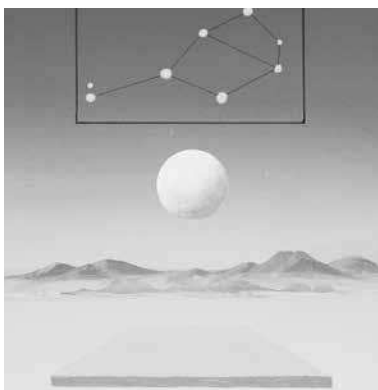


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Fred Meyer

What's on your list today?



King Elementary School parents are calling out the school district over plans to reduce staffing at the school and say the proposal goes against the district's own equity goals.

Staffing Plans Upend King

Diverse school faces huge cuts; parents upset

BY DANNY PETERSON
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Parents at Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School, one of the most diverse and historic public schools in the heart of Portland's African-American community, are upset over proposed staffing cuts for the upcoming school year.

Amid the 50th anniversary of the school's renaming last week were celebrations of its historic past and uneasiness for school's future.

Leaders of the King Parent Teachers Association say the school district's recently announced plans to cut teaching, administrative and other staff positions at King as it transitions next school year from a K-8 program

to K-5, are too extreme and go against the district's own equity goals. In addition, they say a long term failure to draw more students to King by expanding boundaries over the long haul means the northeast Portland school will fall behind other schools and get short changed again and again.

Eight full time equivalent positions—which could include a number of part-time staff whose hours add up together to be full-time—are anticipated to be cut at King which may include teachers for English language learners and special education, the school psychologist, and Vice Principal Yolanda Coleman, the PTA said.

Located at 4906 N.E. Sixth Ave., King is one of eight K-8 schools that is converting to a K-5 school next year. Those conversions, along with the opening of two new middle schools and other changes have caused projected staffing levels district-wide to

change.

A detailed report of each school's expectant enrollment changes and subsequent funding changes was released last Tuesday by the school district, along with a set of equity-based goals for the changes, one of which is to "ensure schools have adequate staffing to maintain reasonable class sizes."

Martin Luther King's enrollment is expected to drop by 21 percent along with a staff cut equivalent to eight full-time positions, the report said, leaving an anticipated student-to-teacher ratio of about 10 to 1 for next school year. But those projections explode to about 30 to 1 when you remove special programs at King, school officials said.

The school houses both a Mandarin language immersion program, enrolled via a lottery, and

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Condemnation of Bigotry Defended

The Oregon State Bar is standing by statements condemning the rise of speech that incites racism and violence even as it is poised to give partial refunds of dues to some of its members who were upset by an adjoining statement criticizing President Trump.

The two statements appeared side by side in the lawyer group's recent news bulletin. One condemned the rise of hate groups, cit-

ing the white nationalist march in Charlottesville, Va. last August and the fatal Portland Max train stabbing in May. The second statement went a step further and criticized President Trump, saying he has "catered to this white nationalist movement, allowing it to make up the base of his support and providing it a false sense of legitimacy."

A Republican bar member complained saying the statements

were too political, particularly the second one, and in violation of federal laws that prohibit partisan activities in state bar associations that require mandatory participation for practicing attorneys.

A state bar spokesman said the criticism of Trump was not meant as the view of the group as a whole and said its placement next to the first statement was "ill-advised and confusing."