

On behalf of the Portland community and the Save Portland Children's Museum & Opal School organizers, I respectfully request the District 5 Ways & Means Committee allocate \$1.5 million* in funding from the American Rescue Plan Act and state budget to save Portland Children's Museum & Opal School and sustain operations through the COVID-19 shutdown and reopening.

The Portland Children's Museum and Opal School:

Serves over 250,000 visitors annually. It is a State of Oregon top ten cultural attraction preceded by Oregon Trail Center, Oregon Zoo, OMSI, Portland Japanese Garden, Oregon Shakespeare Festival and Portland Art Museum.

Generates \$13.4 million in economic activity according to an American Alliance of Museums 2018 study funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Provides an immersive learning experience designed especially for all children, their families and care providers.

Offers affordable entry including many free and low-cost admission and student group visit opportunities.

Designed accessible spaces and learning experiences for children with disabilities, developmental delays and neurodivergent children.

The Opal School, founded on the principles of Reggio Emilia, fosters an environment of creativity, curiosity and wonder of learning for 125 students and 35 preschoolers. The school acts as a laboratory to teach educators new ways of working with students. It was recently recertified for 10 years by Portland Public Schools with plans to double enrollment to 250 students.

The Center for Teaching & Learning brought local, national and international educators to conferences at the museum with Opal School educators. The Center offered educators lessons on methodology in practice and real-time classroom observation to learn how to implement the School's principles within their own curriculum and classrooms.

This essential \$1.5 million funding request ensures a future for Portland's children that includes a Children's Museum and the Opal School.

Keeps Opal School operational through end of 2021-22 school year.

Facilitates reopening the museum at reduced capacity, timed admission as well as new, virtual activities. Supports museum and school management and revenue generating staff positions through June 2022.

Replaces future lost operating revenue resulting from the continued pandemic shutdown and reduced capacity operations.

Ensures COVID-19 safety protocols are met to accommodate partial reopening including facility and ventilation system updates.

In February 2021, the Board of Directors reported \$500,000 was needed by June 2021 to sustain the Children's Museum and Opal School at its current level including facility updates for in-person learning at the Opal School through December 2021. In March 2021, they stated that crisis funding need increased to \$1 million.

Our estimate builds on these goals to ensure continuity through the end of the 2021-22 fiscal year. The museum will utilize the time to undergo a significant matching fundraising campaign with a goal of \$1.5 million to provide sufficient cash on hand at the conclusion of fiscal year 2021-22 in anticipation of the museum and school returning to normal operations.

Thank you For Your Consideration!

Wendy Gragg Niculescu

Nonprofit Fundraising Consultant

Wendy brings to her clients 15 years of fundraising and nonprofit management experience in campaign management, organizational leadership, strategic planning, constituent engagement, change management and communications within educational, arts and culture, and membership organizations. Throughout her career, Wendy has served as an effective partner in strategic programmatic growth, meaningful fundraising success, and institutional change. Wendy believes in the transformative power of philanthropy to create tangible and sustainable change in society to help improve the lives of those who are underrepresented and underserved.