

## **Portland Schools Foundation Announces Recipients of 2011-12 PPS Equity Grants: Nearly \$850,000 to be Distributed to PPS Schools**

Portland, Ore. (May 10, 2011) – At last night’s Portland Public Schools (PPS) Board meeting, the Portland Schools Foundation (PSF) announced the 2011-12 Portland Schools Foundation PPS Equity Grant recipients. At a time when there is a dire need of funds for teaching and learning, 39 schools throughout the PPS district will receive grants totaling \$845,000.

“With all the news about financial cuts and challenges, these funds represent some relief” said Madison High School Principal Petra Callin. “As a principal working within a very tight budget, receiving this Equity Grant is a strong reminder that the entire Portland community is focused on investing in the future of all students. We are very thankful for all the PPS parents who contribute to the Equity Fund.”

PPS Equity Grant funds are generated from the 37 active Local School Foundations (LSFs) in Portland Public Schools, whose dedicated parents, teachers, school staff and leaders designate one-third of what they raise through fundraising activities to the PPS Equity Fund. In the current school year, 113 teachers and staff in PPS are supported in part or in full through monies raised PPS parent-led fundraising (which totaled \$2.83 million in 2010).

Commenting on this investment, Susheela Jayapal, Grant High School parent and PSF Board member said, “How wonderful that we have this good news of parents investing in our kids and in our community during these challenging times. The story of the PPS Equity Grants, and parents with capacity ensuring the needs of all schools are addressed, is unique to our community and one that we should celebrate more often.”

With schools experiencing an uncertain budget climate throughout the district, it was decided that for the 2011-12 awards, PPS Equity Grants would be streamlined to support principals’ existing School Improvement Plans (SIPs) in an effort to ensure accountability and measurable progress. Working closely with the PPS District Office, PSF utilized a data-driven, transparent formula with a focus on equity to identify equity grant recipients. PPS schools that receive an Equity Grant are required to report at the close of the academic year how the funds were spent and the impact they had in order to be eligible for future grant cycles.

Molly Chun, Principal of Boise-Eliot, notes that her school’s Equity Grant “ensures our school and community can strategically invest in teachers through professional development. The funds provided by the Portland Schools Foundation will support our school-wide Equity Training. This work is critical in deepening relationships with all students and closing the achievement gap.”

**(more)**

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The schools that received Equity Grants for 2011-12, as well as the eligibility formula are on the attached spreadsheet. For a complete list of the rankings, visit [www.thinkschools.org/equitygrants](http://www.thinkschools.org/equitygrants).

In 1994/95, on the heels of Measure 5's cuts to local public education, the PPS School Board established the policy allowing parents to raise private funds to enhance staffing for their school through Local School Foundations. Recognizing that abilities and resources for fundraising vary between schools, the PPS School Board required that one-third of all monies raised (after the first \$10,000) by local schools be set aside in a fund that is stewarded and distributed to high-need schools by the Portland Schools Foundation (the PPS Equity Fund). Since its establishment, the PPS Equity Fund has attracted national attention for its creative and collaborative approach to addressing disparities in school funding, having awarded more than \$7 million in grants to schools in need.

The Portland Schools Foundation is an independent, community-based organization that mobilizes the public, private and public will and resources needed to guarantee a world-class public education for all Portland children. To learn more visit [www.thinkschools.org](http://www.thinkschools.org).

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