

July 19, 2010

Portland Public Schools' Budget Cuts

In the face of reduced state funding for the 2010-11 budget year, Portland Public Schools Superintendent Carole Smith plans to move forward with the following budget cuts totaling just over \$13 million.

Central operations and supports: \$3.1 million

Central departments will see budget reductions from 3 to 13 percent, and up to 25 full time positions will be eliminated. These are elements of the plan:

- Eliminate one deputy superintendent position – from four to three.
- Two current principals on special assignment will move into existing school leadership positions and their central positions eliminated.
- The director of High School System Design is retiring and will not be replaced.
- Central departments will share support staff.
- Technology purchases will be postponed.
- School bus routes not mandated by state law will be reduced or eliminated.
- District meeting and travel expenses will be reduced.

Special education: \$3.3 million

- Learning Center teacher ratios increase from 30:1 to 35:1. Para-educators will be assigned when ratio exceeds 35:1.
- High school Learning Centers lose para-educators.
- Some central support services shift from central office to schools.
- Speech pathologist ratio increases from 50:1 to 55:1

English as a second language: \$1.3 million

- A planned increase in ESL teachers will be delayed – trimming approximately 14 full time positions that PPS had planned to add.
- The district will maintain the same level of service as the 2009-10 school year.

School staffing: \$5.6 million

School staffing will be reduced by approximately 62 full time positions, or less than 3 percent. General fund positions are allocated by ratio, based on student numbers; for a certain number of students, schools receive one full time licensed teaching position.

Reductions by school will be shared with principals later this week.

- Elementary, middle and K-8 schools will have a staffing ratio of 24.2:1 for students in grades 1 through 8, up from 23.4 students. (Kindergarten is staffed separately with a target maximum class size of 25.)
- High schools will be staffed at a ratio of 24:1, up from 23.2:1.

- The staffing ratio in alternative schools (ACCESS, Alliance) increases from 17:1 to 17.6:1.
- Elementary, K-8 and middle schools will preserve at least a half-time PE teacher.
- Those schools will also preserve at least half-time library staffing with either a library assistant or media specialist.
- Remaining cuts include using a combination of blended classrooms, increased class size and reductions of enrichment and other offerings.
- High school class sizes will increase, teacher scheduling may change and electives will be reduced.