

SEIU Local 140 Newsletter 11.22.23

Take Action!

- Add your name to the [vote of no confidence](#) in Superintendent Guerrero
- Sign our [strike pledge](#)!
- [RSVP](#) for our holiday party and upcoming bargaining sessions

Union Updates

Bargaining Update

Although we gave the district our latest counter proposals on October 31st, we have not yet received any counters from the district. We filed for mediation on November 3rd, but the earliest date the district agreed to meet is November 27th. We hope to hear PPS's response when we meet on the 27th and hope others will join us! That will be followed by bargaining November 30th and December 11th. Bargaining will start at 1pm but the district has indicated they are willing to bargain past 5pm any of those days if needed. Unfortunately, we will not be able to have a mediator present until early January.

Who is on the School Board?

Gary Hollands, Board Chair- Owner and founder of Interstate Trucking Academy and executive director of the Albina Sports Program, which is seeking to build a massive sports [complex](#) on district property.

Herman Greene, Vice-Chair- Senior pastor at Abundant Life PDX who attended a far-right [rally](#) in 2020 headlined by anti-LGBTQ Christian singer Sean Feucht. His wife Nike Greene worked for the City of Portland in the office of violence prevention for 3 years before she [resigned](#) in 2022.

Julia Brim-Edwards- [Retired](#) in 2021 from a career as a senior director and lobbyist at Nike. Currently serves as county commissioner for Multnomah County. Served on the PPS school board in 2002 when the entire custodial department was [laid off](#) in an attempt to save the district money.

Andrew Scott- Former city budget director and current deputy [chief operating officer](#) of regional government Metro.

Michelle DePass- Works for the City of Portland on the city's [equity and engagement](#) team. Formerly worked in Portland's "Sustainability at Work" program.

Eddie Wang- Owner of [Eddie Wang Instruments](#) which sells "handmade, vintage inspired guitar amplifiers."

Patte Sullivan- Retired [teacher](#). Campaigned against former sheriff Derrick Peterson who was revealed to have [Christian nationalist](#) ties.

Frankie Silverstein, Student Representative- Junior at Franklin High School and member of the district student council. The [student representative](#) does not have an official vote on the school board and may not participate in any “personnel or legal matters.”

Local Solidarity

Teachers’ Strike Update

After indications that both sides had reached a possible tentative agreement Monday morning, PAT shared that the school board had rejected the TA. While the district has its own bargaining team which includes outside lawyer Dan Rowan and Chief of Research Renard Adams, it is school board members who have final say over what gets approved. Despite this, board members like Andrew Scott have been conspicuously absent from the bargaining table. Instead, he continues to accuse PAT of lying while he doubles down on the claim that the district does not have the money to meet teachers’ demands, as revealed in a leaked email exchange with a parent. In the same email he suggests that the parent run for school board writing, “governing requires making hard decisions about trade-offs and not just writing angry emails.”

PAT members and parents rallied Monday afternoon at the Multnomah Building where Julia Brim-Edwards has her office as county commissioner. She and other board members have rejected the teachers’ compromise on the issue of class sizes in which they dropped their proposal for a hard class size cap and proposed that class sizes be determined by committees that include parent voices. Julia Brim-Edwards has so far expressed opposition to this proposal and the district as a whole has been unwilling to agree to hire the extra teachers necessary to maintain manageable class sizes.

As of Tuesday morning, PAT has announced a [new agreement](#) with the PPS bargaining team and is waiting on the board for approval. Although teachers were demanding 21.5% COLA over three years, the current agreement only offers 13.25%. PAT also conceded one of their top priorities: hard class size caps. Meanwhile, an information request has revealed that PPS has been paying ex-military [private security agents](#) \$84/hr while teachers have been on strike over cost of living. In response to the announcement of a possible tentative agreement, some teachers have already expressed that they will be voting no due to the agreement failing to satisfy teachers’ basic demands for living wages, class size caps, and safety.

International Solidarity

Civil Disobedience Against APEC Summit in San Francisco

Last Wednesday, members of the No to APEC Coalition, including SEIU Local 87 members, [blocked access](#) to the APEC CEO Summit in San Francisco in defiance of the hyper-militarized structures erected by the local and federal government. This was the latest effort by the No to APEC Coalition during its months-long campaign to highlight the global and local harms of free trade and global free market agendas while demanding an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.

“We know APEC and IPEF do not represent the interest of the people or the planet,” said Rhonda Ramiro from the No to APEC Coalition. “We are fighting for a different world. A world where all workers have pay and workplace protection, where all working people have the right to unionize and organize, where value is what you contribute to the community. We call on the people to join us in shutting down APEC!”

APEC’s scheduled CEO Summit included panels on sustainability and climate which featured Exxon Mobil CEO Darren Woods as well as heads of state including Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. While demonstrators locked themselves together to block entrances to the CEO Summit and called for “War Criminals Out of SF,” almost 200 gathered outside the Ritz Carlton to protest against Marcos Jr for “greenwashing” and selling out the Philippines to foreign investors.

“My family lost their house during Hurricane Maria and thousands of Puerto Ricans lost their lives. Our lives are threatened by the climate crisis that corporations like Exxon created and banks like Citi continue to finance,” said CJ Acevedo, with Climate Defenders. “That’s why this morning we performed a [symbolic wedding](#) to denounce the union between the CEOs of Citibank and ExxonMobil, who are sponsoring this event.”

“They call it free trade,” said Suzanne Ali from the Palestinian Youth Movement. “In reality, it is forced migration, it is destruction of the environment, it is destruction of our people, it is the depletion of natural resources, it is the fueling of war and genocide, and ultimately at the heart of it, is bloodthirst for profit.”

Will Wiltchko from Bay Climate Action said, “Young people everywhere are angry at world leaders not taking action on climate change. The Indo-Pacific trade deal they’re expecting to announce this week ignores the climate reality that people around the world are facing. This ongoing collusion between APEC leaders and huge corporations won’t be tolerated.”

Organizations are condemning the anti-worker agenda of APEC which they claim will especially harm women. “The big tech agenda on women claims to advance women's equality, when in reality these jobs pigeonhole women into low paying, exploitative jobs,” explains Katie Comfort of the International

Women's Alliance, "all while they make record breaking profits, and expand to new markets in these Asian countries."

Many of the corporations represented at the CEO summit, including GM, Amazon and Kaiser, have recently seen massive worker strikes and walkouts demanding better pay and working conditions. Conny Ford, a participant who risked arrest explained, "I am participating today because many of us workers have been through the last free trade deal for the southern hemispheres and it was a disaster. It was a disaster because no worker organizations were there at the table, and it meant low wages, extreme exploitation, and jobs shipped to the cheapest locations."

In the wake of President Biden's meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, organizers are expressing concern that APEC's profit-driven agenda will only breed further militarization and war in the Pacific Rim. Cody Urban with the Resist US Led War movement warns, "Biden's complete disregard for the calls from the world for a ceasefire in Palestine and an end to the genocidal Israeli assault proves the White House only serves to keep the war industry alive."

The No to APEC Coalition closed out the week of action by publishing a [unity statement](#) in response to APEC's own "Golden Gate Declaration." An excerpt from the unity statement reads: "we fight for a world where all workers have pay and workplace protection, where all working people have the right to unionize and organize, where value is what you contribute to the community, NOT a world where workers are surviving month-to-month, being left alone to challenge the bosses, or valued by how much you produce for corporate owners."