State of Pittsburgh's schools

James Fogarty, Executive Director
A+ Schools
**Agenda**

1. District finances: perception vs. reality
2. Student achievement
3. Bright spots
4. Key issues to address
5. Questions and discussion
Challenges of systemic inequity

“The caste system, and the attempts to defend, uphold, or abolish the hierarchy, underlay the American Civil War and the civil rights movement a century later and pervade the politics of twenty-first-century America. Just as DNA is the code of instructions for cell development, caste is the operating code for economic, political, and social interaction in the United States from the time of its gestation.”

- Isabel Wilkerson, Caste: The Origins of our Discontents

Hands-on attention to ensure every student reads on grade level.

So how does it change?

Building authentic relationships among students, teachers, and families.

Linking families to supports so schools can focus on teaching.

Honest conversations among parents about which students get less and which get more.
Our mission is to make sure every child, and especially Black and Brown children, in Pittsburgh gets the high quality education they deserve.

Listen & Learn
We collect data from parents, students, and teachers and provide best practice research to address specific problems.

Share & Connect
We tell the stories of what’s working, provide key information to community stakeholders, and resources to support learning and quality improvement.

Collaborate & Create
We convene partners to address needs via pilot projects and policy advocacy that makes a difference.
Equitable Education: Providing each student what they need to reach and exceed a shared standard of success.

Each school should get something different based on needs of students.
District finances
Perception versus reality

Perception: PPS lacks resources
Reality: PPS spends more per pupil than benchmark districts.
In 2019 PPS spent $26,909.02 per pupil.

Perception: Teachers underpaid
Reality: Median teacher salary is over $90,000.

Perception: Class sizes are too big
Reality: PPS student teacher ratio 11.5:1.
National average is 16:1.

Perception: Enrollment is down because of charters.
Reality: 60% of enrollment decline not attributable to charters.
Revenue has grown about $69.3 million since 2016

PPS plans on spending $101.3 million more in 2021 than 2016

Budget History (in millions)

$32M DEFICIT Covered by fund balance
PPS current fund balance is $89 million (13% of 2021 budget)

Board policy is to keep fund balance at 5% or greater

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Projected Deficit at time of budget adoption</th>
<th>Actual deficit/surplus at end of year</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>($23.57 M)</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$23.57 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>($15.8 M)</td>
<td>($1.7 M)</td>
<td>$14.1 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>($22 M)</td>
<td>($15 M)</td>
<td>$7 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>($32 M)</td>
<td>($22.8 M)</td>
<td>$9.2 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>($25 M)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Enrollment down 2,848 students, or 12%, in the same period
Population decline, changes in housing affordability, moves to the suburbs, and charter enrollment growth are main drivers
Charter enrollment up 1,162 students since 2016

But 60% of district enrollment decline not attributable to charter growth
Cost Driver #1: Too many buildings, too few students

According to PPS an additional 18,077 students could attend existing PPS buildings

Functional Capacity = 39,665

18,077

21,588

Right-sizing the number of facilities would reduce:

- Administrative Staff Required
- Building Maintenance costs
- Inefficient teacher utilization
- Teacher burnout

Enrollment  Excess Functional Capacity
Cost Driver #2: More staff drives multiple costs

While enrollment dropped 12% since 2016, staffing increased 3.5%, driving expenditures up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Growth since 2016</th>
<th>Growth since 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration (central office, clerical support)</td>
<td>37 positions</td>
<td>74 positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction (teachers, principals, assistant principals, librarians, and in class supports)</td>
<td>85 positions</td>
<td>142 positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support services (counselors, social workers, psychologists, attendance)</td>
<td>9 positions</td>
<td>29 positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health services (nurses and dental)</td>
<td>21 positions</td>
<td>24 positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations and Maintenance</td>
<td>-7 positions</td>
<td>-2 positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food service</td>
<td>0 positions</td>
<td>14 positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>136 new positions</strong></td>
<td><strong>281 new positions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3,972 Overall</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,972 Overall</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
State mandated formula + more staff = higher pension costs

PSERS Employer Contribution Rate Increases

Pension contribution is 11% of total 2021 budget
As PPS loses students and spends more, charter tuition goes up

Source: PA Dept. of Ed.
PPS spends more per pupil than any benchmark district

Per Pupil Spending 2018-2019

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education
Financial storm on the horizon?
Student Achievement
“Every system is perfectly designed to get the results it gets.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3rd grade reading proficiency</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th grade science proficiency</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8th grade math proficiency</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school literature college readiness*</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school math college readiness*</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation rate (2018)</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*As measured by SAT data
“Every system is perfectly designed for the results it gets.”

