



Stand with Stephenson

Stephenson Elementary School

www.stephensonpta.org

An Open Letter from the Stephenson Elementary School Community

October 10, 2026

Dear Board Members and Superintendent Armstrong,

We write as Stephenson families, educators, and neighbors, to urge the Board and Superintendent not to close Stephenson Elementary School, as one of Portland Public Schools' rightsizing scenarios.^[1]

Permanently closing a neighborhood school uproots children and strains families and staff. It removes a gathering place, childcare provider, and emergency site that the surrounding community depends on, leaving a vacant property that drives down property values, attracts crime, and imposes significant maintenance costs. We understand that PPS faces hard choices, but before taking a step that is so difficult to reverse, PPS must demonstrate that the closure is feasible, necessary, effective, and in the best interests of all students, while taking into account schools that will be forced to accommodate an influx of students from closures. To date, the evidence has not been presented, and the data does not support closing Stephenson. The Scenarios presented to you do not reflect a compelling case for closure and, to date, no School Closure Report for Stephenson has been posted by PPS.^[2]

If School Closures Don't Fix the Budget Problem, What Problem Are They Solving?

On October 6, PPS leaders told the Board they are not claiming large savings from closures, and the expected near-sustainability can only be ensured for a five-year period.^[3] The stated goal is to "increase stability and improve student learning experience".^[4] However, Stephenson already supports a vibrant educational experience for its students. The harm that will be caused by the closure significantly outweighs the benefits that PPS expects to gain by targeting this school.

Stephenson students have access to art, music, physical education, enrichment programming, strong family support, and an engaged community of volunteers. Families invest significant time and resources into the school, helping provide opportunities that enrich student learning and strengthen the school experience. We host Missoula Children's Theater twice a year, run a volunteer Maker's Space to increase STEM access, and offer

choir, chess, electronic music, yoga, Odyssey of the Mind, ukulele, and a students-of-color affinity group.

Stephenson is one of the top performing schools in the state and maintains a 10/10 rating on Great Schools.^[53] PPS's own auditors say displaced students "are more likely to benefit when they attend schools that are substantially stronger than the schools they leave".^[8] What will be stronger for our students? We are proud of the academic achievement our students and teachers have achieved together, and schools like ours draw young families into the district rather than neighboring ones.

The Scenarios Ignore Southwest Portland's Geography

Our neighborhood is surrounded by steep hills, winding roads, few sidewalks, and wooded ravines crossable only at designated points. PPS's own memo says geographic isolation and travel distance were "central considerations"^[9] in our region. PPS staff acknowledged the west side is "the one part of town" where students from a closing school could not all be moved to the next school^[11]. Walking routes that look short on a map are deceiving, and often unsafe, even for adults. This is especially true for young children walking on their own. PPS's own rules state that they must provide bus transportation for K-5 students who live within a mile of school if they face "unsafe and hazardous walking conditions".^[12]

Currently, Stephenson has a large number of students who regularly walk and bike to school, and we have a weekly organized Bike Bus. If Stephenson closes and its students are reassigned to other schools, transportation will become substantially more difficult for most families, and the related costs for the district will increase. Notably, the transportation changes will run contrary to Portland's Climate Action Plan and the city's green initiatives. PPS policy requires each School Closure Report to examine "transportation options and barriers".^[13] Meaningful consideration of the barriers for the Stephenson community to travel to the two proposed receiving schools, Markham and Capitol Hill, have not been appropriately weighted.^[1] Moreover, the October 4th regional summary does not provide travel distances or travel times for affected students.^[10] The Board's Resolution 7307 commits PPS to "prioritize walkability and safe routes to schools".^[17] Closing Stephenson and reassigning students to schools that are significantly less accessible on foot would be inconsistent with that commitment and in direct conflict with a stated goal of district staff, which is to see that more elementary school children across PPS have the opportunity to walk to school whenever possible. This has been used as a rationale for why other schools were left untouched in the Rightsizing scenarios.

Stephenson Is Our Only Town Square and Our Only Local BEECN Node

Stephenson serves as the one and only true community gathering space in our largely residential and pastoral neighborhood. We have no nearby community center, library, parks, or playgrounds. There are limited businesses in our neighborhood that are walkable. The Stephenson campus fills that role and hosts school events, childcare services,

community meetings, volunteer activities, and family programming. For many neighborhood residents, the school is the primary place where community connections are formed and maintained. It's where our kids and teens go to stay out of trouble and meet up with friends with the confidence that they are safe.

