



PROGRAM AT A GLANCE:

Portland International Scholars Academy (PISA)

HIGHLIGHTS

In the current year, (2014-15), PISA serves 35 students, representing 52% of the students in the district that are eligible for the program. In 2013-14, PISA served 19 students.

PISA currently has a wait-list of 12 students due to facility space constraints.

97% of students served in this program are students of color who represent 11 languages and cultures.

60% of PISA students are SIFE (students with interrupted formal education)

The 2013-14 average PISA GPA is 3.24. The non-PISA students who remained in their comprehensive high school have a GPA of 2.52. The 2014-15 PISA average GPA is 3.3.



Average attendance for PISA students is 95.4% in comparison to the district high school average which is 90.2%.

WHAT IS PISA?

The Portland International Scholars Academy (PISA) is a supportive learning environment tailored to the needs of 9th -12th grade students who have been in the US for two or less calendar years. Located at Benson Polytechnic High School, PISA provides students with:

- intensive language training to accelerate English language development
- targeted development of foundational educational skills
- multilingual academic support and intentional orientation to the US educational system.
- the opportunity to attend an after school program twice a week that focuses on literacy in math.

REGISTRATION PROCESS

Eligibility

Students are eligible for PISA if they are in 9th - 12th grade, have been in the country less than two calendar years and have an IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT) score of A/1 or B/2 on English Oral Language.

After the first two weeks of school, the ESL Assessment Specialist assists in the identification and interest of potential candidates and shares this information with the PISA program. Students are then notified by the ESL department if they are eligible for PISA. The student's family then decides whether or not their child will attend PISA.

Students stay in the program until they reach level 3 (intermediate level) on the Oregon English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA), or until they have been in the country for more than two years. When students have reached level 3 they are counseled on what other high school program best fits their needs.

UNIQUE COMPONENTS OF PISA

The PISA program is distinct from a comprehensive high school in the following ways:

- 1 A low student/teacher ratio provides for a nurturing environment where students can develop as English speakers and apply their new language skills in their daily learning. The PISA program student teacher ratio is 15:1, in comparison to district average of 24.9:1.
- 2 PISA works to meet all students' unique needs by differentiating instruction for students with formal education and for those students who have had an interrupted formal education (i.e. SIFE).
- 3 PISA students experience intensive English Language development with a teaching staff that is multilingual, culturally competent and trained in language acquisition and development.
- 4 PISA provides personalized opportunities throughout the year for parents to share their multicultural perspectives on education. Interpreters facilitate families connecting and having meaningful experiences.



METHODOLOGY

In compiling this research, the Senior Administrative Analyst of the System Planning and Performance department gathered quantitative data from the Administrator's Dashboard and Synergy that detailed student achievement and demographics. The Analyst then reviewed the program website, brochures, powerpoints, expansion plans, and the original newcomer program proposal to gather general program information and then interviewed the interim director of the ESL department, the current Program Administrator, the previous Program Administrator, the principal of Benson High School and a scheduler/planner from the department of Transportation in order to contextualize the data.

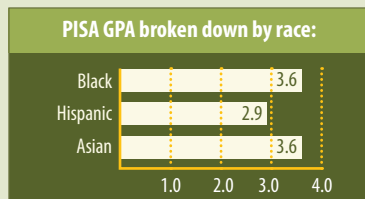
DATA

Attendance

PISA attendance rates outpace PPS average: In the first year of the PISA program, there were 19 students with an average daily attendance of 98%. In comparison, similar groups of students from comprehensive schools (newcomer students with an IPT score of 1 or 2) had average attendance rate of 92%, (PISA students had statistically significant better attendance). Currently, in the second year of PISA, the program's 35 students have averaged 95.4% attendance from September 1, 2014 to February 6, 2015. In comparison, the district average high school attendance rate is only 90.2%.

