



## BOARD POLICY

**8.50.095-P**

### **Portland Public Schools Equity in Public Purchasing and Contracting**

In 2011, the Board of Education (“Board”) adopted the Portland Public Schools Racial Educational Equity Policy, 2.10.010. In that policy, the Board affirmed the intent of the school district to affirmatively overcome the educational barriers that have resulted in a persistent, unacceptable achievement gap for students of color. Complex societal and historical factors contribute to the inequities our students face. The District must address and overcome these inequities and institutional racism, providing students with the support and opportunity to succeed, make productive life decisions and give each student the support to meet his or her highest potential.

The Board recognizes that the historical under-utilization of small businesses, particularly those owned by people of color, perpetuates inequities not only for our students but for our business partners and our broader community. This is a challenge for the District and for the entire Portland metropolitan community.

Modeling equity in District business practices will further enhance achievement of goals established in its Racial Educational Equity Policy. It is the District’s goal to maximize fair and equitable opportunities to Portland’s diverse populations, promote prosperity in all segments of Portland’s diverse communities, foster economic growth and expand competition in the market. As a K-12 entity, there is no current statutory obligation on the District to implement a minority, women and/or emerging small business program. However, as one of the largest employers in the Portland metropolitan area the District has an opportunity to make a difference. Personnel costs (in the form of salaries and benefits) are the largest component of the District’s budget. However, the District’s annual expenditure through its purchasing and contracting activities is significant. It is recognized that the District’s purchasing and contracting expenditures impact our local community and economy, including businesses, parents and children.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY**

The District will significantly change its practices in order to achieve and maintain equity in its purchasing and contracting activities, to achieve and maintain an equitable and diverse contractor workforce and to leverage its contracts to further enhance career learning opportunities for students.

Therefore, the Board establishes the District’s **Equity in Public Purchasing and Contracting Policy** with the following goals:

- The District will provide professional, supplier, construction and personal service purchasing and contracting opportunities to small businesses that have been historically under-utilized, including businesses owned by people of color and women.



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- The District will ensure apprenticeship opportunities in the construction trades and will promote construction employment opportunities for people of color and women.
- The District will continue to provide career learning opportunities for students, providing them exposure to various potential career paths, including, but not limited to, architecture, engineering and related services, legal and accounting services, as well as building trades and construction work.

The District will achieve these objectives as follows:

- **BUSINESS EQUITY**

The District aims to provide greater professional, supplier, and construction opportunities to minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses and emerging small businesses. By diversifying our public purchasing and contracting spend the District will positively, and more equitably, impact a greater number of businesses and families.

All District departments and budget holders will actively search out and open their purchasing and contracting opportunities to minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses and emerging small businesses. District departments will establish specifications for goods and services, personal services, architecture, engineering and construction that encourage competition while meeting District needs. The District will develop its bid packages, contract terms, and work scopes to allow for businesses of all sizes to respond to its solicitation and business opportunities. The District will scope certain bid packages for small businesses.

The District will improve its efforts in this regard over time, looking to established successful models as well as working closely with community stakeholders to innovate and improve our public purchasing and contracting approaches.

- **CONTRACTOR WORKFORCE EQUITY**

The District will increase the numbers of women and minorities in the construction trades through apprenticeship opportunities on District construction contracts. It is recognized that there are established public agency programs addressing contractor workforce equity. Therefore, the District intends to partner with other public agencies which have already successfully implemented such programs or, alternately, create programs and procedures that closely replicate existing programs.



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- **CAREER LEARNING EQUITY**

The District will leverage its public contracting activity to expand the number of young people of color and young women participating in a wide variety of career learning programs. The District has a developing system of career learning programs in schools. The District will enhance existing programs by establishing expectations for District contractors, particularly on larger contracts, requiring their participation in the District's career learning programs.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board will hold the Superintendent and all District departments and schools accountable for making measurable progress toward these objectives. Every Portland Public Schools employee is responsible for the success and achievement of all students. Every District department and school is responsible to further equity in the District's public contracting activities.

The Board recognizes that these are long term goals requiring work and resources to implement across all schools and departments. The Board directs the Superintendent to develop an action plan for implementation of this policy, with clear accountability and metrics, including resourcing, which will result in measurable results on a regular basis toward achieving these objectives. Such action plan will identify specific staff leads on all key work and include clear procedures for District schools and staff. The Superintendent will present the Board with an Administrative Directive within three months of adoption of this policy. Thereafter, the Superintendent will report on progress towards these objectives at least once per year, and will provide the Board with an updated Administrative Directive annually.

Legal References:

History: Adopted 7/16/12