

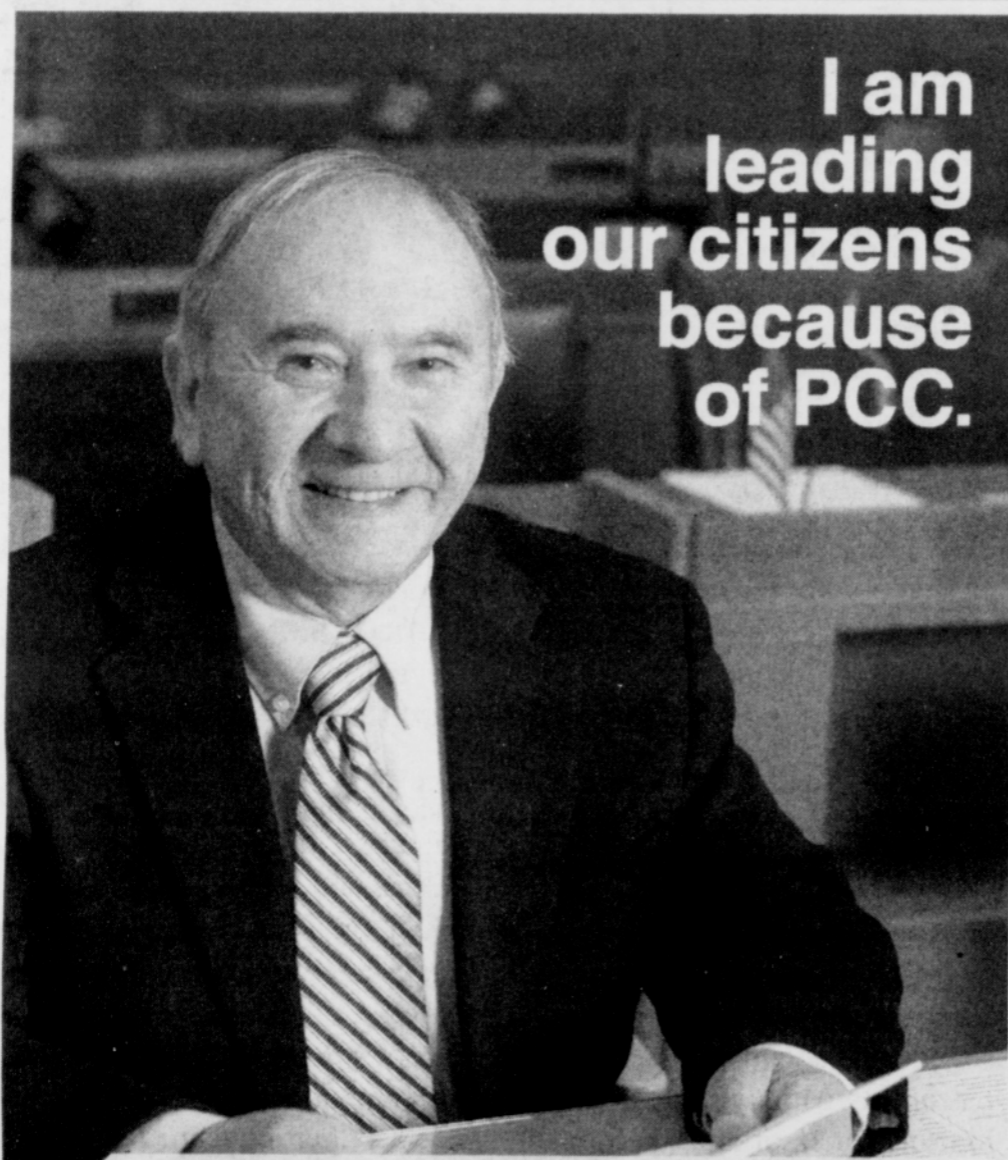
*The Jefferson High School class of "1963" is celebrating their 50th reunion on September 21, 2013 at the Double Tree located at the Lloyd Center,*

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PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER


Mashall Haskins, the new athletic director of Portland Public Schools, takes a stroll along the Jefferson High School track and football field in north Portland where he is greeted by the school's wrestling coach Montrial Brazzile and others.



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# Shaking Up Sports

continued ▲ from front

after Ross retired following 16 years in the position. He is the first-ever African American to hold the job in the state of Oregon.