Achievement

- 3.3 Current Overall average PISA GPA
- 3.24 2013-14 PISA GPA average
- 2.52 2013-14 non-PISA GPA average



English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA)

IPT = 1	ELPA
Median PISA	497
Median Other	496.5

The GPA and ELPA tables above compare two groups of students, both of whom received a 1 on their IPT test. All the students who receive a 1 on the IPT test were eligible to participate in PISA. This data compares those who participated in PISA with those who did not. Please keep in mind when comparing these two groups that it is unclear how many of the students that did not choose to participate in PISA are SIFE students.

Between the 13-14 and 14-15 years there are only 8 students who have taken the ELPA twice. We cannot compare 2 years of ELPA scores due to insufficient numbers of students who have taken the ELPA twice.

In 2013-14, 19 PISA students took the ELPA test.

- 4 of these students scored a 1 (beginning level)
- 4 students scored a 2 (early intermediate level)
- 6 of those students scored a 3 (Intermediate level)
- 4 students scored a 4 (Early advanced level)
- 1 student scored a 5 (advanced level)

15 of 19 students scored an ELPA of 2 or above. The other 4 students had less than a quarter in the program at the time of ELPA testing.

Student Demographics:

Gender: **13** Female, **22** Male

Race/ethnicity: 14 Hispanic, 10 Asian, 10 Black

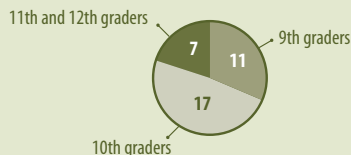
Country of origin:

- Central African Republic
- Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
- Mexico
- People's Republic of China
- Republic of El Salvador
- Republic of Guatemala
- Republic of Moldova
- Republic of Rwanda
- Socialist Republic of Vietnam
- State of Eritrea
- Syrian Arab Republic

Languages Spoken:

- Arabic
- Chinese (*Cantonese*)
- Guatemalan (*dialects including Mayan, Acateca, Quiche*)
- Kinyarwanda
- Mayan
- Oromo
- Other
- Russian
- Spanish
- Tigrinya
- Vietnamese

Grade Level: **11** Ninth graders, **17** Tenth graders and **7** Eleventh and Twelfth graders.



12 students (*approximately 34% of the PISA students*) are eligible for Title X, Homeless Student Services.

21 students are identified as SIFE, or students with interrupted formal education

Neighborhood High Schools:

PISA students come from all comprehensive schools. Jefferson/ Roosevelt and Franklin neighborhood areas account for 20 of the 35 PISA students.

Financial Impact Analysis:

This analysis relies upon the enrollment data for all schools as of October, 2014. At that time the PISA program had 31 Emerging Bilingual students and PISA cost \$12,130 per student (this data includes 2.5 FTE for general education and .5 FTE for ELD). In PPS, the average Emerging Bilingual high school cost is \$10,615 (that includes 394 students in the district).

Student Type	Cost
General education student	\$8,458
ESL student	+ \$3,672
Total	\$12,130

Student Type	Cost
General education student	\$7,324
ESL student	+ \$3,291
Total	\$10,615

The New York Department of Education¹ (followed by many other states around the country including Oregon²) define SIFE students as "immigrant children who come from a home in which a language other than English is spoken and:

- 1 Enter a United States school after the second grade;
- 2 Have had at least two years less schooling than their peers;
- 3 Function at least two years below expected grade level in reading and mathematics; and
- 4 May be pre-literate in their first language."

At present Portland Public Schools has no way of identifying those students and keeping track of their progress. There is a belief by program administrators that the SIFE population at PISA is growing.

¹ New York State Education Department, Proceedings of the New York State Symposium on the Education of Over-Age Limited English Proficient Students with Interrupted Formal Schooling 7-8 (1997).

² See, e.g., Oregon Department of Education, <http://www.ode.state.or.us/superintendent/priorities/sife-definition--regan.pdf> (last visited March 11, 2015)



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

At Portland Public Schools, we believe in continuous improvement, therefore we are always working hard to improve programs and processes, to make them more efficient and effective.