This is why Stephenson is officially designated by the city of Portland as a Basic Earthquake Emergency Communication Node (BEECN).^[54] A BEECN (pronounced *beacon*) is a specific place residents can go after a major earthquake if phone lines, internet, and power lines are entirely disrupted. Closing Stephenson will make our neighborhood LESS SAFE in an emergency.

We know that health and safety is one of your top priorities. Stephenson's campus is one of the healthiest and safest in the area. Our campus:

- Has both a large, green, flat field and a paved area with a covered roof providing ample outdoor space, trees, and grass.
- Has natural barriers instead of fences, as it is nestled between quiet neighborhoods that surround the school on all sides.
- Is located on a safe and quiet street with less, and slower, traffic flows compared to nearby schools.
- Is one that children can SAFELY walk to independently, in part, because of a student-led safety patrol program that is run by the 5th grade leadership team.
- Has cleaner air due to its distance from freeways.

The district's utilization analysis measures seats and square footage, but it does not measure the value of:

- Community partnerships
- Volunteer contributions
- Parent fundraising
- Childcare access
- Active transportation programs
- Neighborhood health
- Social cohesion
- The greater school property size and assets that lend to youth activities

These are real assets that contribute to student success. This proposal impacts more than students and families, as there are numerous businesses that support Stephenson in acting as the heart of the local community.

Once lost, they cannot simply be recreated elsewhere.

Stephenson Child Care Association (“SCCA”) Is a Critical Community Resource

Board policy requires a study of community partnerships.^[24] Any discussion of closing Stephenson must account for the impact on working families and SCCA, a highly successful independent local nonprofit childcare and after-school provider that serves local working families every day. The program is an essential community resource, and it has expanded beyond its original location to meet demand for the Stephenson community due to the number of working families in the area. Unlike the large corporate after-school programs offered at many schools, SCCA was created by and for our community. It provides dependable, on-site care tailored to the needs of local families at a reasonable price. For many working families, access to reliable on-site childcare is not a convenience, it’s a necessity.

As of October 7, 2026, PPS has not said what will happen to this essential community service if students are reassigned. We do not believe adequate consideration has been given to whether receiving schools are able to match the high-quality safe childcare Stephenson families have come to rely on at the volume needed to support our working families. You are asking these kids to not only lose their school, but potentially their beloved after school and summer camp programs too.

PPS Has Not Addressed the Long-Term Consequences of Vacant School Buildings

Closed school buildings can sit empty for years and be “costly to seal, maintain and insure”.^[39] The closure of George Smith Elementary should serve as a cautionary example. Twenty years after its closure, the property remains vacant. They had to bulldoze a portion of it due to how decrepit and dangerous it had become. What was once a thriving neighborhood school became a deteriorating building that has required ongoing cost, maintenance, security, and oversight while providing little benefit to the surrounding community.

The experience raises an important question: What is PPS's plan for the buildings it proposes to close? Families have heard a great deal about enrollment and building use.^[40] Without clear plans for reuse, redevelopment, or disposition, closures risk creating additional long-term liabilities rather than solving existing challenges. To date, PPS has not posted its plan for any building targeted for closure.^[38] Without a clear plan, closures risk creating long-term costs, security, and maintenance issues.^[39]

Before the Board votes to close any school, it should require a clear, workable plan for every affected property. PPS's own auditors call for “a facilities reuse strategy”.^[41] PPS policy has a rule for each School Closure Report. It must cover the “current and potential use of the facility”.^[42] We urge the Board to create these plans prior to any decision to vacate property.

At a time when the city of Portland has struggled to recognize a full economic recovery, the Board should also strongly consider how the action to close a large number of schools under either of the Scenarios will impact property values, causing further economic decline in certain areas of the city that are already experiencing challenges.

The Burden of Proof Should Be Higher. Closing a school is hard to undo.

The burden should not be on families to prove why their school should remain open. The burden should be on the district to demonstrate why each individual closure is necessary and how with each individual closure students will be better off as a result. We should be able to see in the weighted data the results of the extensive community engagement that we participated in with our neighboring schools and PPS and have access to the scoresheet for every school being evaluated under the same matrix.

