

SEIU Local 140 Newsletter 11.01.23

Take Action!

- Support teachers on picket lines from 7:30-10:30! Join the rally at PEC on 11/2 from 12-2.
- Wear purple for the training on Friday and sign our strike [pledge!](#)
- Membership meeting 11/11 location TBD.

Union Updates

Bargaining Updates

The bargaining team met with management October 25-27 to continue contract negotiations in hopes of coming to a strong tentative agreement. While we did score important wins on some articles, we are still very far apart on our economic proposals, especially wages. Management is also refusing to offer retro pay back to July 1, 2023.

Some of the improvements we won include:

- the right to speak at board meetings just like the teachers (Article 1)
- the right to provide anonymous feedback to the district on our work environment, including our experience with management (Article 14)
- language making sure that using accrued leave is not counted as an “occurrence” that could lead to discipline. (Article 17)
- a guarantee that we will get paid for absence due to quarantine or isolation without having to use our normal sick leave (Article 17)
- the right to use paid family leave or bereavement leave for extended family and chosen family. (Article 17)

Even though we gave management counters on wage proposal a week in advance, they did not share their counter until the end of our second day this week. They moved from offering 2.5% to 3% raises for nutrition service assistants and from 5.5% to 6% for leads. They are also willing to place NS on a step scale where you are assigned a step based on the years worked in that position (NOT years worked for the district overall.)

Instead of their initial offer of 3% raises for custodians, the district is now offering 4%. The district wants to eliminate working lunches for heads and extend their shift a half hour to include a half hour unpaid lunch. They also want to remove the 14 days notice required to change a custodian’s start time for non-student days.

The bargaining team also met on Monday to work on counter proposals for the district. Although we asked to extend bargaining into the evening to allow time to make more progress, the district was

unwilling to grant us that time. We decided to wait until we request mediation on November 6th before scheduling any more bargaining dates since we felt the district was not offering the time needed to work through all the remaining items on the table.

We will have flyers with our recent proposals and the district's offers at the union table during our training on Friday. Members of the bargaining team will be present to answer any questions you have about the bargaining process. We also encourage you to sign our [strike pledge](#) to show your readiness to take action if the district refuses to take our demands seriously!

What to Expect at PPS's Sexual Harassment Prevention Training

PPS has announced that they are holding an in-person sexual harassment training in response to our union coalition letter addressing widespread sexual harassment and retaliation at PPS. The district has hired a management-side attorney named Marc Alifanz to run Friday's training. Alifanz is an attorney with Office of General Counsel Network, a legal firm co-founded by PPS's current General Counsel Liz Large.

Alifanz worked previously as Assistant General Counsel for the for-profit education company KinderCare Education. It's worth quoting from Marc's [bio](#) to get a sense of what he does: "Marc is passionate about helping employers manage and mitigate their legal employment risk; not only through reactive management of issues after they arise, but by avoiding them altogether through respect, education, and positive HR management. For over 20 years, Marc has helped businesses do just that - as a big firm litigator, corporate in-house counsel, and non-profit HR executive." It is unclear what qualifies Alifanz to provide sexual harassment prevention training.

PPS has repeatedly failed to ensure the safety and well-being of their employees, especially those facing workplace sexual harassment. If you are experiencing harassment or discrimination at PPS it is important that you get in touch with a union representative who you trust. It is also helpful to document your experience as best you can whether that is through writing, or saving emails or screenshots.

Executive Committee Signs on to Justice for Jude Fernandez Letter

Our executive team recently signed on to a letter expressing solidarity with the labor movement in the Philippines and asking Congress to pass the Philippines Human Rights Act which would halt the flow of money for arms to the Philippines until the human rights situation improves. The Philippines has seen many killings of not only labor organizers but also land defenders and advocates of all kinds under the Marcos Jr. regime.

Local Solidarity

PFSP Rejects Second Tentative Agreement

PFSP members voted to reject a secondary tentative agreement last week with 65% of members voting against the TA. The vote sends a clear message that members will not accept poverty wages and demand better language on safety and training which was always an integral part of the bargaining campaign. The PFSP Communication and Action Team is now [recommending](#) their bargaining team request mediation from the state.

Teachers Rally and On Strike!!

On Saturday, SEIU members rallied and marched with PAT as well as members of PFSP and DCU, along with unionists and community members from outside the district. The march began at the PAT headquarters in inner NE Portland and crossed the Burnside Bridge before turning north for a few blocks downtown and concluding at Waterfront Park near Saturday Market. The crowd of thousands filled the entire length and width of the Burnside Bridge amidst chants of “Union Power!” and “Whose Schools? Our Schools!”

The teachers are set to strike this Wednesday November 1st. The teachers will hold picket lines in the mornings between 7:30 and 10:30 at their schools and then will rally or march at central locations starting around noon. While we’re still required to go to work alongside members of PFSP and DCU, we can attend picket lines outside of our work hours and [contribute](#) to the teachers strike fund if able to do so or share it with others. They also have a page of [resources](#) for allies who wish to stand in solidarity with them. You can sign up for more updates from [PAT](#) here.

As the teachers prepare to strike, PPS is contracting with private security to add to PPS’s own security personnel. The district has 24 hour patrols set up in advance of the strike but have not notified custodial staff to expect additional security on campus. The district has also recently hired undercover security including Nathan Adams from [Black Wolf Protection](#) who was revealed to have been in the audience at a recent board meeting. It appears that the district has the money to police a teacher strike, while they claim they do not have the money to meet the teachers’ bargaining demands.

International Solidarity

Hundreds of Thousands Rally in Solidarity with Palestine

As Israeli attacks intensify, hundreds of thousands of people around the world, including workers and trade unions, are voicing their [opposition](#) to Israel’s genocidal war and deadly siege on Gaza. Over 8,500 Palestinians have been killed including more than 3,500 children. Gaza is currently experiencing a second internet blackout, essentially preventing any communication with the outside world while hospitals are facing critical shortages of fuel and basic supplies. On Friday, the United Nations passed a

[resolution](#) calling for an immediate “humanitarian truce” with 140 votes in favor and only 14 opposed including the US and Israel. Meanwhile, Biden has requested a massive \$105 billion [security package](#) from congress that includes \$61 billion for Ukraine, \$14 billion for Israel, and \$13 billion for militarizing the US-Mexico border.

Since the war began, Israel has [detained](#) thousands of Palestinian workers in military facilities in the West Bank. Due to limited job opportunities, many Palestinians are forced to apply for work permits to perform manual jobs in Israel. Now many of these workers are unable to return to their families and are being held in inhumane detention facilities while Israel is refusing to release the names of those they are holding. As the war in Gaza continues, unions are [speaking up](#) to condemn Israel’s siege of Gaza and call for an end to US military aid to Israel. United Electrical Workers (UE) and UFCW 3000 have also sponsored a [petition](#) calling for a ceasefire in Israel and Palestine. A national demonstration in DC will be taking place on Saturday, November 4th, which will have tens of thousands in the streets and may be the largest protest for Palestine in US history.