

**Benson Polytechnic High School
Alumni Association**



Benson Polytechnic High School (Benson) has been the subject of many articles in both the Oregonian and Portland Tribune with regard to the Career Technical Education Opportunities the school has historically and continues to provide to the students of Portland. Benson is Portland's School. The entire city is its neighborhood as students apply from all neighborhoods of the city. Benson graduates 81% of its students, the highest graduation rate of any East Portland High School. Its student body is a mix that represents the city very well, approximately 25% each of African American, Hispanic, Asian and White. Benson's capacity is 1800 to 2000 students, currently it is serving 880 due to the restrictive enrollment policy implemented by PPS. Last Fall, 390 students applied and PPS allowed 250 students. This Fall, PPS has increased the allowable enrollment to 280. There is no question more than 280 students will want to attend Benson starting in the Fall of 2013. We simply ask that you sir, as the head of all of Oregon's education system, step up and make it clear to PPS that this restricted enrollment does not serve ours nor the city of Portland's long run economic interests of creating a more qualified young workforce for our present and future manufacturing needs.

It is well documented in the press that our business community needs increasing number of Career Technical oriented and trained employees. This generation and future generations will need industrial grade educations that this school has historically provided. It is also well known that Finland has the best educational system in the world, while the U.S. is lagging severely. In Finland, 48% of Sophomore High School students choose a Career Technical Education track and it is well understood that this reduces the dropout rate dramatically. Benson has proven that as well, as Sophomores make decisions on their major from an array of Career Technical Education choices.

Governor and Education Leaders of Oregon, the persons in charge of all education in Oregon, we as a community of business leaders which have a goal of developing a quality pool of talented workers to draw from for our individual business success ask you firmly to overrule PPS's position on enrollment restriction at Benson for the Fall 2013 and going forward. We need to build a stronger base of skilled labor and provide Portland's students opportunities (and for that matter all of Oregon's students) to excel in proven manufacturing disciplines that allow them to pay their way through further education or seek a trade that can provide a family wage. We are not asking for money, we are asking for opportunity. As PPS Board will be making a decision soon on this issue to formalize their position, we ask for immediate action from you.

Signed Collectively,


Vigor Industrial


Greenbrier Companies


Tjce Industries


Oregon Ironworks

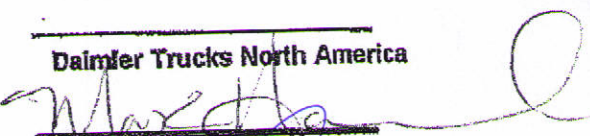

Oregon Metals Industry Council


Submitted Respectfully,


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