



Richmond Newsletter

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A Letter from Portland Public Schools Board of Education Co-Chairs David Wynde & Bobbie Regan

When the three-year county income tax expires in June, Portland Public Schools and our neighboring school districts will face a significant loss in their budgets. For PPS, we're faced with \$57 million in budget cuts in 2006-07: \$50 million lost from the income tax and \$7 million of cuts that we deferred last year.

Those new reductions would come on top of cuts made last year, when the local option property tax expired and state desegregation funding ended. Those \$25 million in cuts included the elimination of 245 teaching positions and huge reductions to central staff supporting students in our classrooms.

Over the last few weeks, parents, school district leaders, community representatives and local government leaders have been meeting, and a plan to address our school funding crisis is emerging. Although the final details are not decided, this is the outline of the proposal under discussion:

- A funding measure on the May 2006 ballot would support stable and adequate school funding for students across the city.
- The City of Portland has stepped up to help (thank you, Mayor Potter!), after the Legislature failed to provide adequate funding, the regional tax discussion faltered, and the County Commission ruled out the possibility of a funding solution for all county students.
- All funds raised through a local funding

measure would pay for teaching positions and other direct support to schools; none of the money would be used on central office administration. For PPS, the funding levels under discussion would prevent further cuts to school staff, and might even restore some teaching jobs cut last year.

- Five Portland school districts would benefit: Centennial, David Douglas, Parkrose, Reynolds and Portland Public Schools. Each is losing 12 to 18 percent of their operating General Fund as the county income tax expires.
- The new funding proposal will be a Portland city income tax targeted only to schools, would cost less than the expiring county tax, and would include stringent accountability requirements. The business community would share responsibility for maintaining Portland's strong public schools.
- The funding proposal would ensure our most important promise: To provide Portland's children with the quality education they deserve.

Portland City Council is expected to vote to refer a measure to city voters by February 1. You may also learn more about this effort by contacting HOPE, at Doug@hope4schools.org. We will keep you posted as this evolves and look forward to working with you to ensure a great school district 100% focused on raising student achievement!

Bobbie Regan and David Wynde

Portland Public Schools

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Special points of interest:

- ☺ Letter of congratulations from Susan Castillo, Oregon Superintendent of Public Instruction
- ☺ Registration form for after school calligraphy class
- ☺ PPS TAG Student Showcase information
- ☺ OMSI Day for PPS Students on Feb. 22
- ☺ Key facts on the Portland Public Schools' budget
- ☺ Order form for coffee to support the elms

ITEMS NEEDED FOR AUCTION

So far, approximately \$30,000 worth of items have been donated to the auction. This amount is far below the necessary level to secure funding for our 5th grade trip, Oya No Kai cultural support and our Foundation. Please look through this list and see if you know any professional or business to approach for a donation:

- Airlines for plane tickets
- Restaurants for gift certificates
- Gardening services
- Home decorating services
- Home remodeling services
- Carpenters and general "fix-it" folks
- Galleries for pieces of art

- Artists for weavings, jewelry, paintings, pottery, etc.

The auction procurement forms and envelopes are in the main hallway on the big blue table. Please stop by and pick some up before you talk to your intended donors.



We need your help getting donations of items for the auction!

LEARN THE ART OF JAPANESE TEA CEREMONY

Elaborate kimonos, beautiful pottery and elegant sweets are the props for this age-old Japanese tradition, in which the simple act of serving and receiving tea is raised to a fine art. Come learn this art for yourself. Over an 8-week period, you will learn the basic skills of making special, frothy green tea, as well as the history and meaning of the ceremony.

Classes are each Wednesday from January 25 to March 22, 2006.

For more information about the class, please contact Masae Wright at 503-640-9303.

"There are few hours in life more agreeable than the hour dedicated to the ceremony known as tea."

Henry James (1843-1916)

BANK DAY NEWS—SEEKING A NEW COORDINATOR

Bank Day has been a long-standing tradition at Richmond and the oldest school banking program in the district. Every Wednesday morning, 60-70 Richmond students rush to the cafeteria to make their bank deposits and select a prize.