Finding the right location

Currently PISA is in the process of seeking out approval to expand the program by adding one additional cohort (i.e. 15 students) to the two existing cohorts for a total PISA enrollment of approximately 50 students. However, this program cannot grow in its current location. The program will not be moving in 2016 and is actively seeking a new home for 2017. PISA needs a location where students can transition into completing their diploma, have a diverse array of elective class options, and be supported by after school programming. The current location poses challenges for PISA. On page 4 is a map detailing the locations of current and potential PISA students.

Boosting PISA enrollment

- Program recruitment. PISA has a list of current 8th graders who will be eligible for PISA next school year. PISA should contact those potential students as soon as their Spring ELPA scores are available. Due to resource constraints, PISA is not currently able to do this.
- Broaden eligibility requirements. There are currently 5 students who are 10th, 11th and 12th graders that have been deemed ineligible to participate in PISA because they are 18 and 19 years old. Expanding the age range could support graduation of older students. Another way to broaden the eligibility requirements might be to allow students who have been in the country for three years or less instead of the current two years requirement.
- Include a middle school component for grades 6-8.
- Expanding the program would likely lead to a lower cost per student.

Continuing PISA success through program effectiveness

- **Program access:** One important component of program access is assessment for eligibility. At present, 9th-12th grade students who arrive and register during the summer don't receive the IPT test until the fall with all the other newly arrived students. This causes a backlog in test administration. Even one round of late Summer IPT administration could alleviate this difficulty and students could transition into PISA or their neighborhood school on the first day of school.
- **Electives:** Currently PISA contributes a .5 FTE for students to access electives at Benson (PE/ Health, Art, Architecture and Drafting, Computer Class, and Automotive Class). 17 students are currently enrolled in elective classes. There are a few barriers to elective participation at present: 1.) students need the language skills to participate in some classes, 2.) the elective teachers need to shelter their instruction to make learning accessible to the PISA students. 3.) scheduling conflicts confine PISA students to electives only during one period per day. Should PISA relocate, they would need to continue to access electives within their new home school.
- **Staffing improvements:** Substitutes are difficult to get because the program isn't prioritized or identified as its own school. Counseling is an important component of any program that serves students who have experienced trauma in their lives and those students who have had disrupted educational backgrounds.
- **Class size:** Based on research sponsored by the Center for Applied Linguistic's article, *Helping Newcomer Students Succeed in Secondary Schools and Beyond* (Short & Boyson, 2012), successful newcomer program class sizes are between 12-15 students. The PISA class size is 16-17 students per class.
- **Evaluation:** Continue to evaluate the success of this program. The PISA program is less than two years old, and serves less than 50 students, so currently we are limited in our ability to evaluate this program. As the program continues, however, an evaluation plan could include:
 - Interviews with students and their families.
 - Monitor progress of PISA students after they exit PISA
 - Comparative analysis incorporating students in ESL who did not participate in PISA (Control Group) and students who have participated in PISA, that have been in the country for similar amounts of time.
 - Ongoing Financial Impact Analysis that tracks the cost per student to ensure the program has the supports it needs to be successful.

Financially sustaining the program

As the PISA program develops and potentially expands, every effort must be made to ensure it is a financially sustainable program. The low student to teacher ratio of PISA means that it will always carry a considerable cost per student. However, the program can operate more efficiently by sharing staff with the host school. This could include sharing counseling, nursing, and elective courses. PISA might also boost enrollment so that administrative support per student is less costly.

