



"Portland Public Schools has entered a period of relative, if still inadequate, budget stability. We have the opportunity now to turn our full focus on our true mission: making sure every student in every classroom in every neighborhood is prepared to succeed. This is our time, and this is our challenge."

— Carole Smith



Our Schools Perform Above the State Average

70% PPS

61% OR

PPS schools that met federal benchmarks vs. state average
(Source: Oregon Department of Education)

"Within Portland's schools there is creativity and a willingness to try innovative approaches. Nike's goal is to help unlock that creativity and give schools, principals, teachers and children the resources to help kids reach their potential."

— Mark Parker, President & CEO, Nike Inc., parent of PPS graduates and founder of the Nike School Innovation Fund



Our Teachers Are Experienced

PPS 14 years

OR 12 years

PPS teachers have two more years of experience on average than teachers statewide. (Source: ODE)



Our Average Class Size Is Less Than 25

K-5	23.9
K-8	22.7
6-8	24.3
9-12	22.6

Beginning this fall, PPS is reducing kindergarten class sizes.

Moving Forward Together

Parent, grandparent, business owner, neighbor — everyone has a stake in the success of the more than 46,000 students of Portland Public Schools.

In that spirit, I want to tell you what's happening in our school district and share some of our successes in the past year.

Our world is changing, and so are the expectations for students and schools. Today, it's not enough to make sure our students get a diploma — not when 75 percent of living-wage jobs demand computer skills and our technology-based economy faces a shortage of well-educated employees.

Thanks to your support, we're rising to the challenge of educating students for a changing world:

Our students regularly do better than the Oregon average on key measures of academic achievement.

Our schools offer great choices — strong neighborhood programs and others that allow students to explore environmental science, technology, the arts and world languages.

Our teachers rate among the most experienced in the state — and show incredible dedication to our children.

Are we doing all we can for every one of our students? No.

Too many students from low-income or minority families lag behind their counterparts in most measures of academic achievement. Too many of our high school students leave school without a diploma — and too few graduates go to college.

Too many schools have leaky roofs and windows, unreliable heating and obsolete classrooms that are ill-equipped to support the technological needs of today's students.

But this year, we took important steps to strengthen our schools and support our students. The Portland School Board and our teachers agreed on hiring reforms to make sure we can match the right teacher with the right classroom. We lowered kindergarten class sizes, and we helped students stay on track through key transitions: after kindergarten and after first, sixth and eighth grades.

We also prepared to upgrade our schools — more than 65 years old on average — and to reduce our energy use, lowering costs and providing a better learning environment for our students.

All of these accomplishments involved parents, teachers, school staff, volunteers, business owners and other community partners. I am grateful for your partnership and support.

Our students are growing into the next generation of leaders, scientists, teachers, artists and entrepreneurs — not to mention parents, co-workers, neighbors and friends.

They will shape our lives as much as we shape theirs. It's important for us to help them reach their dreams — because the only way for us to move forward is together.

Carole

Carole Smith
Portland Public Schools Superintendent



"The core of our program is teaching students to be ethical, caring and responsible, to treat each other with respect, dignity and honor. They need to be equipped for conflict and life's injustices, not just with coping skills but with self-advocacy. From there, everything else flows: academic achievement, community service, extracurricular activities."

— Kevin Bacon, Principal of Hosford Middle School, which was named a 2008 recipient of the Oregon Celebrating Student Success Award

Preparing Our Students for Success

Picture a kindergartner at a Portland school, learning to write her name, to solve a math puzzle or to cooperate with a classmate. Someday, she may build a bridge, run a business or cure an illness. The skills she will need to accomplish those tasks — skills our community will depend on — are taking shape today in her classroom. Her future, and ours, is already happening.

Our goal at Portland Public Schools is to prepare our students to succeed, not just at each grade, but for a future beyond our schools: college, careers and fulfilling lives as good parents, neighbors and members of the community.

How are we making that happen? With strong teaching, rigorous new standards and targeted support at key transition points to keep kids on track:

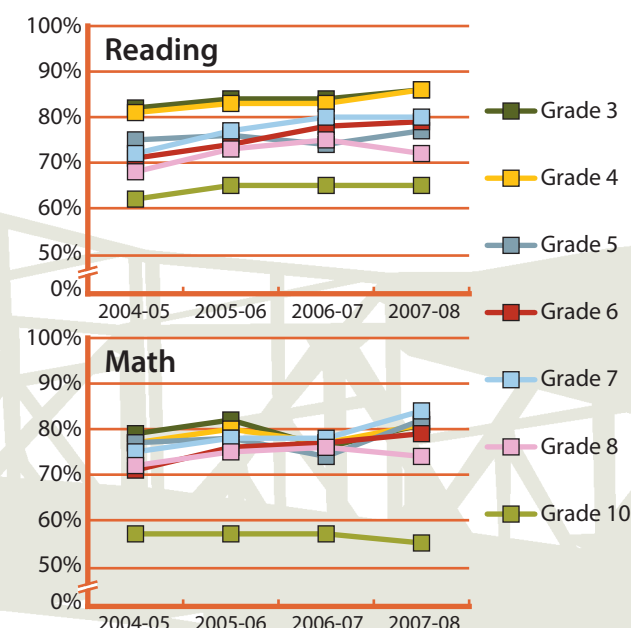
- ▶ Over the last two summers, more than 600 kindergartners and first-graders have reached and exceeded benchmarks, through our **Summer Academy for Early Learners**. This academy is one of the first projects sponsored by the Nike School Innovation Fund, a five-year, \$9 million effort to support new initiatives in Portland, Beaverton and Hillsboro schools.
- ▶ **Thousands of new library books** will hit the shelves of our PK-8 schools this fall.