PPS Outcomes 2017-2019

3rd Grade Reading Proficiency
Black 31%, White 74%, Low-income 46%

8th Grade Math Proficiency
Black 9%, White 37%, Low-income 12%

H.S. literature college readiness
Black 34%, White 78%

H.S. math college readiness
Black 15%, White 61%
2019 Graduation Rate

- **All**: 80%
- **Black**:
  - Black women: 83%
  - Black men: 69%
- **White**:
  - White women: 86%
  - White men: 85%
- **Latino**: 64%
- **Asian**: 82%
30% complete college/tradeschool in 6 years
What are the causes?
“There is a wealth of evidence showing that it’s far more effective to impart information to students directly rather than having them attempt to figure it out for themselves.”
Decades of rigorous scientific research have strong implications for the content and methods of teaching children to read. Seidenberg, 2017

Yet, with few exceptions, mainstream education and the ILA have largely resisted and deflected the findings and implications.
14 out of 50 regular schools highly segregated *

* 75% or more African-American
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>2017 9th grade enrollment</th>
<th>2019-20 12th grade enrollment</th>
<th>Percent increase (+)/ decrease (-) in 9th-12th grade enrollment</th>
<th>2019-20 Low-income students</th>
<th>2019-20 Students with IEPs excluding “gifted”</th>
<th>2019 Graduation rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAPA 6-12</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>-6%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obama 6-12</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>-31%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sci-Tech 6-12</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>-16%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allderdice 9-12</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>-19%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brashier 9-12</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>-15%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrick 9-12</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>-50%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milliones 6-12</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>-26%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perry 9-12</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>-53%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westinghouse 6-12</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>-27%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bright spots:** The Imagine PPS process recognizes a need for significant rethinking of current models for Milliones, Perry, and Westinghouse. Read more about the student and teacher driven vision for Perry High School on page 12 of this report.
Where poverty is concentrated in a neighborhood, it's concentrated in a school.
2020 PPS Teacher Diversity

- Black teachers: 13%
- White teachers: 85%
- Other: 2%
Chronic absence: Number of kindergartners missing 10% or more of school days 2020

- Overall: 21%
- Black: 31%
- White: 10%
- Asian: 10%
- Latino: 15%
- Multi-ethnic: 22%
Chronic absence: Number of 9th graders missing 10% or more of school days 2020

- Overall: 46%
- Black: 56%
- White: 33%
- Asian: 43%
- Latino: 51%
- Multi-ethnic: 39%
Evictions lead to chronic absence
14% Percentage of Black students suspended at least once
5%

Percentage of White students suspended at least once
Students identified as “Gifted” grades K-8

- White: 66%
- Black: 18%
- Other: 16%
Gifted identification rates correlated with student poverty

We advantage wealthier kids with project based learning and access to more rigorous courses than we do kids in poverty.

Bright spot: Dilworth PreK-5 provides services for students identified as gifted at the school. Some of the activities are open to all students.
Who's taking Algebra by 8th grade and how are they doing?

- Total 8th Graders: 1,500
- Took Algebra: 500
- Scored P/A: 200

- All: 54%
- Black: 33%
- White: 29%

- All: 56%
- Black: 28%
- White: 53%

- All: 70%
- Black: 12%
- White: 12%
Percent of HS Students Taking AP Courses

- All: 26%
- Black: 15%
- White: 41%
There is not a statistically significant relationship between student need (economic disadvantage) and per student spending at schools (correlation value \( r = 0.41 \)). There is high variability in per student spending ($6,189 - $11,529) even among schools with >69% of students identified as economically disadvantaged (to the right of the red line).
3rd grade reading results disaggregated

- Black: 38%
- White: 72%
- Latino: 49%
- Economically Disadvantaged: 41%
Overall trajectory for English Language Arts: 2019
Overall Middle School Math Achievement: 2019

22%
Overall trajectory for Mathematics achievement: 2019
Percent that met SAT Math Benchmark

37% All

15% Black

61% White
Percent that met SAT Reading Benchmark

55%  34%  78%
All   Black  White
3rd grade reading results disaggregated

- Black: 38%
- White: 72%
- Latino: 49%
- Economically Disadvantaged: 41%
Implications for development
Segregation and housing instability

COVID-19 and its long-term impacts

Teacher diversity

Literacy instruction

Principal Leadership
What you can do

Consolidations are coming.

