

# A Personal Update from Peace in Schools

Your October 2023 - March 2024 Mid Year Report

Dear Beloved Community,

Will you take a moment to pause with me? I'm reflecting on the magic of the last six months at Peace in Schools: We're celebrating ten years of partnership with Portland Public Schools. We've raised over \$2.3 million to advance Mindful Studies. We're training ten educators from seven brand new partner high schools from California and Oregon. We wrapped on a film project slated to reach tens of thousands of educators in the coming year. All the while, we made huge strides improving our curricula as we prepare to see hundreds of more students enrolled in Mindful Studies next fall. I'm honored to share our favorite highlights with you. Forever grateful!

**Janice Martellucci**  
Executive Director



**peace**  
IN SCHOOLS  
EST 2014

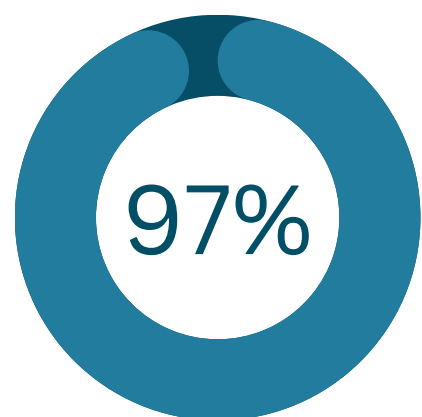
TRANSFORMATIVE  
MINDFULNESS  
EDUCATION



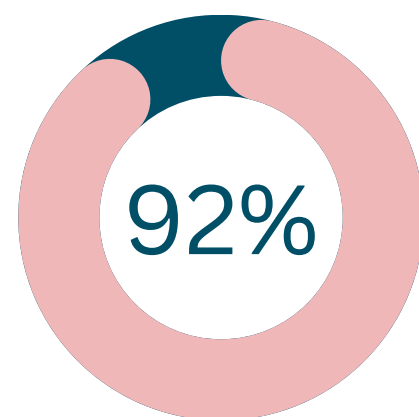
# 10 Years of Transformation!

This year marks our 10th year of partnership with Portland Public Schools! In October, we gathered in Portland to celebrate this milestone and the more than 6,000 teens who have completed Mindful Studies since 2014. You can read a recap of the event, see more pictures, and watch a video of our alumni, Zoë's, moving speech on our blog [here](#).

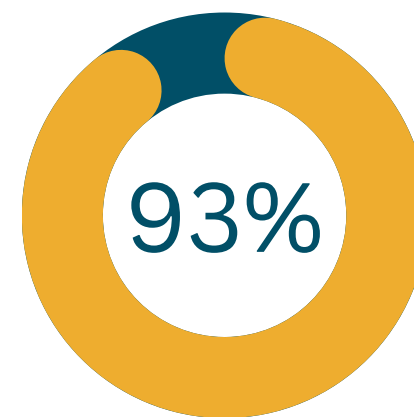
This fall, 251 students from eight PPS high schools took Mindful Studies elective. Our class continues to serve high levels of students who experience systemic social barriers, including students of color (46%), LGBTQ+ students (38%) gender-expansive students (19%). Fall 2023 student surveys report:



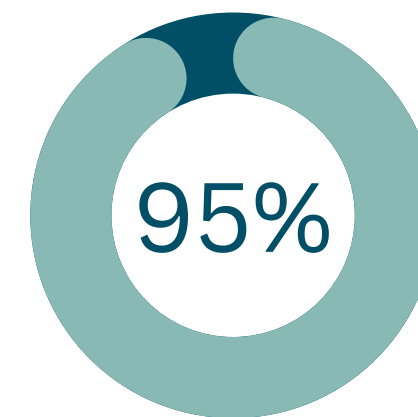
reported they would or might recommend Mindful Studies to another student



reported using practices and tools from Mindful Studies in their lives outside of class



reported that Mindful Studies helped them deal with stress



reported that Mindful Studies was useful in dealing with relationships (with family, friends, etc.)



“ It's hard to put into words, but this class helped me be myself more, accept that I am a work in progress and I am doing the best I can. It has seriously helped my mental health so much, and learning to practice unconditional love and non-judgement towards myself has literally changed my life. ”

— Cleveland High School, 10th Grade Student

# Our Expansion is Underway

We're taking the next step to bring Mindful Studies to teens across the country! Ten educators are participating in the inaugural cohort of the Mindful Studies Partnership Program. Starting next fall, this cohort of educators will teach Mindful Studies to hundreds of new students at these seven high schools.

