

# SEIU LOCAL 140

SEPTEMBER 19TH 2023 NEWSLETTER



## **TAKE ACTION!**

Support educator [Bryan Chu](#) as board considers termination, Tuesday 9/19 6pm, PEC

SEIU Informational picket at McDaniel HS, Wednesday 9/20 at 5:30pm

Next bargaining Thursday 9/21, 1-5pm at 525 NE Oregon St

Special bargaining info meeting 525 NE Oregon St or [Zoom](#): Saturday 9/23 at 11am

## **UNION UPDATES**

### **Bargaining Update**

Bargaining is moving into a new stage as the bargaining team requested mediation at our 9/14 bargaining session with management. We have been bargaining with management since February 10th and have failed to reach tentative agreements on any substantive changes to our contract. We shared our first proposals with management on April 7th but management did not present any proposals or counters until 4 sessions later on June 6th. Besides making a proposal to add a 10 step wage scale for nutrition service workers, and proposing wage increases of 5.5% for NS

leads, 2.5% for assistants, and 3% for custodians, the majority of management's proposals are to simply reject our language outright.

We have proposed 45% wage increases for NS and 30% for custodial as well as healthcare for part time employees. Although we presented our healthcare proposal April 21st, we have yet to receive a response from management. Due to management's delay tactics and failure to meaningfully respond to the majority of our proposals after well over 150 days in bargaining, we have requested mediation from the state. If approved, this means a state-approved mediator will attend future bargaining sessions to try to help both sides come to an agreement. The teachers have already been in mediation for the last 3 bargaining sessions.

We hope that management will engage with our proposals and decide to make counter-proposals that are more in line with the priorities of our members. If we fail to come closer to an agreement during mediation, either the district or the union can declare an impasse as the teachers did on Friday which would force both sides to present their last and final offer.

If after a one month “cooling-off” period, the two sides do not reach an agreement, we will have the option of going on strike or simply accepting management’s final offer. The bargaining team is hosting information sessions to learn more about where we are at in bargaining and ask questions about our timeline to settle or strike. The first will be this Saturday 9/23 at 11am in person at the SEIU building or on [zoom](#).

## **Teachers Declare Impasse**

On Friday 9/15 the Portland Association of Teachers (PAT) bargaining team [declared an impasse](#) in negotiations with the district. Over the course of 7 months PAT has been [bargaining](#) for class size caps, cost of living adjustments (COLAs) that adequately keep up with inflation, and increased [teacher planning time](#). Although teachers are asking for a 21.5% wage increase over the next 3 years, the most the district has offered is 10%. You can read more of PAT’s bargaining updates [here](#).

Declaring an impasse means that both sides will have until this coming Friday 9/22 to present their final offers followed by a 30 day “cooling off” period. Both sides can continue to meet for further mediation during this time. If no agreement is reached by the end of the 30 days, the district can impose its final proposals or the teachers can decide to go on strike. Before this can happen, teachers will have to vote to decide whether to authorize a strike.

## **PFSP Reach Tentative Agreement**

The bargaining team representing classified workers at PPS (paraeducators, secretaries, admin assistants, safety associates, etc.) has reached a tentative agreement (TA) with the district. This means the bargaining team and management have agreed on language for a new contract. For the contract to go into effect, it must first be approved by a majority of members. Voting for PFSP members opens this week.

The PFSP contract action team has put together [this document](#) summarizing the TA. In short, their bargaining team has agreed to raises of \$1.87 per hour this year and cost of living adjustments (COLAs) of 3.5% and 3% for years 2 and 3. Although training and safety were major priorities for members, the TA has no new language on either. If a majority of members vote no on the current TA, it will require to bargaining team to go back to the bargaining table with management.

## Bryan Chu Termination

This Tuesday 9/19 the PPS Board will be holding a special meeting to fire Bryan Chu for a series of alleged offenses. Chu has been on leave since April 2022 when he was [removed from the classroom](#) for allegedly disrupting a board meeting and telling a district administrator that she “failed at her job.” Chu has elected for the board decision regarding his termination to be open to the public, and students and community members plan to gather before and attend the meeting at the PEC to show support for him.