Bank Day has been lovingly coordinated by Wendy Sakai, parent of a graduating fifth grader, for the last eight years. As Wendy and her family move to Mt. Tabor



Bank Day is a great way to save for the 5th grade trip!

next year, we need to find a new Bank Day Coordinator to carry on in Wendy's place. Wendy will provide training and walk the new coordinator through the beginning of the school year in September.

Please contact Wendy Sakai if you are interested in this once per week volunteer project: 503-246-5298.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR AWARDS ASSEMBLY TODAY

Pictures clockwise from the top:

1). Special guests that wrote letters of support for our Goldman Sachs Award.

2). Consul General Egawa receives a welcome gift from Richmond students. Michael Bacon, PPS Immersion Coordinator and Sawae Watanabe, PSU professor also pictured.

3). Deanne Balzer introduces our student performers.

4). Third graders perform for our special guests.



Portland Public Schools

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Japanese Magnet Program



Portland

Calendar for January 16-February 3

Mon. Jan. 16	NO SCHOOL in honor of Dr. King's Birthday
Wed. Jan. 18	Kindergarten coffee/tea at 8:45-9:30 AM Auction committee meeting at 7:00 PM in vol. Rm.
Thurs. Jan. 19	8th grade information night at Mt. Tabor
Fri. Jan. 20	1st Grade coffee/tea at 8:45-9:30 AM
Tues. Jan. 24	Scrip order day Oya No Kai Board meeting at 6:45 PM
Wed. Jan. 25	2nd Grade coffee/tea at 8:45-9:30 AM Mandatory meeting for auction and 5 th grade parents regarding Japan trip 7:00 PM
Thurs. Jan. 26	Information night for Prospective Parents 7:00-9:00 PM in cafeteria
Fri. Jan. 27	3rd Grade coffee/tea at 8:45-9:30 AM Scrip pick up day
Sat. Jan. 28	Mochitsuki 2006 at PCC Sylvania Campus 12:00-4:00 PM. Richmond will have a booth to display information about our school with packets for interested parents. Richmond students perform at 12:20 PM.
Wed. Feb. 1	Principal for a Day 4th Grade coffee/tea at 8:45-9:30 AM 5th grade trip performance rehearsal at 3-4:00 PM
Fri. Feb. 3	Setsuban (Day to chase away evil spirits in Japan) 5th Grade coffee/tea at 8:45-9:30 AM

TWO BUDGET INITIATIVES UNDERWAY AT RICHMOND

1st Initiative—Weekly Parent Coffees

Getting information to parents about the district budget process and the impact on our staffing at Richmond is an important responsibility over the next few months. Parents want to know about the funding resources at Richmond, how money is raised and how decisions are made about the use of these funds. Parents also want to know how we seek their input about budget and staffing issues.

This past Wednesday, at our general parent meeting, we decided to establish weekly parent coffee and tea gatherings to give you a chance to chat with our interim principal about budget and staffing issues or any other area of need. Parents thought these gatherings would be best by grade level, so the following schedule has been set up accordingly. We'll meet in the Volunteer Room at 8:45-9:30 AM. Please join us!

Kindergarten Parents— Wed. Jan. 18 & Wed. Feb. 8

1st Grade Parents—Fri. Jan. 20 & Feb. 10

2nd Grade Parents—Wed. Jan. 25 & Wed. Feb. 15

3rd Grade Parents—Fri. Jan. 27 & Feb. 17

4th Grade Parents—Wed. Feb. 1 & Mar. 1

5th Grade Parents—Fri. Feb. 3 & Mar. 3

2nd Initiative—Fundraising Committee for Strategic Plan

A committee is in the process of forming to establish a fundraising action plan for our school's strategic planning work. This committee will have two representatives from each Richmond parent group: Foundation, Oya No Kai and PTA. We also need two parent representatives from each grade level K-5. The time commitment is approximately 4-6 hours per month with a May 2006 deadline.

Our first meeting will be Monday, January 23 at 6:30-8:00 PM in the Volunteer Room (105). Future meetings will be set as a group. Please contact Kathryn Anderson if you are willing to serve as a grade level representative (503-916-6220 or keanders@pps.k12.or.us).