## OREGON

Gresham High School  
Fir Ridge High School  
Northwest Academy  
West Linn High School  
Wilsonville High School

## CALIFORNIA

New Tech High School  
El Cerrito High School

Over a three year partnership, we will infuse mindfulness into the culture of the entire school community. Learn more about this important initiative in our press release from January!



Above: Photos from the week-long mindfulness retreat for trainees this January.

Right: Photos from mindfulness demonstrations for high school students offered by Peace in Schools staff and partners this winter.





“ I want to thank Peace in Schools for this extraordinary opportunity. I might have gone my whole life without this type of training. ”

— Teacher Trainee

# Visionary Investors Pass \$2,000,000 Benchmark



In less than nine months, fourteen generous supporters helped launch a new major donor program for Peace in Schools, combining for more than \$2.3 million in total pledged support. Each Visionary Investor pledged a minimum of \$25,000 or more over a period of up to five years. Our top investor committed \$1 million over two years. An up-to-date list of Visionary Investors is available on the Peace in Schools [website](#).

Visionary investors play a vital role in opening access to Mindful Studies for thousands of high school students across numerous regions. The Visionary Investors Founders Drive aims to raise \$4 million in total giving and pledges for Peace in Schools by June 2026. If you are interested in joining the Peace in Schools Visionary Investors Circle, please reach out to Janice, or [giving@peaceinschools.org](mailto:giving@peaceinschools.org).

We also welcome introductions to others who may be interested in bringing the benefits of Mindful Studies to high school students anywhere in the U.S.



“ There has never been a more important time to have mindfulness taught in high schools. With social media, eco-anxiety, the political divide, and aftershocks from the pandemic - teenagers need Peace in Schools more than ever. I am thrilled to be a Visionary Investor. ”

— Greg Hammer, M.D. Peace in Schools Visionary Investor. Stanford, CA

# Wide Ranging Support for Peace in Schools

## Recent Foundation Grants

Edwards Mother Earth Foundation  
The IMA Foundation  
So Hum Foundation  
Herbert A. Templeton Foundation  
Joseph E. Weston Public Foundation  
Zephyr Impact Fund

## Visionary Investors Circle

Since launching the Visionary Investors Circle Founders Drive in May 2023, Peace in Schools has raised over \$2.3 million to advance teen wellbeing!

Every Visionary Investor has pledged \$25,000 or more over a period of up to five years to expand access to Mindful Studies.

## Giving Drives

In appreciating the wide ranging support for Peace in Schools, we thank all of our donors, including those participating in seasonal giving drives. We were honored to be featured among Portland's greatest nonprofits in the 2023 Willamette Week Give!Guide. Thank you to all who joined in the drive and raised \$20,000 for Peace in Schools.

## Featured Grant: Zephyr Impact Fund

From 250 applicants, Peace in Schools and four other incredible organizations were chosen as "being among the most innovative and effective community-based solutions lifting the mental health and wellness of young people in America." Peace in Schools is received an unrestricted \$20,000 grant to "bolster groundbreaking work in supporting and enhancing youth wellbeing through creative and effective programs." For the full story, read Zephyr Impact's [press release](#).



# On Set with Peace in Schools



We've partnered with the [Sounds True Foundation](#) to create a free video series for educators! Sounds True is a major publisher and leader in the field of wisdom education, with a following of hundreds of thousands subscribers. "Peace with Youth Starts with Us: What I Wish I Learned in High School" will be released late summer 2024 - with the opportunity to invite tens of thousands more educators to join the Peace in Schools community.



Head of Training & Curriculum Maggie Steele (left), Program Director Zakiya Rhodes middle), and Founder & Lead Contemplative Caverly Morgan (right) wrapped video recording over the course of the third week in October.



# Updates for Equity and Accessibility



In 2023, we updated our curriculum to highlight the role of Asians and Asian Americans in the history of mindfulness and the role of relational mindfulness and community building-- core aspects of Mindful Studies-- in the civil rights movement and Black history.

To improve accessibility, especially for students with learning differences, we provided a new visual schedule and bin of sensory tools for each class and introduced a new lesson on neurodiversity. We also provided translated class materials, including a translated journal and class survey, for Spanish-speaking students.

# Stay Connected

Upcoming Virtual Events with Peace in Schools!

- [Connection Over Control](#)

For Educators: Wednesday, April 17 at 4pm PST

Learn more and register [here](#).

- [3rd Annual Pause for Peace](#)

A 3 Week Mindfulness Event for Mental Health Awareness Month: Save the date - Starting May 7

- [2nd Annual Teen Mental Health Forum](#)

A teen-centered conversation about mindfulness and mental health: Save the date - May 28

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THROUGH TRANSFORMATIVE MINDFULNESS EDUCATION