At Stephenson, families are being asked to accept the loss of a neighborhood school and disruption to our students.^[28] We are being asked to accept uncertainty about our childcare provider, which contracts with PPS each year for its space at the school.^[21] We are being asked to accept longer trips to school to much more congested areas, with drastically fewer children able to walk or bike to school.^[16] We are being asked to accept the loss of a key community gathering place,^[19] without a clear account of what Stephenson's students would gain in learning.^[2] In return, PPS acknowledges limited cost savings and a short-term vision of sustainability.

That is not a decision that should be rushed.

The Board Still Has a Choice

PPS staff have told the Board it may “choose to defer this work to a later time”.^[46] We respectfully urge the Board to pause any closure decision affecting Stephenson and all PPS schools until PPS can provide:

- Clear evidence that PPS is taking every measure to avoid “disruptive, poorly managed school transitions that can harm student achievement”.^[47]
- A detailed transition plan for students, families, and teaching staff that addresses building vacancies, transportation costs, environmental impacts, employment matters, class sizes, childcare for working families, and economic consequences.^[48]

- A study of how closures would impact school accessibility, absenteeism, and traffic patterns in Southwest Portland, and a plan that covers the 'transportation options and barriers' PPS policy requires.^[13]
- Assurance that community partners will be maintained specifically to provide the adequate volume of childcare to support working families. Stephenson kids should not lose both their school and their after-school care. The plan should be part of the 'current community partnerships' study PPS policy requires.^[24]
- A property plan for each building proposed to close that covers the 'current and potential use of the facility' that PPS policy requires.^[42]
- A full review of other choices in each school's School Closure Report. That includes growing enrollment and investing in the community. PPS's own enrollment campaign lists Stephenson's ZIP code, 97219, for a later phase.^[49]
- An economic impact study that accounts for job losses, declining property values, crime and safety matters, and environmental and community impacts resulting from a substantial number of school closures.

Stephenson is a thriving school community, a neighborhood anchor, and a public asset that has kept students in the district when there are so many options for education in our area. For our children, our neighbors, and the future of Southwest Portland, we respectfully ask you not to close Stephenson Elementary.

Right-plan before you right-size.

Sincerely,

*The Stephenson Elementary School Community Students, Families, Staff, Alumni,
Stephenson Childcare Association, and Neighbors of Stephenson Elementary School*

Sources

[1] [Rightsizing Update: Scenario Release \(Board memo\)](#), Portland Public Schools. Oct 5, 2026 memo, p. 2. "Stephenson would consolidate into Markham and Capitol Hill using the same proportions".

[2] [Rightsizing Scenarios](#), Portland Public Schools. Rightsizing Scenarios page, checked 2026-10-07: it links only View the Scenarios, four regional summaries and the Rightsizing Scenario Survey, and a search of the page finds 0 hits for 'closure report'. "As of October 7, 2026, PPS's Rightsizing Scenarios page listed no School Closure Report for any school".

[3] [2026-10-06 Board of Education Regular Meeting \(YouTube recording; Save PDX Schools automated transcript\)](#), PPS Board of Education (recording); automated transcript by Save PDX Schools. Oct 6, 2026 PPS

Board regular meeting, recording at 3:43:52. *"it's one of the reasons why we're not exclaiming some huge dollar amount from closures and savings because we know that, first of all, our educators and staff generally move with students"*.

[4] [September 1, 2026 Board Meeting: Rightsizing \(slide deck\)](#), Portland Public Schools. Sept 1, 2026 deck, slide 8, Why Do We Need a Rightsizing Process Now?. *"Rightsizing goal: increase stability and improve student learning experience across the system and in every school, especially for historically underserved students"*.

[5] [PPS 2026-27 Proposed Budget, Volume 1](#), Portland Public Schools. Budget Vol 1, printed p. 207 (PDF p. 214). *"Each K-5 homeroom is scheduled for 90 minutes per week of PE, and 45 minutes of Library, Music, and Visual Arts"*.

[6] [Active Nonprofit Corporations: STEPHENSON PTA](#), Oregon Secretary of State, Corporation Division (data.oregon.gov). Oregon open data, Active Nonprofit Corporations, registry number 42969485, read 2026-10-07. *"registry_date": "1994-11-23 00:00:00"*

[8] [Green and Hanson, Equity Audit Evaluation of PPS's Southeast Enrollment and Program Balancing Initiative \(June 10, 2026\), BoardBook file 3997427](#), Portland Public Schools (commissioned audit). PDF p. 108, 'Do School Closures or Major Reconfigurations Improve Student Outcomes?'. *"Across studies of school closures in urban districts in the nation, a consistent pattern emerges, which is that students who are displaced because of closures are more likely to benefit when they attend schools that are substantially stronger than the schools they leave"*.

