



## KairosPDX

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**DATE:** February 19, 2014

**TO:** Members, Education Committee, Oregon House of Representatives

**FROM:** KairosPDX

**SUBJECT:** SB 1538A

Since SB 1538, as introduced this session, was requested by Portland Public Schools, we would like to talk with you more about Portland.

The racial achievement gap in Portland Public Schools has been prolific for over 50 years, we believe in part, because we have not authentically engaged communities of color to be part of the solution. KairosPDX recently was approved by PPS to open our K-5 Public Charter School in North Portland, and we believe we can help directly address this gap.

**Kairos is an ancient Greek word meaning the right or opportune moment (the supreme moment).** We believe there is no do-over for Childhood. You get one moment / one chance...

...One chance to get the best opportunities;

...One chance to get the best education possible.

Race is a greater predictor than class of academic achievement in Portland Public Schools.

*Right now, children of color are 3-4 times more likely to be kicked out of school for subjective reasons. This trend starts – for black students- as early as Kindergarten.*

Only 12% of African-American and 6% of Latino students living in North Portland are on-track to graduate according to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade test scores.

Low-income students fall as much as 1 grade level behind during every summer break.

Low-income children of color enter Kindergarten, on average, 1 grade level behind.

**All of this data isn't new; it has been this way for over 55 years.**

KairosPDX exists to close the academic achievement gap and ensure that the best opportunities and best education is afforded to those who have been historically underserved in our community.

We exist to challenge the status quo and introduce learning techniques that develop not just better test-takers, but better thinkers, leaders, change makers.

Currently, In PPS, schools that yield the greatest results for children of color are either alternative schools or charter schools.

SEI Academy is a strong example of this, being named this year as a model school, but it is not alone in its strong outcomes. Arthur Academy, a completely different educational model than SEI, also is making a dent in the achievement gap for low-income kids and kids of color in Portland.

If the PPS bill before you, in its original form, had been on the books as law, SEI, Arthur, KairosPDX and others would likely have never gotten approval to serve students.

In that vein, it is also critical that we allow charters to hold up to 50% of slots for historically underrepresented students that include: children of color, English language learners and low-income youth. These are students the traditional public schools do not and have not served well.

Currently there is no law or policy that allows charters to give priority admission to disadvantaged kids.

Denying underrepresented youth access to these schools is denying children access to opportunity, causing us to fall short of our 40-40-20 vision before kids even hit 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

44% of children in PPS are children of color. So, figuring this out is essential to the future of our district.

It takes a village. It takes all of us working together to solve these insidious problems. Why would the Legislature or PPS impose limits on possible partners in solving these problems?

This doesn't just help these children and their families- it helps our community as a whole.

In one generation we can change the cycle of poverty for a child.

This isn't conjecture - this is possibility.

All of this to say: KairosPDX does not support the base piece of this bill and we urge you to either leave it intact (A version) or vote no.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



## KairosPDX is an education nonprofit

That will transform Portland's education landscape by providing a model for teaching and learning that eradicates the racial achievement gap in education, and cultivates our next generation of social entrepreneurs, inventors and engineers.

We will accomplish this goal with a three pronged approach to be implemented in North Portland targeting low income families and students of color.

BY 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE ONLY 12% OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN AND 6% OF HISPANIC STUDENTS IN NORTH PORTLAND ARE ON TRACK TO GRADUATE. THESE NUMBERS WORSEN OVER TIME.

DATA SHOWS US THAT STUDENTS OF COLOR ON AVERAGE ENTER KINDERGARTEN APPROXIMATELY ONE GRADE LEVEL BEHIND THEIR WHITE CLASSMATES.



**KairosPDX**

**Cultivating Confident, Creative, Compassionate Leaders**

**Wrap Around Services** – Supports that involve connecting families and caregivers with resources including an Early Learning Network that provides training and support to parents and in-home day care providers caring for children ages 0-5.

### **Early Learning Center**

Providing a Reggio inspired curriculum and environment for 40 3-4 year old students as well as intergenerational programming for families and children 0-5 that aid in cognitive, social and emotional development of all participants.

### **K-5 Learning Academy**

This is a public charter school that will provide a culturally-relevant environment that nurtures curiosity, creativity and success in all of its students and lays a foundation for excellence in STEM subjects.

44% of kindergarten students in Portland Public Schools are youth of color. Estimates show that by 2020 Portland Public Schools will be majority students of color.

White middle class students have clearly outperformed Black, Hispanic and Native American students on state assessments in every subject at every grade level.

A SOLID EDUCATION IS REQUIRED TO SECURE A FAMILY WAGE JOB.

A CORRELATION EXISTS BETWEEN POOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND THE PREVALENCE, ONSET, FREQUENCY AND SERIOUSNESS OF DELINQUENCY.

**KAIROSPDX PUTS HEAVY EMPHASIS ON PRE-K DEVELOPMENT.**

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