The lifetime Portland resident and Jefferson alumni has long been committed to supporting youth. Before being appointed athletic director last month, Haskin's was vice principal at Jefferson, Wilson, and Franklin high schools. He coached two state championship basketball teams at Jefferson, and worked at the youth-centric non-profit Self Enhancement, Inc., as vice president for 15 years.

Haskins said sports and education share a symbiotic relationship where both need each other to survive. The students competing must be passing classes to participate, he said, and if they are not meeting the grade, the young student athletes will be placed in a tutoring program in collaboration with their schools,

coaches, and parents.

Plans to increase the number of female and disadvantaged youth who participate in athletic programs are also part of the new athletic director's vision.

Increasing the participation of parents in their children's academic and athletic life is something he has already made moves to achieve. Less than a month into his post, Haskins assembled a parent advisory meeting that will continue to meet quarterly. Parents from every school in the district are welcome as they discuss a range of topics in relation to making sports better for the kids.

Currently, sports in Portland schools face three major deficits, according to Haskins. He lists the issues as a lack of athletic trainers; transportation cuts which make it more difficult for teams to get to away matches; and a shortage of coaches for freshman teams who often have students who are just

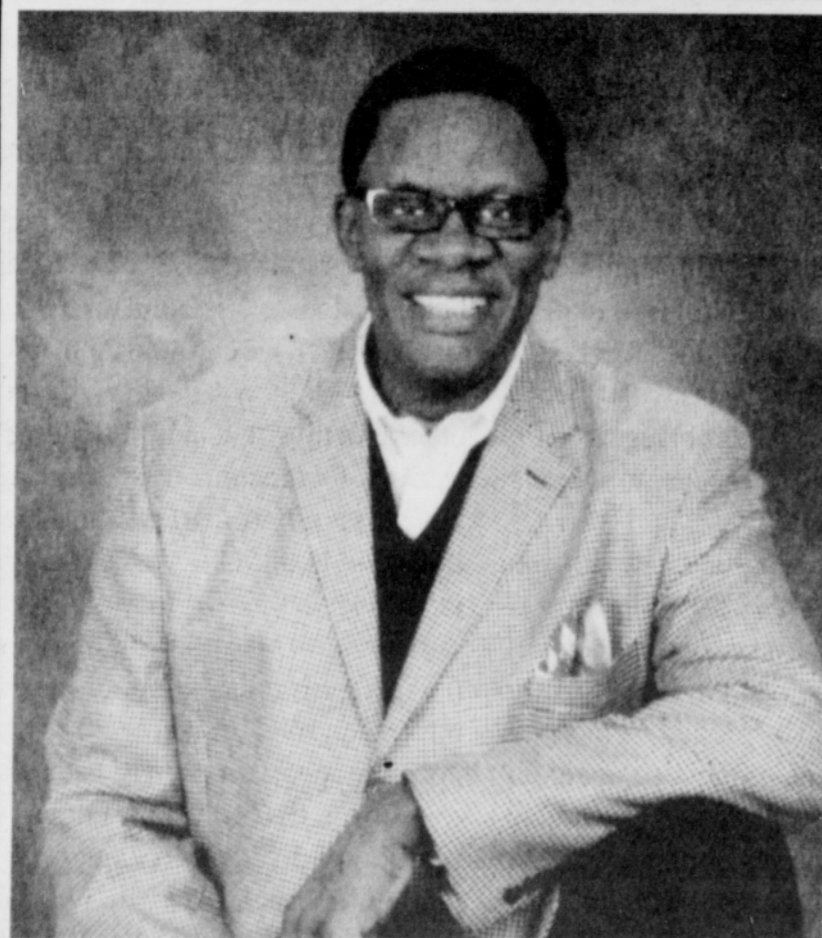
learning a sport.

To have a successful year, Haskins says the school district will need to raise about a combined \$1.2 million for sports programs. He approximates the ball-park figure to how much the state has cut from sports funding in the last 5 to 10 years.

"We want to restore the P.I.L. [Portland Interscholastic League] back to its glory days," he says.

Haskins has full confidence that an invigorated sports league can happen but only with the emotional and financial support from a wide range of people.

"If we have parents and whole communities coming together to support kids, fundraising won't be an issue," he says. "We've started the conversation, so out of it should come some possible results that again will make sure kids have their academic choice and athletic opportunities across the board in our district."



Dr. Billy R. Flowers

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