scrapped the surface, we need to reach out to all the families and give them what they need!” (Multi-Racial Woodmere, Lane, Franklin community member)



Question 1: How do you define success? What are barriers to success? How does school play a part in that? (This primarily represents feedback from Lent families-- as Harrison Park sessions were led by the Principal, who has a rapport built with families.)

- Experienced administrators who set learning outcomes set by the school help my child's behavior
- Language is a barrier to success at school. Parents still need a lot of support from school
- Friends and teachers have a big influence on children. Family and kids need attention from staff.
- Access to after school activities like chess club and social activities help support success
- Concern about diverse kids going to Kellogg without the support they need

Feedback on DLI Impacts in Scenarios

Lent

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Harrison Park

- A large amount of parents express a preference for DLI programs remaining at Harrison Park
- Neighborhood Families are feeling heard at Harrison Park, and express value in multiple options
- Enrollment forecasts aren't capturing the new construction & open homes waiting to be purchased or rented in the neighborhood--it feels like the projection might be overly conservative especially once the HP facilities have been refreshed.
- Preference to have one DLI program at Harrison Park so school isn't too populated and administrators can build more relationships with students

*Appendix A: Schools*

School	Number of responses
Woodstock	82
Creative Science School	78
Atkinson	52
Arleta	47
Bridger	30
Lewis	25
Marysville	22
Mt Tabor	21
Sellwood MS	17
Kellogg	15
Hosford	13
Franklin	11
Glencoe	6
Lent	5
Richmond	4
Cleveland	3
Creston	3
Harrison Park	3
Alameda	1
Beaumont	1
Buckman	1
Grant	1
Grout	1
Lane	1
Vestal	1
Woodmere	1
Other (e.g., homeschooling, incoming kinder in 2022-23, etc.)	3

Note: Survey participants could indicate more than one school, no participant indicated they were affiliated with more than three schools.