Chu has long faced [retaliation](#) by the district for speaking out against environmental racism and the lack of democratic process at PPS. A vocal [critic](#) of the district’s decisions, including the planned relocation of Harriet Tubman middle school for the I-5 Rose Quarter expansion project, an environmentally disastrous endeavor that’s now far over budget and may be canceled. Supporters will gather at the PEC (501 N Dixon St) at 5:30 before the board meeting at 6pm. This is a chance to show solidarity with a passionate educator, dissident and whistleblower!



## SEIU 503 Board Meeting Recap

Union members who mobilized to Seattle at the end of July to oppose APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) reported back to the SEIU Local 503 board last week about the [events and protests](#) held by the PNW People over Profit coalition. PNW-POP is a coalition of labor, climate justice, anti-war, and human rights organizations united in their opposition to APEC, an entity that promotes free trade around the Pacific rim. Local 503 agreed in July to help PNW-POP by donating \$2,500 to the coalition, which was used to hold the People’s Summit: a day of speakers and workshops addressing the many damaging aspects of free trade policies to workers, migrants, and the environment across the Asia-Pacific region. The day after the People’s Summit, [hundreds mobilized](#) in the streets in front of the Seattle convention center to call out APEC for their secretive meetings that entirely exclude voices of the public.

In early November, APEC 2023 is ending in San Francisco with a heads of state meeting, which will be attended by Biden and other world leaders. The national No 2 APEC coalition is organizing to expose and confront these meetings much like in Seattle, and SEIU Local 503 has the opportunity to continue aid for the campaign.

## **LOCAL SOLIDARITY**

### **Portland to Criminalize Drug Use, Pending State Approval**

Portland City Council members recently [voted](#) to pass an ordinance that would make public drug use a misdemeanor offense. Now powerful business leaders, including Nike founder Phil Knight are sponsoring an effort to [repeal](#) Measure 110 which decriminalized drug use and which prohibits cities from enacting laws criminalizing use. In 2020 Oregon voters passed Measure 110 which was seen by some as a move in the right direction away from incarceration and towards empathy and mental health treatment for those dealing with addiction. City leaders have stated that the current drug crisis and particularly the prevalence of fentanyl means that they need greater tools for enforcement to improve public safety and Portland's reputation.

TriMet has also called for a [crackdown](#) on drug use in the wake of a study by the University of Washington that found trace amounts of fentanyl and amphetamines on public transit surfaces. Although the study authors found that there was no meaningful danger to riders, many news outlets ran stories on the findings. Rather than solving the root problems leading to drug abuse and addiction, criminalization simply ends up further targeting poor and racialized communities. There's little or no sociological [evidence](#) showing that tighter enforcement, more policing, or harsher laws have had much effect on reducing substance use disorders or improving public health and wellbeing. Criminalization also diverts more money into policing and [incarceration](#) and away from essential social services like housing, addiction treatment, and education.

## **INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY**

### **UAW Workers on Strike**

Thousands of auto workers are [on strike](#) across multiple plants producing vehicles for Ford, General Motors, and Stellantis. Represented by the United Auto Workers (UAW) they are demanding a [40% wage increase](#), more paid time off, increased retiree pay, and the right to strike over plant closures among other [demands](#). This is the first time that workers have gone on strike at all of the "big three" auto manufacturers at once.

## Trade Union Tour: Solidarity with Philippine Labor under Attack

In the face of increasing attacks against the Philippine labor movement, Filipino worker-leaders are visiting the United States to strengthen solidarity with unions, worker organizations, and community groups based in the US, and share the situation of workers in the Philippines. Building from the momentum of a labor solidarity tour last year, BAYAN USA is sponsoring the [Kapit Bisig \(Link Arms\) Tour 2023: Solidarity for Philippine Labor under Attack](#). In Oregon, BAYAN will be hosting Elmer “Ka Bong” Labog, a longtime labor activist and chair of Kilusang Mayo Uno, an independent and democratic labor organization in the Philippines. On Sunday 9/24 from 4-7pm at Moreland Presbyterian Church, Ka Bong will be sharing his experience as a labor leader and discussing ways of building solidarity support for the labor movement in the Philippines. You can [RSVP for the event here](#).



*Elmer “Ka Bong” Labog*