Can’t get to equity if there’s too much equal. Talk to your school board member and take part in Imagine PPS process to have your voice heard about what you want to see.
What you can do

Get to know your local schools.

There's something good happening in every school. Community organizations like Lawrenceville United, Homewood Children's Village, One Northside, the Hazelwood Initiative and others are partnering with schools to support them. Become a school partner.
What you can do

Host a candidate forum

School board elections in Districts 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9 are happening this Spring (May Primary). Host a candidate forum in your community to inform your neighbors and ask the candidates their plans. Be part of the Vote School Board First coalition. Contact Graham at gmulqueen@aplusschools.org to learn more.
Host an A+ Schools information session

We can tailor a presentation to do a deeper dive into your neighborhood schools and help your constituents make informed decisions about how to best support the students and families in your community.
Bright spots
Schools can significantly reduce chronic absence

Percentage of Schiller students missing 10+% of 2012-2013 school year (chronically absent)

Percentage of students missing 10+% of 2018-19 school year (chronically absent)

36%

Schiller 3%

K-5 schools 21%
K-8 schools 25%
Middle schools 21%
6-12 schools 29%
High schools 42%
A “relentless and diligent” commitment to all students
Schools can close gaps in early literacy

3rd grade PSSA Reading by race/ethnicity, 2017-19
Percentage at Proficient/Advanced levels

- Allegheny black students
- PPS black students
- PPS all students
- Allegheny white students
- PPS white students

Allegheny's black students 75% (2019)
Everyone reading by 3rd grade

Main literacy strategies at Allegheny K-5:
- Daily 5 allows for differentiation, student agency, and consistency
- Habits of mind provide a framework for students to know what it means to be a good learner
- Strong phonics instruction in early grades helps students decode
- Field trips, arts, and additional experiences help all children build their knowledge
Schools can significantly reduce suspensions without increasing disruption

1%

Dilworth’s suspension rate for 4 of the last 5 years.
“Be not afraid and ask for help.”

Lowering expectations for black students, says Assistant Superintendent Monica Lamar, “endangers their lives.”
Schools can create significant learning growth for students.

How many PPS schools “grew” math achievement in 2019?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Did not meet the standard</th>
<th>Met the standard</th>
<th>Exceeded the standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All schools</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: PA Value-Added Assessment System, PA Department of Education
A belief that all means all and a determination to “just destroy” state growth projections

2019 PSSA achievement compared to district (6th through 8th grades)
Percentage at Proficient/Advanced levels

ELA

Math

Arsenal 6-8 2019 PVAAS Data
Schools can create cultures where teachers thrive

Teachers who agree “My school is a good place to work and learn”

- Beechwood 97%

Teachers who performed at “Distinguished” level in 2018-19

- Beechwood 71%

Source: PPS 2018-19 Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey

Source: PPS
“I am a teacher, and I trust teachers.”

2019 PSSA achievement compared to district (3rd through 5th grades)
Percentage at Proficient/Advanced levels

ELA

Math
Schools can get all students ready by graduation

- 27% Low-income public schools in U.S.
- 41% City High

6-year college completion rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>College/Trade School Readiness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A radically different design where all students are known.

On a recent survey, 88% of City High students agreed that “Teachers here have the same high expectations for students regardless of race, gender, or identity.”
Key issues
Sources of Information

1. Financial
   - PDE - AFR Financial Reports
   - PPS Budget Page
   - PPS Finance Committee Minutes

2. Student Achievement
   - PPS Data Dashboards
   - PA Future Ready Index
   - NAEP Scores

3. Enrollment and Demographic Data
   - PPS Data Dashboards
   - NCES Data
   - ACS Data from US Census

4. Research
   - Importance of 3rd Grade Reading
   - How we teach reading is wrong
   - Chronic Absence Impacts
   - The To & Through Project
   - The Algebra Project
Questions?