- ▶ This year, we adopted **rigorous new education standards** for all grades that align our lessons with national and state standards — and often exceed them. Working with teachers, we adopted hiring reforms to match the right teacher with the right classroom.
- ▶ We delivered **thousands of cutting-edge textbooks, lab supplies, maps and electronic media** to teachers and students in elementary and middle grades, with the newest round bringing materials for health and middle school social studies.
- ▶ Schools **boosted achievement** for more than 3,000 students who were performing below standard as they entered high school. Extra class hours, tutoring, parent meetings and other supports helped these students pass their classes and keep pace to graduate.

Making the Grade

Student assessment data are one indicator of success in preparing students for productive lives. Over the last several years, achievement in Portland Public Schools has risen across grade levels — but we're striving for bigger gains. Another measure is the recognition given our graduating seniors. Our students have been selected for numerous awards and scholarships.

Academic Gains on State Assessments



Students Meeting/Exceeding State Standards
(Source: ODE)

"A lot of kids have been let down. There has to be somebody to help them grow and inspire them. I felt like it was my calling to be one of those people."

— Jason Owens, teacher at Madison High School and a 2008 winner of the Mr. Holland's Opus Award



"My philosophy is that the teacher makes the class — and my teachers have been great, in almost every subject."

— Nathan Mathabane, 2008 state winner of the Gatorade Player of the Year award for track and field, 2008-09 senior body president and co-captain of the Lincoln High School debate team

PPS Graduation Rates 2002-07 (Source: ODE)

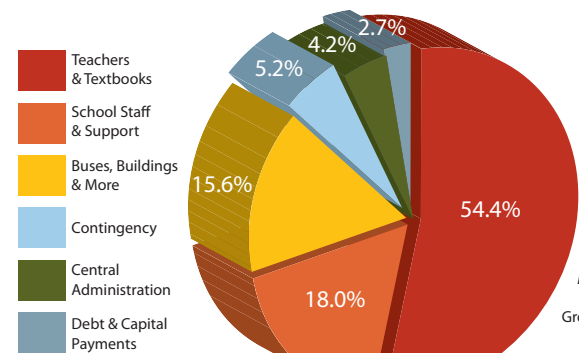
2002-03	64.4%
2003-04	66.0%
2004-05	70.6%
2005-06	70.1%
2006-07	65.6%

Free college — forever. That's essentially what seven Portland Public Schools students earned this year when they were awarded the coveted Gates Millennium Scholarship, given nationally to 1,000 high-achieving minority students. The scholarship covers all unmet financial needs through graduate school.

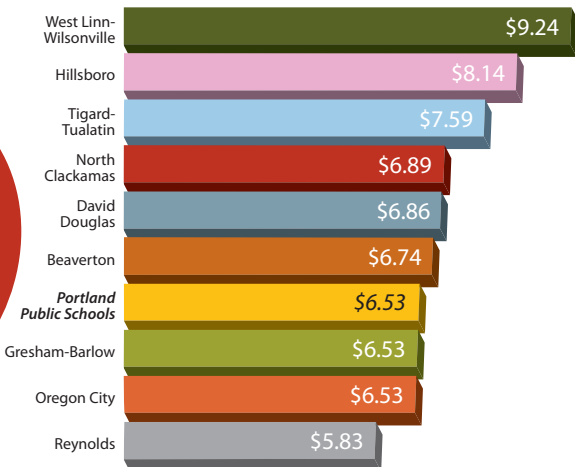
Whole brain. Rebecca Anderson of Lincoln High School is a 2008 Presidential Scholar, one of 141 students selected nationwide. Anderson was recognized for her academic and musical achievements.

Think you know your Constitution? Don't go toe-to-toe with PPS students. This year, a team from Grant High School placed third in the national We the People competition. "These kids have a deeper understanding of the Constitution than most Americans," says team adviser Geoffrey Henderson.

2008-09 PPS General Fund Budget (\$452 million)



2007-08 Property Taxes (per \$1,000 of assessed value)



Spending Where It Counts: In the Classroom

Portland Public Schools has achieved budget stability in the past two years, thanks to the community's passage of a local option levy. Even with that levy, the tax rate for Portland Public Schools is lower than in most neighboring school districts.

