



## **Increase PPS Students' Sense of Belonging and Safety: Addressing Negative Impacts of Article 9 "Discipline and Safety" that Disproportionately Affect Black, Latino and Students of Color**

October 12, 2022

Dear PPS families and students,

PPS is committed to the health and well-being of our school communities. We believe that each of our students is brilliant and talented, and capable of learning, growing, and achieving. With this as our starting point, our job is to shape district policies so that educators can unlock each student's full potential.

Our current discipline policies do not further this goal. We have reached this conclusion from reviewing [years and years of student discipline records](#) that show:

- Black students are 3.5 times more likely to be referred, suspended, and sent to disciplinary hearings.
- Native American students are 2.5 times more likely to be referred, suspended, and sent to disciplinary hearings.
- Latinx students are 1.24 times more likely to be referred, suspended, and sent to disciplinary hearings.

Special education students also bear the burden of disproportionate discipline: additionally, they represent over 90% of students on whom restraint was used.

This system is clearly not unlocking each student's full potential, but we cannot just change it. Because it concerns the safety of our teachers' workplace, it needs to change as part of our contract negotiations with the Portland Association of Teachers (PAT), which began on October 12.

In those negotiations, we start from a baseline commitment to educator and student safety. We believe we can keep that commitment while aligning the PAT contract with our core shared value of racial equity and social justice. Guided by the evidence, we can enact discipline policies that are trauma-informed, build relational trust, embrace human dignity, and restore justice.

You can learn more about the specifics of our proposal [here](#).

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