

SEIU Local 140 Newsletter 3.30.24

Take Action!

- View our finalized and signed [2023-2026 contract!](#)
- Vote for your new union leaders by April 2nd.
- Attend PPS board meeting April 2nd at 6pm to oppose JROTC at PPS and speak out against planned budget cuts.
- Join our next membership meeting April 13 at noon, SEIU hall (525 NE Oregon St) or on zoom.

Union Updates

Union Elections

All members should have received a link via their personal email to vote for our new union leadership. Elections for Executive Committee members and General Council delegates occur every two years. Voting is open until April 2 and you can view candidate statements [here](#). If a position has no candidates running, or you do not see the person you want, you are always welcome to write in a candidate. If you have not received an electronic ballot, email Joe Cartino at cartinoj@seiu503.org.

Contract Ratification Celebration

Union members gathered with friends and family on Monday at the PSU Viking game room to celebrate the ratification of our new contract. Since beginning our bargaining campaign in late 2022, we have all contributed a lot of time and energy to fight together for our rights as workers at PPS. Our unity and solidarity with one another and with other workers across the district and across the city contributed to our ability to win better wages and other improvements to our working conditions. While we still have more to fight for, it is also important for us to take the time to celebrate our collective power. We hope to have more events like this in the future to continue building trust and camaraderie among our fellow coworkers!

Membership Meeting April 13

At our April 13 membership meeting, members will have the opportunity to vote on several items for our consideration. The first item is a petition shared with us by members of PFSP who are taking up a local campaign to oppose Portland-based nuclear energy corporation NuScale Power. Local organizations are circulating this petition to say [No to NuScale!](#) in response to its efforts to undermine the rights of the Filipino people by attempting to export its unproven and expensive technology to the Philippines.

Another item for consideration will be a resolution for SEIU 503 to consider at this summer's statewide General Council. The text of the resolution is currently being drafted, but will express support for the

Philippine labor movement and call for end to US military aid to the Philippines which is being used to target activists and organizers and anyone who stands up for their rights.

Anyone is welcome to bring an item for discussion to our membership meetings. It is important for us to practice democracy as a union to ensure we are representing the interests of our members and building unity in our collective decision making.

Public Records Requests

Anyone is welcome to request public records from the district by emailing publicrecords@pps.net. Recent records requests have revealed that the district has a contract worth \$137,000 with [Human Capital Enterprises](#), the firm they are using to conduct their superintendent search. Another request shows that the district paid nearly \$20,000 to air advertisements like [this](#) on KOIN in an effort to hire more custodians in 2022.

Local Solidarity

Actions Planned for April 2nd Board Meeting

At the April 2nd board meeting there will be a rally and “Peoples’ Board Meeting” calling attention to the recent budget cuts and their effects on special education, as well as an action regarding the school board’s vote on whether schools will be allowed to implement Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) programs at PPS. At our union’s recent executive committee meeting, we hosted Dan Shea who is the president of the Veterans for Peace Portland chapter. Shea informed us of his work with Veterans for Peace and the War Resisters League in speaking with students to push back on the rhetoric of military recruiters. He also shared some of his personal experiences as a US Marine during the Vietnam war and the aftermath of this experience including PTSD and the toxic effects of exposure to Agent Orange, the dioxin-containing herbicide used in enormous quantities during the Vietnam War.

For the past several months, the board has been considering revising district policy to allow JROTC programs in PPS high schools. Many people including Dan have [spoken out](#) against this at committee meetings. Meanwhile, board members like [Herman Greene](#) are pushing JROTC as a “career pathway.” [Gary Hollands](#) even compared it to trades like trucking and culinary and made a joke about people getting their hands cut off in culinary school which elicited laughter from Julia Brim-Edwards. While Michelle DePasse does not support the policy change, [Eddie Wang](#) remains “on the fence.”

This proposal to bring military training into our schools comes as PPS has failed to make any statements condemning the ongoing US-backed genocide which Israel is carrying out in Gaza which has resulted in over 32,500 Palestinian [deaths](#) including over 13,000 children. At the end of the day, school cuts and privatization are linked to the massive amounts of money that are diverted for war and destruction. This board meeting will be a critical chance to resist the narratives of austerity and scarcity that are undermining our public schools.