

Dear JDLI Community,

We encourage you to weigh in before 2/25 regarding the district's proposed new policy regarding Off-Campus Activities. Below are resources and guidance for your own communication with the school district.

### **Final Amendments to Off-Campus Activities Policy**

<https://www.pps.net/cms/lib/OR01913224/Centricity/Domain/4814/Off%20Campus%20Activities%206.50.010-P%20--%20final%20amendments%20on%201-20.pdf>

### **Relevant Documents**

1. Please review Oya No Kai's 2-Page Fact Sheet:  
<https://oyanokaipdx.files.wordpress.com/2019/02/pps-travel-policy-fact-sheet.pdf>
2. Please review questions collected from the community by Mount Tabor Middle School. There are many good points made in these comments that can be expanded upon:  
<https://oyanokaipdx.files.wordpress.com/2019/02/proposed-board-policy-for-school-trips-qa.pdf>
3. Please review ONK comments submitted 1/1, 1/31 and 2/6 and expand upon any of these points:

Submitted 1/1:

[https://oyanokaipdx.files.wordpress.com/2019/02/onk-comments-1-1-pps-policy-re\\_-non-school-based-travel-1-1.pdf](https://oyanokaipdx.files.wordpress.com/2019/02/onk-comments-1-1-pps-policy-re_-non-school-based-travel-1-1.pdf)

Submitted 1/31:

<https://oyanokaipdx.files.wordpress.com/2019/02/onk-comments-1-31-policy-comm-mtg-statement-2.pdf>

Submitted 2/6:

<https://oyanokaipdx.files.wordpress.com/2019/02/onk-comments-2-6-meeting-with-superintendent.pdf>

In addition, the PPS Policy & Governance Committee has communicated to ONK leaders that they are very aware of the exceptional opportunity these cultural exchanges, particularly, the JRR and CRR capstones, afford the participants. So imperative is to communicate that we should preserve these trips not solely because they are amazing experiences for our children, but because the educational value they provide is aligned to district and state educational objectives and the district should work to expand comparable opportunities to all students.

Here are a few areas in which to focus your comments:

## **A. Creating multilingual and global citizens**

Aligned with the district's and Oregon state goals for promoting excellence in education and growing a highly capable workforce, ONK's mission is to "develop global citizens through embracing the diversity of students, families and cultures." Essential to that mission is the cultural exchanges (inbound and outbound) supported by the ONK organization and its volunteers.

It has been documented through numerous studies: DLI programs increase high school graduation rates overall and drastically increase graduates with advanced language and cross cultural skills (see studies cited on PPS DLI website). PPS is a national leader in dual language education - it is committed to growing and enhancing these programs. In 2018, PPS implemented a Vietnamese DLI in Rosa Parks Elementary School. An Arabic DLI program is in planning. The demand from PPS constituents is unparalleled with 10% of participants currently in PPS Dual Language Immersion programs.

***According to studies on best practices in DLI, long term retention of students is critical.***

The National Dual Language Immersion Research Alliance (Alliance) is a new network of K-12 practitioners and education researchers. The mission of the Alliance is to advance quality and build capacity in additive dual language learning programs by identifying core features and variables for quality implementation to prepare students to be bilingual, biliterate, bicultural, and career and college-ready.

Representing an initial network of more than 450 dual language programs with approximately 70,000 students enrolled from elementary through high school, our alliance of K-12 practitioners and researchers is formed around a shared need for better evidence about problems, issues, and practices associated with developing and implementing dual language immersion programs in secondary schools across the U.S.

The Alliance research concludes that a vital element for long-term success of K-12 programs is retention of students throughout primary and secondary school and attainment of college. The JDLI has found a direct relationship between opportunities for cultural exchange at key junctures in the program (5<sup>th</sup> grade, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> grades). Surveys of participants demonstrate that the program enables the majority of students to internalize the language skills they have spent years in the classroom studying and become inspired to continue their language studies.

**B. PPS should embrace the opportunity to articulate its values regarding social, political and ethnic diversity**

This proposed policy rescinds value statements we believe are critical to the growth of the state of Oregon and the city of Portland: Specifically, we are concerned by the rescinding of the 6.50.022-AD Travel-Study Committee - Sister City and Council of Great City Schools Programs policy.

6.50.022-AD articulates values that are critical to a wholistic and global view of education:

*It is the responsibility of public schools to prepare their students to live and work successfully in our rapidly changing international society. For this reason students will need a solid base of understanding of the world's social, political, and ethnic diversity. An excellent and cost-effective teacher tool to pursue this goal is well-planned foreign travel-study.*

The values articulated in this rescinded policy are not replaced with any value statements from the district regarding the **need to create students that can navigate the world's social, political and ethnic diversity** - skills that are needed in today's political climate more than ever.

For both points A and B above, it would be valuable to get personal testimonies of prior grads or families of the program in which the cultural exchanges of JDLI changed the trajectory of their student's educational and/or career paths. Student's testimony on this point would be appreciated.

### **C. An essential opportunity to connect to culture**

PPS has rightfully embraced many opportunities to provide everything from culturally appropriate curriculum, school lunch menus and as many educational experiences as possible to meet the multicultural makeup of its population.

For the many of the students in DLI programs, cultural exchanges deepen the connection they have to their cultural and language heritage. For many Japanese-American families in the NW in particular, the JDLI has offered the opportunity to recapture language and culture that was lost due to the history of internment camps and the desire of many Japanese-American families to fully assimilate in the aftermath of WWII.

It would be valuable to hear testimonies from families in which this program has provided a critical cultural connection and children that were able to benefit from both language and community that reflected their heritage.

### **D. Teacher voices: a chance to create meaningful experiences outside the classroom.**

Trips that are in-country and international. This policy restricts the ability for teachers to organize and lead such opportunities.

It would be valuable to hear the voices of our educators.

**E. This policy inhibits the opportunity to fundraise and ensure no student is denied access.** Through fundraising by parent support organizations, no student is denied an opportunity to participate in cultural exchanges due to lack of financial wherewithal. However, these parent organizations and leaders depend on their school community (communication venues, school events, etc.) to be able to fundraise appropriately.

It would be helpful to hear from families whose children would not otherwise be able to participate these types of international cultural exchanges were it not for fundraising and scholarships.