



brentwood-darlington
neighborhood association

June 25, 2018

Dear Portland Public Schools and Board of Education,

The Brentwood-Darlington Neighborhood Association (BDNA) voted on June 7th, 2018 to send a formal letter of complaint regarding the disrespectful and unprofessional behavior of Portland Public Schools (PPS) during the recent decision to co-locate ACCESS to Lane Middle School and Vestal Elementary School. As a community partner, the Neighborhood Association works closely with its neighborhood schools to advocate for our families and students. The BDNA is extremely concerned about the alarming lack of communication with parents and staff before, during, and after this decision was voted on by the Board of Education. The blatant disregard with which the Board of Education treated the parties in question must be addressed.

The Board vote to co-locate ACCESS to Lane and Vestal occurred on May 30th, 2018. Less than twenty-four hours before the meeting on May 29th, an email was sent out to parents and staff stating that there would be a “work session,” but that *no vote* or testimony would be taken. The following day, less than six hours before the meeting, a second email went out, stating that there would be a secondary “brief regular meeting” immediately following the work session and that select testimony would be taken, and *a vote would in fact be held*. This recklessly insufficient notice effectively prevented parents, staff, students, and community members from attending the meeting to voice their concerns. By holding the vote on improperly short notice, and at a time of day (afternoon, rather than evening) when stakeholders were in school, working, or simply unaware of what was transpiring, the Board demonstrated deep disrespect to multiple communities.

By leaving all of us out of the conversation, PPS is actively damaging the future education of children across Portland. This decision has created an early education vacuum in Brentwood-Darlington. The co-location of ACCESS removes four classes of Head Start from the heart of our neighborhood. This is the only Head Start program in our area with a dedicated and age appropriate play structure. This 50% reduction of free or reduced-cost early education will cause many families in our diverse neighborhood to self-select out of this vital service. The offer of priority enrollment for displaced families at neighboring Head Start programs only intensifies the problem, straining an already underserved region and negatively impacting the most vulnerable populations.

This letter constitutes a request by the BDNA for a formal written apology within five (5) business days from PPS and the Board of Education to each of the involved entities. We call upon PPS and the Board of Education to reach out to the communities they have wounded and have a meaningful dialogue to address the concerns and needs of all affected parties. We expect better than this from our education system and will be holding PPS and the Board of Education accountable for making vast improvements in a timely manner.



Post Mail Box 547
4326 South East Woodstock Boulevard
Portland, Oregon 97206

Sincerely,

Chelsea Powers
Board Chair

Meg Van Buren
Equity & Inclusion Chair

Shannon Kane
Member at Large

Tina Biornstad-Szafranski
Member at Large

Lynn Reck
Treasurer

Jean Blackmore
Vice Treasurer

Stephenie Frederick
Transportation Chair

Esther Crowell-Duncan
Member at Large
Lane Middle School PTA President

Rob Hanifin
Vice Chair

Paul Willey
SE Uplift Liaison
SE Uplift Secretary