

Climate Crisis Response Committee
c/o Barbara Alexander, Chair

Dr. Kimberlee Armstrong, Superintendent
Portland Public Schools District
501 N. Dixon Street
Portland, OR 97227

Dear Dr. Armstrong,

On behalf of the Climate Crisis Response Committee, I am writing to express our deep concerns regarding the potential impacts of the proposed budget cuts on Portland Public School District's ability to uphold its climate policies and meet critical decarbonization and climate justice goals. As the district works to navigate these challenging financial circumstances, we urge you to prioritize transparency and accountability in ensuring that PPS's climate commitments remain at the forefront of decision-making.

Accountability in Upholding Decarbonization Policies

The district has made clear and public commitments to decarbonization, sustainability, and climate justice. We respectfully request that the district provide a thorough analysis of how proposed budget cuts will affect the programs, staff, and policies directly supporting these goals. Specifically, if positions such as program managers, sustainability coordinators, or climate-focused educators are eliminated or reduced, what is the expected impact on the district's ability to achieve the decarbonization targets outlined in PPS's policies? A clear accountability framework is necessary to ensure that budget decisions align with rather than undermine the district's climate responsibilities.

Analysis of Budget Cuts and Program Impacts

We further request that the district conduct and publicly share an analysis of how specific budget reductions will directly affect PPS's climate and sustainability programs. For example, if a staff position is cut, and that position played a key role in tracking greenhouse gas emissions, coordinating with facilities staff, or integrating climate curriculum into classrooms, what is the measurable setback to PPS's decarbonization progress? Without this analysis, the district risks unintentional and significant regression in meeting both short- and long-term climate goals.

Student and Community Intersections

The student body, particularly students from frontline and historically marginalized communities, remains at the center of climate justice work. Cuts to climate programs or sustainability staff do not just affect operational goals, they impact students' educational opportunities, health, and sense of environmental agency. The district's commitment to climate justice requires not only

the continuation but the deepening of partnerships with community organizations, environmental advocates, and culturally specific partners. These partnerships ensure climate action is equitable and rooted in the lived experiences of our students and their families.

Preserving Skilled Administrative Staff

Finally, we must emphasize the indispensable role of experienced administrative staff in advancing the district's climate goals. These professionals hold institutional knowledge, maintain critical partnerships, and ensure accountability across departments. If proposed budget reductions disproportionately affect administrative staff responsible for coordinating sustainability and climate justice work, the consequences could be catastrophic, unraveling years of progress and jeopardizing the district's credibility as a climate leader. We strongly urge you to consider the long-term costs of such cuts, both environmentally and socially.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your leadership team to discuss these concerns in greater detail. The Climate Crisis Response Committee remains committed to partnering with Portland Public Schools to ensure that climate action, equity, and fiscal responsibility go hand in hand.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Barbara Alexander
Chair, Climate Crisis Response Committee
Portland Public Schools

cc: PPS School Board
PPS Office of Climate Justice
PPS Office of Energy and Sustainability
PPS Community Partners