[9] [Rightsizing Update Scenario Release Memo](#), Portland Public Schools. Rightsizing Update Scenario Release Memo (Oct 5, 2026), PDF p. 2. *"In the Lincoln and Wells region, geographic isolation, travel distances, and elementary enrollment were central considerations; immersion programs were already consolidated"*.

[10] [Rightsizing regional summary: Ida B. Wells / Lincoln region](#), Portland Public Schools. Checked 2026-10-07: 'Regional summary - Wells-Lincoln', p. 1 'Ida B. Wells / Lincoln, side by side' table reports seven measures, and none is a distance, walk or travel measure. *"As of October 7, 2026, PPS's Ida B. Wells / Lincoln regional summary (updated October 4, 2026) reports seven measures, and none is a travel distance or travel time"*.

[11] [2026-10-06 Board of Education Regular Meeting \(YouTube recording: Save PDX Schools automated transcript\)](#), PPS Board of Education (recording); automated transcript by Save PDX Schools. Oct 6, 2026 PPS Board regular meeting, recording at 2:10:47. *"This is the one part of town that we were not able to move students in totality to the next school"*

[12] [Service Guidelines, Student Transportation \(rev. 08/07/2024\)](#), Portland Public Schools Student Transportation. Service Guidelines, Section D 'Safety Provisions', item 1, PDF p. 8 (printed p. 7). *"Students living within one mile of their assigned school (Pre-kindergarten – 5) or within 1.5 miles for grades 6 – 8 will only be transported if it is determined that they face unsafe and hazardous walking conditions"*

[13] [PPS Board Policy 6.10.030-P](#), Portland Public Schools Board of Education. Page 3, II(2)(d)(B). *"how the school closure and redistribution of students will affect other schools within the cluster and, if applicable, schools outside the cluster, both in the quality of the cluster's educational programs and in the number of students attending each school. Analysis of the location of the school in relation to other schools, community resources, and transportation options and barriers"*.

[14] [Service Guidelines, Student Transportation \(rev. 08/07/2024\)](#), Portland Public Schools Student Transportation. Service Guidelines, Student Transportation, Section B 'Eligibility of Ridership', items 1 and 2,

PDF p. 4 (printed p. 3); footer 'Rev. 08/07/2024'; linked from pps.net/departments/transportation/service-guidelines. *"1. For students who live more than one mile from the elementary school they attend within their school attendance boundary. 2. For students who live more than one and one-half miles from the middle school they attend which is within their attendance boundary"*.

[15] [Service Guidelines, Student Transportation \(rev. 08/07/2024\)](#), Portland Public Schools Student Transportation. Service Guidelines, Section F 'Transportation of General Education Students', C.1 items 2 and 3, PDF p. 11 (printed p. 10). *"Pre-K to K 0.25 mile during midday when older students are not en route Pre-K to 5th 0.5 mile 6 to 12th 1 mile [...] General transportation routes are developed to run within a 60-minute time frame whenever possible"*.

[16] [How Children Get to School: School Travel Patterns From 1969 to 2009](#), National Center for Safe Routes to School. National Center for Safe Routes to School, 'How Children Get to School: School Travel Patterns From 1969 to 2009' (Nov 2011), PDF p. 4, Key Points; data: 2009 National Household Travel Survey (US DOT). *"Distance between home and school was strongly associated with how children get to and from school. The percentage of children who walked to and from school is greater among those who live closer to school"*.

[17] [Resolution 7307](#), Portland Public Schools Board of Education. Resolution 7307, Exhibit 1, Guiding Principles b (Safe and Healthy Learning Environments), PDF p. 2. *"We will seek to responsibly steward our resources and maintain a sustainable portfolio of school facilities that support academic programming and long-term operational viability, and prioritize walkability and safe routes to schools"*.

[18] [2035 Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 8: Public Facilities and Services \(as amended May 2023\)](#), City of Portland, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. Chapter 8, Goal 8.K School facilities, PDF p. 9 (page GP8-9), May 2023 edition. *"Public schools are honored places of learning as well as multifunctional neighborhood anchors serving Portlanders of all ages, abilities, and cultures"*.

