

Submitter: Katrina Bray
On Behalf Of:
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On Education
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Like all working parents of school aged children, I have a lot on my plate so I will keep it brief and to the point. I am mom to a freshman and two 5th graders in the Portland Public School system. We have had very positive experiences with our public schools and that is thanks to the quality and dedication of the teachers and administrators as well as the community of students and families that participate in these schools. As our public schools struggle for funding, too often we see families in our communities choose private school options, which not only takes funding away from our schools, but also takes away from the strong community. The more that leave, the weaker the community becomes and more leave in turn. It's a self-perpetuating cycle.

I find myself constantly championing our public schools, and often that happens at extracurricular activities like sports, theater, OBOB, school fundraisers, etc. I find myself talking to other families about the impressive breadth of classroom offerings and commitment of teachers and staff, and all of the positive attributes I and my children perceive from within the school during school hours. But the conversations and relationships with these families are happening during all of the enriching activities that take place in and around the school as extracurriculars that create a sense of belonging for so many students and their families.

We need ALL of these aspects of our public schools to be functioning at a high level to help our students become their best selves, achieve academically, and prepare them to be good citizens of our community. We need schools to be strong to instill that sense of belonging within the families in our neighborhoods and keep them together at our neighborhood schools. Great schools are the foundations of great communities, and need to be valued and funded as such.