The PPS budget remains inadequate to restore all the programs schools once offered, but for now the funding crisis has passed. The five-year local option has allowed schools to:

- ▶ Maintain teaching positions.
- ▶ Keep class sizes lower than the suburban average.
- ▶ Purchase new classroom materials for teachers and students at every school.

Each year, a citizen budget review committee examines our budget, ensuring that every dollar of the local option funding is spent as taxpayers intended: in the classroom, on our students.

The bulk of school funding comes from the state school fund. Almost **80 cents** of every dollar support classroom instruction, school buildings and transportation. About **5 cents** are dedicated to reserves, and **4 cents** are used for central administration.

According to the State Database Initiative, Portland Public Schools spends the same percentage on administration as the average Oregon school district.

We continue to look for ways to reduce costs and save money for our classrooms. In recent years, we have:

- ▶ Hired an independent performance auditor to scrutinize critical functions such as teacher hiring, facilities maintenance and health care costs, and to suggest improvements.
- ▶ Reduced costs on liability insurance.
- ▶ Begun using propane in our school buses and redesigned bus routes to be more fuel-efficient.
- ▶ Worked with partners to install energy-saving and environmentally friendly features in school buildings.
- ▶ Eliminated centralized food processing to cut costs while bringing more local food to lunch trays.
- ▶ Capped health care premiums for most employees and worked with teachers to limit and share medical coverage costs.

Moving Forward Together: Report on Our Schools 2008 cost 22 cents per copy to print and distribute. We gratefully acknowledge the support of the generous sponsors who made this report possible.

Portland Public Schools: Facts and Figures

Student enrollment (October 2007)

District schools	43,130
Community-based programs	1,342
Special services programs	539
Public charter schools	1,077
Total	46,088

Our students (October 2007)

African American	16%
Asian/Pacific Islander	11%
Hispanic	14%
Native American	2%
White	55%
Other	3%
Languages spoken	111
English language learners	10%
Eligible for free/reduced-price meals	45%
Receive special education services	15%

Schools (September 2008)

Elementary	30
K-8 schools	27
Middle schools	11
High schools	16
K-12	1
Total	85

In addition: PPS students attend 7 charter schools, 25 community-based alternative programs and 16 special services programs.

The Portland Public Schools Board of Education comprises seven volunteer directors and one high school student representative: Co-Chairs **Dilafroz Williams** and **Trudy Sargent**; **Ruth Adkins**, **Martín González**, **Sonja Henning**, **Bobbie Regan** and **David Wynde**; and **Olin Stickler**, student representative.

Contact the board office: **503-916-3741**, schoolboard@pps.k12.or.us

"Portland Public Schools is key to Portland's future. High-quality local schools are vital to economic development: Starting in the earliest grades, our schools train the work force local businesses hire, and they are a key community ingredient necessary to attract and retain the best talent. Good things are happening in our schools — I'm glad PPS is delivering on that trust."

— **Sandra McDonough**,
President & CEO,
Portland Business Alliance

Working for a Healthy Environment

Resource conservation is important to Portland Public Schools. We built LEED Gold-certified **Rosa Parks Elementary School (above)**. We use solar power at six schools, carefully manage storm water to reduce pollution and donate surplus food from cafeterias to those in need. We've been replacing energy-inefficient lighting and heating equipment. This year, students will enjoy a locally grown meal once a month, thanks to a new grant.

These efforts make sense financially as well as environmentally. We save thousands of dollars each year by conserving resources. And the savings could be even greater. We have performed an audit of our school buildings and hope in the near future to renovate or rebuild our aging facilities to make them more energy- and space-efficient.

We're Better Together



What happens in Portland Public Schools affects all of us. Our quality of life and our city's vitality depend on the strength of our schools.

Prosperity — Our local economy depends upon schools to produce educated and skilled workers, to allow existing businesses to grow, and to develop the next generation's entrepreneurs, who will create new jobs.

Community — Our schools form strong bonds of community within neighborhoods. Every year, they're the site for thousands of events and programs hosted by neighborhood groups, churches, community organizations and after-school programs. Our playgrounds and fields are gathering spaces for recreation and sports.

Sustainability — As one of Portland's largest employers and property owners, Portland Public Schools has a responsibility to do business in ways that preserve the environment for our students' future. Just as critical: educating students to be leaders in the effort.

Across the community, **more than 18,000 individuals volunteer in our schools**, reading with children, mentoring our youth, offering internships, goods and services, improving our grounds. Our **public and nonprofit partners** support our students with programs, funding and new opportunities.

In turn, our students are assuming their role as **community members**: removing invasive plants from Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge, collecting canned goods for food banks, visiting residences for senior citizens, gathering socks and hats for the homeless, and raising money for relief efforts worldwide.

Through mutual acts of service, we build bridges in our community.

Portland would not be the city it is today — livable and vital — without its strong public schools. Together, we can set a course for our future: Better, together.

Moving Forward Together: Report on Our Schools 2008 was produced by the Portland Public Schools Communications Office. For the latest news on Portland Public Schools, visit our Web site: www.pps.k12.or.us. To share your questions or ideas about schools, write us at pubinfo@pps.k12.or.us.

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