[19] [The Land-Use Question: When School Closures Become Neighborhood Policy](#), Research for Action. "Schools as Anchor Institutions: What Gets Lost", paragraph 3, article dated March 3, 2026. *"Schools function as gathering places, employment anchors, and symbols of institutional commitment"*.

[21] [SCCA Parent Handbook \(February 2024\)](#), Stephenson Children's Care Association. p. 4, Enrollment. *"SCCA contracts annually with Portland Public Schools for space, and the number of children in our own program is determined by square footage available within our school and The Hive"*.

[22] [PPS Long-Range Facility Plan 2021, Volume 1](#), Portland Public Schools. LRFP 2021 Vol 1, PDF p. 26 (printed p. 50, left page, first column), 'Determining Utilization'. *"Classrooms are assigned a student count based on area: classrooms between 500 - 800 square feet are assigned 24 students; classrooms between 800 - 1000 square feet are assigned 27 students; classrooms above 1000 square feet are assigned 30 students"*.

[23] [Rightsizing: Comparing three scenarios \(district-wide\)](#), Portland Public Schools. Checked 2026-10-07: 'District wide scenarios 10.04.26', PDF p. 1, 'District-wide, side by side' table. *"As of October 7, 2026, PPS's district-wide scenario table (updated October 4, 2026) lists eight measures. None counts community partnerships, volunteers, parent fundraising, child care, active transportation, neighborhood engagement or social cohesion"*.

[24] [PPS Board Policy 6.10.030-P](#), Portland Public Schools Board of Education. Page 3, II(2)(d)(D). *"current community partnerships and possible community impact"*.

[25] [Sept 15, 2026 Board presentation \(Rightsizing KPIs\)](#), Portland Public Schools. Sept 15, 2026 board deck '09.15.26 BOE Meeting_Rightsizing', PDF p. 17 (slide 17, title 'Key Performance Indicators: Current State'). *"2.*

Percent of students living within 1.0 and 1.5 miles of school 3. Number of schools with split feeders 4. Percent of middle school feeders moving to the same high school”

[26] [Resolution 7307, Exhibit 1 \(Rightsizing guiding principles and workplan\)](#), Portland Public Schools Board of Education. PPS Board Resolution 7307 (May 26, 2026), Exhibit 1, Workplan c.i (Implementation Plan), PDF p. 3. *“PPS staff will develop an implementation framework to operationalize the rightsizing plan over time in a manner that minimizes disruption for students, families, and staff, including an assessment of cohort cohesion, and supports effective coordination across central office functions”*.

[27] [Reciprocal longitudinal effects between sense of school belonging and academic achievement: quasi-experimental estimates using United States primary school data](#), Frontiers in Psychology. Sakellariou, Frontiers in Psychology 15:1478320 (Feb 2025), PubMed abstract. *“the dominant effect is from sense of school belonging to achievement”*

[28] [Green and Hanson, SEGC Equity Audit Evaluation \(June 10, 2026\)](#), Portland Public Schools (commissioned audit). PDF p. 109. *“This body of evidence suggests that closures and major reconfigurations can often create multiple layers of disruption. They may disrupt academic progress, attendance routines, peer networks, relationships with trusted adults, school identity, family-school connections, and receiving-school stability”*.

[29] ["In Military Terms, We Are Just Collateral Damage": School Closures and Symbolic Violence](#), Policy Futures in Education. ERIC EJ1404974, abstract (Mutch, Policy Futures in Education, 2024). *“Research on permanent school closures reports mostly negative and long-lasting consequences, not just for the school's staff and students, but for the local community”*.

[30] [Subtracting Schools from Communities](#), Urban Institute. Feature "Subtracting Schools from Communities", paragraph on Joiner, Arkansas, read 2026-10-07. *“This is likely the case for many students whose schools close, as Gallagher and Gold's research found that only 8 percent of closed schools are fully replaced with a school that serves the same grade levels within the community”*.

[31] [SCCA Form 990, year ending June 30, 2025](#), IRS e-file data (filed by SCCA). Form 990 year ending June 2025, Part I line 1 and Part III mission. *“SCCA is a nonprofit member association that provides childcare programs for students at Stephenson Elementary School and Jackson Middle School”*.

