

SEIU LOCAL 140

OCTOBER 23RD 2023 NEWSLETTER



TAKE ACTION!

Sign our strike [pledge!](#)

Next bargaining dates:

10/25 1-5pm PEC
501 N Dixon St.

10/26 1-5pm SEIU
525 NE Oregon St.

10/27 1-5pm PEC

Teachers (PAT) rally and march
across Burnside bridge 10/28 9am
at PAT 345 NE 8th St.

Local 140 executive team meeting
10/28 11am at SEIU

UNION UPDATES

SEIU Strike Pledge and Upcoming Bargaining

As we head into 3 days of bargaining this week, our bargaining team has already given the district our counter-proposals on items the district initially rejected and hope to get responses at the bargaining table. We are maintaining our proposal for 30% wage increases for all custodians and 45% for all nutrition service workers as well as ensuring that all employees have access to employer-provided healthcare. Please come support the bargaining team at the table at any of the upcoming 3 days of negotiations!

Currently we are running a [strike pledge](#) to determine whether we have the strength to go on strike if the district fails to meet our demands at the bargaining table. A strike pledge demonstrates how many of our members are willing to go on strike if the bargaining team determines it is necessary. It does not mean we will necessarily strike. Having the support of a large majority of our members can sometimes be enough to move the district to a fair settlement, even without going on strike.

If we are not able to come to a tentative agreement with the district within the next several weeks, we are allowed to request mediation from the state. This would put us on a timeline to potentially strike in early January if both sides fail to reach a tentative agreement. In order to strike, members would need to approve a strike authorization vote (different from the strike pledge) by at least 75%. In the coming weeks we hope to provide more information about what it would mean to strike and what resources SEIU would have to support us if necessary. Although it will not cover our normal pay, our dues can help pay for a strike fund and we can fundraise to make sure members can continue to pay their bills and make ends meet during a possible strike.

Who is Superintendent Guadalupe Guerrero?

In 2017 the school board appointed Guadalupe Guerrero to fill the vacancy left by superintendent [Carole Smith](#) after she resigned in the wake of an investigation into the district's failure to address lead in school drinking water. Guerrero currently oversees the top administrative positions at the district including HR director Sharon Reese, chief of staff Jonathan Garcia, and deputy superintendent Cheryl Proctor. He also works closely



with the district's contracted general counsel [Liz Large](#) who has previously worked as executive vice president of KinderCare Education, one of the nation's largest for-profit education companies. Meanwhile, the school board is charged with appointing, overseeing, and evaluating the superintendent. In 2022, the Board [renewed](#) his contract until the summer of 2024, guaranteeing him a [salary](#) of \$322,354 with 3% annual raises. This means for 2023-24 his raise alone totals over \$9,600. On top of this salary, the district is contributing a retirement annuity of \$36,000 for this year, and he could be eligible for additional contributions up to \$75,000 for raising test scores of Black students in reading and math. He is also afforded \$360 a month for car related expenses.

Before coming to PPS, Guerrero worked as deputy superintendent at San Francisco Unified School District. Prior to that, he served as [principal](#) at a school in Dorchester, Massachusetts which later fell into state receivership as a result of failing test scores throughout his tenure. Guerrero applied, but was not hired, for the superintendent position of Boston Public Schools in 2015. In his application for Boston Public Schools, Guerrero claimed he had completed doctoral coursework at Harvard, but had not finished his dissertation. The [Boston Globe](#) later revealed that he had in fact been terminated from the doctoral program at Harvard. However, the spokesperson from Harvard would not reveal the reason for his termination.

In addition to serving as PPS Superintendent, Guerrero is currently [chair](#) of the Council of Great City Schools Board of Directors. The Council of Great City Schools describes itself as a "coalition dedicated to the improvement of education for children in the inner cities." It was formed in 1956 by Chicago School superintendent Ben Willis who [fought against](#) integration of the city's racially segregated schools. Today, the Council [partners](#) with a wide array of private corporations that profit off of contracts with public school districts. Guerrero will be speaking at the Council's 67th annual [fall conference](#) this week which is entitled "Sailing into the Future of Urban Education."

LOCAL SOLIDARITY

PFSP to Vote on Second Tentative Agreement

After members rejected the initial tentative agreement (TA), Portland Federation of School Professionals (PFSP) and the district have reached a new agreement which members will vote on this week. The new agreement adds automatic annual step increases and the ability to discuss training issues with the district at monthly meetings. It does not include further wage increases, safety or staffing language, or actionable language for additional training. Many PFSP members have expressed disappointment with the second TA and are encouraging members to vote no and are advocating that the bargaining team request mediation with the district.

Teachers Vote to Strike Beginning November 1

The district’s teachers who make up the Portland Association of Teachers (PAT) recently voted to authorize a strike, with 93% of members voting and of those 99% voting yes to going on strike. This doesn’t mean a work stoppage is necessarily inevitable, however it gives the teachers the ability to go on [strike](#) on November 1st if they do not reach an agreement with the district. PAT stated, “the district has failed to deliver a contract that makes needed investments in our students, our educators, and our community.” They explained, “we are seizing this opportunity to build the learning environments all of our families need, to create safe and modern classrooms that provide the one-on-one attention our students deserve, and to respect educators with competitive wages and benefits.” Some of PAT’s crucial issues are wrap-around services for students, schools that are safe and fully staffed, and adequate resources available for professional development addressing key topics for advancing social justice in the district.



How to Show Solidarity with Teachers

PAT has put together a page of [resources](#) for anyone who wants to show solidarity with the teachers in the event of a strike. Sadly, nutrition service workers and custodians are still required to work even in the case of a

work stoppage, however we can still show up on picket lines with teachers outside of our working hours. Although the district can legally reduce working hours if a strike occurs, at this time they have stated that there will be no reduction in working hours for either nutrition service workers or custodians. The teachers are also holding a rally and march this Saturday 10/28 starting at 9am at the PAT office 345 NE 8th Ave. There have been many different strikes and pickets in Portland over the last year including workers at the City of Portland, New Seasons, Magic Tavern, Providence, Kaiser, Powells, CertainTeed, Chrysler and more! We will continue to give updates about how to stand in solidarity with teachers as the strike approaches

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Solidarity Week of Action for Philippine Labor

In the wake of the recent killing of longtime labor leader Jude Fernandez, the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines (ICHRP) is calling for a week of action in solidarity with Philippine Labor. Jude's murder is the [72nd](#) labor-related killing in the Philippines since 2016 and the 4th since the beginning of 2023. On top of soaring inflation and stagnant wages, workers in the Philippines



are also facing cuts to basic social services and ever increasing repression and militarization. The Philippine National Police who carried out Jude's assassination is partly funded by the United States, which has sent over [\\$1.1 billion](#) in military aid to the Philippines since 2015. There are several ways unions and members can show solidarity and take part in this national week of action:

1. Take a selfie holding a sign with one of the following demands:
 - a. Justice for Jude Fernandez!
 - b. Defend Philippine Labor!
 - c. Cut US Military Aid to the Philippines!
 - d. Pass the Philippine Human Rights Act!
2. Encourage your union to sign onto this [letter to congress](#) urging the passage of the Philippine Human Rights Act which would suspend US military aid to the Philippine government.
3. Release a statement condemning Jude's murder and the ongoing attacks against the Philippine labor movement.