

SEIU Local 140 Newsletter 9.25.24

Take Action!

- Last chance for custodians to fill out this anonymous [survey](#) to give feedback on management. The deadline was extended to this Friday the 27th.
- Attend the [Reject Militarism Panel](#) Friday 9/27, 6-8pm at the Filipino Bayanihan Center (1537 SE Morrison St)
- Join a [discussion](#) on building Philippine Solidarity at SEIU 503 Sunday 9/29 5-7pm at the SEIU building 525 NE Oregon St.

Union Updates

Custodial Climate Survey

This is the final week for custodians to fill out the [climate survey](#) to give feedback on PPS management. Please fill out this anonymous survey if you have not already. Your answers will remain anonymous and any potentially identifying information like job site will not be connected with your other responses.

Inclement Weather Updates

PPS has continued to demonstrate its dysfunction 6 months after it notified custodians who worked during January's ice storm that they would have to pay back the extra .5x pay they earned working during inclement weather.

In July, Superintendent Armstrong suggested we could resolve the issue by drafting a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which the Board could vote on to allow custodians to keep the extra pay. However, the PPS Director of Employee Labor Relations Genevieve Rough has failed to sign the MOU and did not return our emails for over 2 months.

One day before the Sept Board meeting she emailed asking to speak to a member of SEIU staff. Our co-chair Jim D'Arcy responded indicating that she could reach out to him as a representative of our union. Still, she snubbed his response. Shortly after the board meeting had begun she also emailed Jennifer Sherman who was signed up to give union comment, requesting to talk with her before union comments were made. Jennifer also directed her to talk to Jim. After Jennifer and Cody [testified](#), Board member Gary Hollands spoke up to say that Genevieve had already emailed the union, even though she still refused to talk to union representatives.

Several days later Genevieve succeeded in reaching a union staff member. She told him she did not think signing an MOU was the best way to resolve the issue and suggested filing a grievance

instead (despite this not fitting the requirements for a grievance, and being well past the 30 day window we have to file a grievance.)

Union leaders intend to continue to put pressure on board members (three of whom have already suggested they would vote to authorize the MOU if it was brought before them) and the district at large to resolve this issue as quickly as possible.

Union Meeting Recap

Union members met Saturday to hear updates and discuss ongoing concerns in their workplaces. The regular membership meeting was followed by a meeting of the Contract Action Team (CAT) which discussed unifying issues across the district that we can work together to address including ongoing discrimination, harassment, and retaliation by management, as well as safety issues.

CAT members are union members who want to take a more active role in building union power by connecting with coworkers and helping organize around issues in the workplace. We discussed filing a grievance over the recent heat-related inclement weather for which the district refused to pay custodians the time and a half they are promised.

Local Solidarity

Reject Militarism Panel

Despite massive public outcry, the Portland Public School Board voted last spring to allow high schools to offer military training classes as a “career opportunity.” PAT and PFSP both signed letters to the Board voicing their opposition to this resolution.

This week, Kalikasan Solidarity Organization, War Resisters League, Students for a Democratic Society and other local grassroots organizations are hosting a panel discussion on the rise of militarism in our schools and internationally, its effects on the people and planet, and how we can fight back for genuine solutions! Speakers will discuss issues ranging from Junior Reserves Officer Training Corps (JROTC) at Portland Public Schools, the brewing regional war around the US-Israeli genocide in Palestine, and the US-backed militarization of the Philippines to incite war against China in the Asia-Pacific.

The panel will be held on Friday, 9/27 from 6-8pm at the Filipino Bayanihan Center (1537 SE Morrison St)

Register: tinyurl.com/rejectmil

Masks required!

PPS Restricts Teachers from Displaying “Personal or Political” Messages

In August, PPS adopted a new [rule](#) barring teachers from displaying “personal or political” messages in their classrooms. The decision was made internally without a Board vote. The Portland Association of Teachers (PAT) has filed a [grievance](#) alleging that the new rule violates their contract, including their right to academic freedom and the ability to display union-related materials.

Boeing Strike

Nearly 33,000 workers at Boeing factories in Oregon and Washington are [on strike](#) after rejecting a tentative agreement that promised 25% raises rather than the 40% workers were demanding. Boeing is one of only two major aerospace manufacturers worldwide and is also a major weapons manufacturer. Its CEO Kelly Ortberg earns a base salary of \$1.5 million, but is expected to make close to \$22 million this year through stock awards and bonuses. You can join the picket line at the Gresham factory to show your support.

New Seasons Labor Union Sees Bargaining Success Post-Strike

After a coordinated one-day strike across 10 unionized New Seasons stores, New Seasons Labor Union (NSLU) saw progress at the latest round of negotiations with the company. The strike cost the company an estimated \$750,000 in sales showing the power of collective action to disrupt business as usual.

New Seasons Market has recently contracted with a new anti-union lawyer named Dennis Westlind. PPS has also contracted with the law firm Alifanz and Westlind. During the teacher strike last fall Westlind penned a letter to PAT leadership accusing them of illegal activity. PPS also hired Westlind’s law partner Marc Alifanz last fall to facilitate a training on sexual harassment in the workplace for the custodial department.

International Solidarity

SEIU 503 Stands with Philippine Labor

At our SEIU 503 General Council in August, delegates voted overwhelmingly to support a resolution on building solidarity with workers in the Philippines.

Join us Sunday, Sept 29 from 5-7pm in person at 525 NE Oregon St or on zoom to learn more about the conditions and struggles of Filipino workers both locally and in the Philippines and why our solidarity is so important. We will also have discussion on next steps and actions we can

take as a union. Open to all, not just 503 members! We will also have a potluck if you are able to bring a dish to share. Masks will be required when not eating.

Register at tinyurl.com/SEIU503PHsol