[32] [SCCA Form 990, year ending June 30, 2025](#), IRS e-file data (filed by SCCA). Form 990 year ending June 2025, Part I line 1 and Part III mission. *“SCCA is a nonprofit member association that provides childcare programs for students at Stephenson Elementary School and Jackson Middle School”*.

[33] [SCCA Parent Handbook \(February 2024\)](#), Stephenson Children's Care Association. p. 5, Waitlist. *“Parents should keep in mind that SCCA has a limited number of openings and, historically, there have been many families waiting for available positions”*.

[34] [This is Afterschool in Oregon \(fact sheet, February 2026\), citing America After 3PM, fifth edition \(2025\)](#), Afterschool Alliance. PDF page 2, "Afterschool Programs Help Working Families and Strengthen the Economy" panel, figure 80% (label: "Helps them keep their job"). *“Helps them keep their job”*

[35] [Rightsizing Scenarios](#), Portland Public Schools. Checked 2026-10-07: PPS's Rightsizing Scenarios page links only the scenario overview, four regional summaries and the survey, and lists no School Closure Report. *“As of October 7, 2026, PPS had posted no analysis of what happens to Stephenson's child care partner, SCCA, if the school closes”*.

- [36] [PPS memo, Scenario Release \(Oct 5, 2026\)](#), Portland Public Schools. Page 4. *“The recommendation will describe the proposed changes and how community input informed them, along with implementation considerations and transition supports for further Board review.”*
- [37] [Green and Hanson, SEGC Equity Audit Evaluation \(June 10, 2026\)](#), Portland Public Schools (commissioned audit). PDF p. 114, recommendation 'Fourth'. *“Transition support should begin before a final decision and continue after students and staff move. This includes academic support, social-emotional support, student orientation, staff integration, family navigation, transportation assistance, multilingual communication, school culture-building, and explicit attention to grief, loss, and institutional mourning”*.
- [38] [Rightsizing Scenarios](#), Portland Public Schools. Checked 2026-10-07: PPS's Rightsizing Scenarios page links only the scenario overview, four regional summaries and the Rightsizing Scenario Survey; none is a plan for a closing school's building. *“As of October 7, 2026, PPS had posted no plan for any building it would close”*.
- [39] [Shuttered Public Schools: The Struggle to Bring Old Buildings New Life \(Feb 11, 2013\)](#), The Pew Charitable Trusts, Philadelphia Research Initiative. Executive Summary, PDF p. 1. *“Since 2005, the 12 districts have sold, leased or reused a total of 267 properties and still have 301 unused sites on the market, empty buildings that can cast a pall over their neighborhoods and be costly to seal, maintain and insure”*.
- [40] [October 6, 2026 Board Meeting: Rightsizing \(slide deck\)](#), Portland Public Schools. Oct 6, 2026 deck, slide 10, Applying Criteria to Develop Scenarios, Guiding Question. *“How can we increase the number of school sites that operate in a sustainable enrollment range, so that students across our district can experience stable and adequately resourced programs while also using our buildings efficiently?”*
- [41] [Green and Hanson, SEGC Equity Audit Evaluation \(June 10, 2026\)](#), Portland Public Schools (commissioned audit). PDF p. 115, recommendation 'Eighth'. *“Eighth, districts should examine neighborhood impacts. Schools are not only instructional sites. They are public institutions embedded in neighborhood histories, racialized geographies, and community networks. Closure and reconfiguration decisions should therefore include a facilities reuse strategy, community benefit analysis, and safeguards against accelerating neighborhood disinvestment, displacement, or loss of public infrastructure”*.
- [42] [PPS Board Policy 6.10.030-P](#), Portland Public Schools Board of Education. Page 2, II(2)(c). *“Facility in which the school exists, including building capacity, current and potential use of the facility, cost of operations, ADA accessibility, physical condition, environmental concerns, and capital needs”*.
- [43] [PPS Board Policy 6.10.030-P](#), Portland Public Schools Board of Education. Page 2, II(2). *“Board determination on school closure shall be made only upon a recommendation by the Superintendent accompanied by a School Closure Report which shall contain a full and adequate analysis of the following:”*
- [44] [PPS Rightsize FAQ](#), Portland Public Schools. PPS Rightsize FAQ, question and first sentence of its answer. *“How will class sizes, teacher counts, and support staff (like counselors) change at remaining schools? Rightsizing does not change class size expectations”*.
- [45] [Rightsizing Scenarios](#), Portland Public Schools. Checked 2026-10-07: PPS's Rightsizing Scenarios page links only the scenario overview, four regional summaries and the survey. *“As of October 7, 2026, PPS had posted no class sizes for any receiving school after the proposed changes”*.
- [46] [2026-10-06 Board of Education Regular Meeting \(YouTube recording; Save PDX Schools automated transcript\)](#), PPS Board of Education (recording); automated transcript by Save PDX Schools. Oct 6, 2026 PPS Board regular meeting, recording at 3:10:23. *“And you can either accept that recommendation with no changes, accept it with some changes, or choose to defer this work to a later time”*.

