



Community & PARENTS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF PORTLAND

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CPPS Work 2019

CPPS is undergoing rebuilding, so what we do will be different based on the priorities we develop in the coming years. The main focus, however, is outlined below.

At CPPS, our mission is **better schools through parent and community involvement**. We especially emphasize the role of parents in **decision-making** at their schools and at the school district level. To do this, we focus on three areas:

1. Creating **powerful partnerships** of parents and community members -- We work in partnership with school districts and with many community organizations to combine energy for real change in our schools.
2. Building **enduring equity** of opportunity for all students in Portland—we work to ensure that all children have equal access to a great education.
3. Fostering **clear communication**—between parents and teachers, between parents and schools, between parents and school districts, and between districts and the community at large – and this is two-way communication.

We are a **selective friend** of school districts. We support public education as a cornerstone of democracy, and we support our school district. As a supporter, we support selected equity initiatives in the context of working as a partner to develop a better course of action. We work for systemic reforms that change the way districts operate and that will benefit all children. As a result, we have had an excellent relationship with the superintendents and key district leaders who see us as knowledgeable, hard-working, and trustworthy.

CPPS is a **tax-exempt non-profit organization**. We are the Portland chapter of Parents for Public Schools, a national organization with 16 chapters, including Seattle and San Francisco.

CPPS PAST ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Below are a number of projects we have been involved in over the years—all from a small organization with a shoestring budget.

I. Parent Involvement (2001-2011)

- CPPS sponsored 10 Parent Leadership Conferences, initially just for parents of Portland Public Schools, but the last two years we expanded to include Parkrose, David Douglas, Centennial, and Reynolds school districts. The conference offers a variety of workshops in a number of languages, attracting a diverse group of parents—40 percent of the 150 attendees of the last conference were immigrant parents.
- CPPS initiated the Site Council Training Task Force in partnership with PPS, the Portland Schools Foundation, and the Portland Association of Teachers. A training curriculum was fully developed, but never implemented by PPS.
- CPPS persuaded PPS to change the way principals are hired, to involve parents, staff, and students in the hiring process. This lasted for three years until PPS with no public notice changed the process.
- CPPS worked with PPS to develop a process for parent and community involvement in textbook selection—as required by law. It was implemented for several years, and then forgotten when textbook adoption was suspended due to funding cuts for several years.
- CPPS surveyed the PPS community regarding proposed reconfiguration around K-8 schools in 2006 and subsequently helped facilitate system-wide discussion.
- CPPS conducted a thorough assessment of parent involvement in PPS in 2007, benchmarking current parent involvement practices using a survey of over 1,100 parents and 20 focus groups at 11 schools and in six languages.
- CPPS piloted workshops connecting parents with literacy curriculum at three Title I schools in 2008, focusing on what parents can do at home to enhance their child’s learning. These “Families Learning Together” workshops have been adopted by PPS and other community partners, and have been adapted for Spanish, Vietnamese, Somali parents.
- When CPPS found that many low-income parents were being left out of the High School Redesign process, we developed the Middle School Connect Project in partnership with PPS. We held listening groups in several languages in north and outer southeast Portland to get input from middle school parents on what they wanted when their children reached high school, and presented the results to the PPS School Board.

II. Communications (2004-2017)

- CPPS took the lead in helping PPS establish their first email distribution list to parents and community members.
- CPPS organized a Speakers Bureau, making presentations on the PPS budget at 70+ schools at Back to School Nights in 2004-07.

III. Teaching Quality (2004-2017)

- CPPS was a member of the Community Education Partners, which worked with PPS on reducing on inequities in student discipline and suspensions.
- CPPS members observed teaching and learning at six Portland schools in 2007, as part of consortium working to improve PPS support for teachers.

IV. School Funding (1998-2017)

- CPPS endorsed the 2000 PPS Local Option. CPPS members were instrumental in starting HOPE in 2003 and passing Measure 26-48, the three-year temporary income tax that filled a \$57 million budget hole. CPPS members also staffed the 2006 Local Option campaign and worked on the 2011 Local Option/Bond campaign. OPOS (Our Portland Our Schools) led the development of the 2012 Bond and helped lead the successfully campaign.

V. Representation on various school district Committees (1999-2017)

- PPS used to regularly ask for CPPS representation on committees/task forces.
- CPPS members have been members and provided leadership to the PPS Citizens Budget Review Committee.
- CPPS members participated directly in strategic planning committees and conversations for PPS over the last three cycles (15 years).
- CPPS was represented as a member of Portland Mayor and County Chair's Education Cabinet from 2009-2011.
- CPPS members have played important roles on the Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Enrollment and Transfer (SACET) and the Districtwide Boundary Review Advisory Committee (DBRAC).
- CPPS members have also served on the Calendar Committee, design advisory committees for new high schools, and textbook adoption committees.

VI. More recent activity

- Two former CPPS Board members are now serving on the Portland Public Schools Board.
- In 2014, OPOS merge into CPPS to strengthen both organizations and their work.
- Over the past two years, CPPS has focused on educational vision, the bond, and District Boundary Review Action Committee (DBRAC).
- CPPS negotiated with then-Superintendent Smith to launch a community-wide educational vision process, as a precursor to a district strategic plan. One stakeholder meeting was held before the superintendent resigned. We hope to renew the process with Superintendent Guerrero.
- CPPS/OPOS tracked the implementation of the 2011 bond. We intervened in the Roosevelt planning process, and negotiated with Superintendent Smith for PPS to hold extra meetings to increase community engagement, an agreement that was torpedoed by PPS staff. Our criticisms of the Roosevelt process led PPS to hire an evaluator to produce a "Lessons Learned" documentation of missteps and suggested changes.
- CPPS sent a letter, with a number of community co-signers, advocating for a continuation of DBRAC's work when it looked like the interim superintendent might cancel it in 2016-17.