



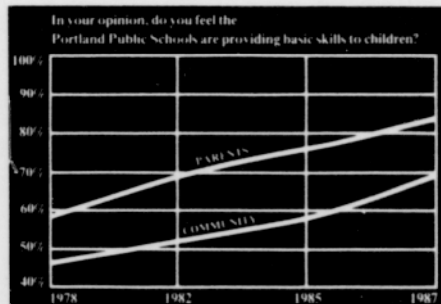
## PROGRESS TOWARD GOALS

### ACHIEVEMENT

#### Improving student achievement

Portland Public Schools students in all grade levels are making increasingly rapid progress through a balanced, well-designed curricula.

Today its students are typically half a grade to one grade ahead of where students were six years ago. For example, this year's third-graders have mastered as much of the mathematics curriculum as fourth-graders had six years ago.



The most impressive achievement increases recently have been in mathematics, particularly at the lower grades.

For instance, the percent of students in Grade 5 making satisfactory mathematics progress toward graduation has gone from 67.4 percent in the spring of 1981 to 82.4 percent in the spring of 1987, a gain of 15 percent.

But achievement goals are set for all students and until all students are achieving satisfactorily, the Portland School District will continue to develop programs and provide individualized instruction and other special support for low-achieving students.

Many more Portland elementary schools now are served by counselors and child-development specialists providing early attention to potential behavior and learning problems.

Just as students in Portland overall outperform their peers nationwide in academic achievement, so do our minority students.

The general trend in districtwide basic-skills achievement scores has been upward during the past six years since the Portland Board of Education rededicated the school district to its central mission of educational effectiveness.

During that period of growth and renewal the rates of gain for minority students often have been as great or greater than the rates of gain of nonminority students. That has resulted in a progressive reduction in the differences between minority and nonminority student scores.

A dramatic indicator of the progress in minority-student achievement is that the percentage of black seniors passing the Portland School District's rigorous graduation-standards tests of basic skills has risen from 71.2 percent in 1984 to 91.1 percent in 1987, almost a 20 percent gain in just three years.

### MANAGEMENT

#### Improving school district planning and operation

Establishing one- and five-year plans and goals have been routine tasks at all levels in Portland Public Schools during the past four years.

Also routine has been accomplishing more with 11 percent fewer administrative employees.

That's a remarkable achievement by itself, especially since the school district's enrollment has been rising steadily during that time.

But there are more concrete examples of getting better services from available dollars:

Maintenance of the school district's aging physical plant — most schools are more than 60 years old — has embraced advances in computers and technology and saved millions of dollars.

Computerized systems also have generated millions of dollars in

savings in the areas of data and word processing, student transportation and food services.

Performance evaluations and justifications of expenditures before specialized citizen budget-review committees also have made the school district more responsive and efficient in its day-to-day operations.

### FINANCE

#### Maintaining adequate and stable funding

Since voters last approved a tax-base increase, in 1982, the school district has trimmed millions of dollars from the real cost of its administrative operations.

And those dollars — representing an annual one percent reduction mandated by the school board and generated through improved efficiencies — have provided funds for expanding instructional programs such as summer school and the drug-and-alcohol and talented-and-gifted programs.

Furthermore, those efficiencies provided a 1987-88 general-fund budget even lower than 1985-86 and allowed the school district to anticipate operating within its 1982 tax base through 1989-90. That's four years more than forecasted and promised in 1982.

And, as frosting on the fiscal cake, the efficiencies have produced unanticipated resources for improving the school district's aging physical plant and for retiring bonded indebtedness.

To ensure cost-efficiencies, future departmental budgets must justify increases for inflation as well as other factors.

Furthermore, as an amendment to the mandated one percent annual redirection of central expenditures to instructional programs, there can be no net growth except for inflation in expenditures for goods and services.

## COMMUNITY

#### Increasing community confidence

Reducing school dropouts, increasing youths' employment skills and providing increased access to jobs — especially for low-income and minority students.

Heavy goals to tackle. But important goals for the Portland School District and its community.

Portland Public Schools' participation with local business, government and education leaders in the Portland Investment — a plan designed to achieve those goals — is one of many areas where the school district and its communities are working together toward common goals.

The school district recognizes that schools and local businesses in the future will increasingly share equipment and training responsibilities.

Already business and industry participate in partnerships — ranging from middle-school career fairs to cooperative work-experience programs for high school students — that promote improved relationships between schools and their communities.

Community support of Portland Public Schools, shown in the approval of the school district's newest tax base in 1982, benefits both students and the local economy.

Last year the Portland School District bought more than \$25 million in products and services from 1,000 local businesses. Portland Public Schools deposited \$350 million in local banks and each month made a payroll totaling \$14 million. That meant approximately \$8.75 million in take-home pay for some 6,500 employees.

Portland Public Schools reaches out to the community through extensive networks of community advisory committees, parent teacher organizations, vocational task forces, the Volunteers in Portland Schools (VIPS) program and other areas.