[47] [2026-10-06 Board of Education Regular Meeting \(YouTube recording; Save PDX Schools automated transcript\)](#), PPS Board of Education (recording); automated transcript by Save PDX Schools. Oct 6, 2026 PPS Board regular meeting, recording at 2:17:04. *"The research being cited across our community is real, and we have studied it carefully. Academic literature consistently shows that disruptive, poorly managed school transitions can harm student achievement"*.

[48] [Rightsizing Update: Scenario Release \(Board memo\)](#), Portland Public Schools. Oct 5, 2026 Rightsizing Update memo, p. 2. *"receiving school readiness, transportation, staffing, and transition support will require further implementation planning"*.

[49] [Teaching, Learning & Enrollment Committee, Focus: Enrollment Updates \(Sept 18, 2025\), Enrollment PowerPoint](#), Portland Public Schools. Sept 18, 2025 TLE enrollment deck, slide 9, Phase 4: Brand Activation & Expansion. *"Expand to mid-level decline schools (next 5 zip codes: 97219, 97266, 97213, 97215, 97229), replicating the same strategy until all schools are reached"*.

[50] [Enrollment Summary, October 2025, by K-12 Students' Neighborhood and Type of School Attended \(capture rates\)](#), Portland Public Schools. p. 1, Enrollment Summary, October 2025, by K-12 Students' Neighborhood (elementary rows), row Stephenson: col Own Neighborhood School count [1] = 250; col Own Neighborhood School (Capture Rate) % [2] = 89%; col Total [11] = 282. *"Stephenson 250 89% 10 4% 13 5% 0% 0% 9 3% 282"*

[51] [Portland Public Schools Enrollment Forecasts 2026-27 to 2035-36 \(Portland State University Population Research Center\)](#), Portland State University Population Research Center, published by Portland Public Schools. PSU forecast PDF p. 20, sec. 3.1, on PPS district residents. *"At the kindergarten level, enrollment in both public and private schools decreased, with the private share remaining stable at just under 32%"*.

[52] [PPS Board Policy 6.10.030-P, School Initiation and Closure \(adopted 6/16/2003\)](#), Portland Public Schools Board of Education. Page 1, policy statement. *"Those factors include financial impact, projected enrollment, quality of the facility, community impact, and expanded choice"*.

[53] <https://www.greatschools.org/oregon/portland/929-Stephenson-Elementary-School/?searchWhatType=autosuggest&searchLocationType=city&searchWhatKeywordValue=stephenson%20elem>

[54] <https://gis-pdx.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/basic-earthquake-emergency-communication-node-beecn-locations/explore?location=45.528100%2C-122.641900%2C12>

Additions from our research

[B1] [PPS 2026-27 Proposed Budget, Volume 1](#), Portland Public Schools. Budget Vol 1, K-5 School-Wide Support table, printed p. 207 (PDF p. 214). *"<300 300-349 350-399 400-499 500-549 550-599 600-699 700-799 K-5 School Total 2.75 2.75 2.75 2.75 2.75 3.75 4.00 4.00"*

[B2] [Resolution 7307](#), Portland Public Schools Board of Education. Resolution 7307, Exhibit 1, Workplan a.iii, PDF p. 2. *"In parallel, the District will assess the operational feasibility of potential scenarios, including staffing, transportation, facilities, nutrition services, program continuity, and financial impacts, to confirm that proposed strategies are viable and sustainable"*.

[B3] [SEGC Equity Audit Evaluation \(June 10, 2026\)](#), Green and Hanson for Portland Public Schools. Section 'Do Districts Typically Save Money When They Close or Consolidate Schools?'. *"If families leave the district because of the closure or reconfiguration, the district may also lose enrollment-driven revenue"*.