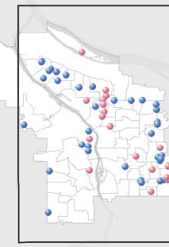


PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

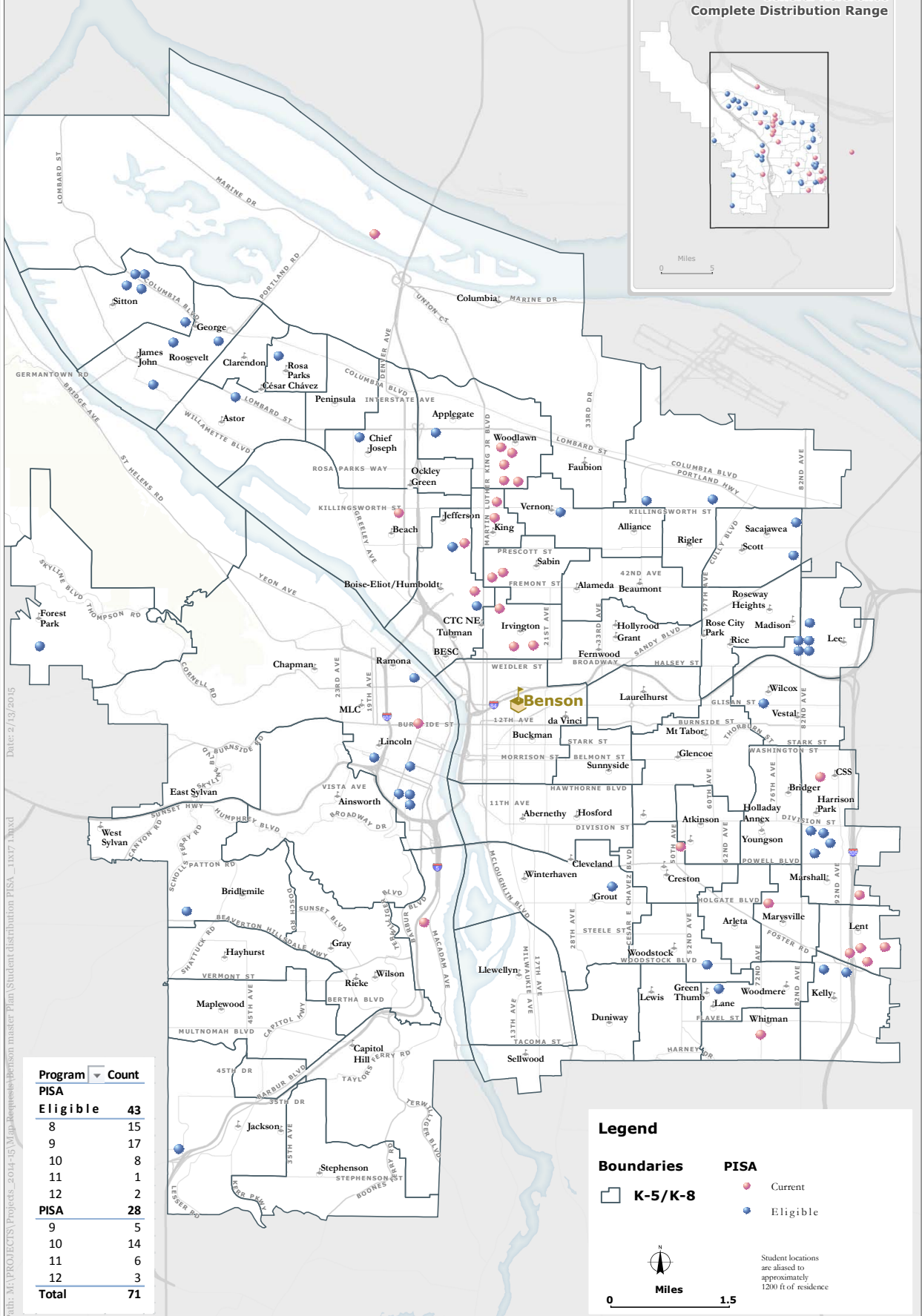
2014-15 Attendance Areas with PISA* Student Distribution Current and Eligible

*Portland International Scholars Academy

General Reference Complete Distribution Range



Miles 0 5



Date: 2/13/2015
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Program	Count
PISA	
Eligible	43
8	15
9	17
10	8
11	1
12	2
PISA	28
9	5
10	14
11	6
12	3
Total	71

Legend

Boundaries

- K-5/K-8

PISA

- Current
- Eligible

Student locations are placed to approximately 1200 ft of residence

Miles 0 1.5