

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Fund for PPS receives \$20,000 matching gift from the Portland Association of Teachers for Coronavirus Relief Fund for PPS Students and Families

May 21, 2020 Portland, OR - The Fund for Portland Public Schools, the fundraising nonprofit organization supporting PPS, announced today that the Portland Association of Teachers (PAT) has made a generous \$20,000 “matching gift” to encourage PPS teachers and other Portlanders to donate to the Coronavirus Relief Fund for PPS Students and Families. Starting today and continuing through June 1, any donation made online at FundforPPS.org will be matched dollar for dollar, up to \$20,000.

“We know the importance of communities rallying together in unprecedented times,” said **Victoria Lara**, Chair of The Fund for Portland Public Schools Board of Directors. “Through the generosity from our friends at the Portland Association of Teachers, we hope to galvanize every member of our community to donate \$5 or \$500. 100 percent of these gifts will go to help PPS families and students impacted by the devastating health and economic crisis this pandemic has created.”

Since launching the campaign in mid-March, The Fund for PPS has received more than \$130,000 in donations from generous individuals and businesses across Portland. In concert with school-based counselors and administrators, The Fund for PPS has distributed over 500 \$100 grocery gift cards to PPS families and is preparing to distribute another 500 within the next week.

Encouraged by its members, the Executive Board of Directors of The Portland Association of Teachers, a labor union representing more than 4,000 professional educators in the Portland Public Schools system and affiliate of the Oregon Education Association, earmarked \$20,000 of its annual union membership dues to provide relief to families during these unprecedented times.

“We hope this gift encourages our educators--and others in our community--to dig deep, if they can, to support PPS families and students in need,” said **Suzanne Cohen**, President of the Portland Association of Teachers. “Everyday--and especially now--teachers across Portland exemplify in their words and actions that they are adaptive, caring and community-minded. We are excited to partner with The Fund for PPS to harness the incredible energy and compassion of our teachers, many who, since the crisis began, have continued to ask us how else they can provide support to students and families.”

Encouraged by this announcement, PAT member and 7th/8th grade teacher at Marysville School, **Madeleine Allen** has pledged to be among the first teachers to donate to the Coronavirus Relief Fund for PPS Families and Students.

“I have been a teacher in the Portland Public Schools for seven years, and I absolutely adore my job and students. I hope this donation shows my students and their families--and students all across the district--that we miss them, and are still here to support them even if we’re not in the classroom together.”

Erika Schneider, PAT member and 2nd grade teacher at Llewellyn Elementary Schools also will be among the first teachers to donate to this effort.

“As an educator in Oregon for the past 17 years, I am deeply concerned for students and families during the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic is exacerbating existing disparities within our community. I hope my donation will encourage us to rally together to support our students and families who are in need now, and ensure they thrive when we come back to school buildings.”

For teachers--and others in our community wanting to join Madeleine and Erika in donating to the Coronavirus Relief Fund for PPS Families and Students, please visit FundforPPS.org today.

About The Fund for Portland Public Schools

The Fund for Portland Public Schools is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to building a robust network of generous donors, stewarding strategic philanthropic investments and overseeing parent-led school foundation efforts in support of Oregon’s largest school system, Portland Public Schools (PPS). As a nonprofit entity, The Fund for PPS plays a unique role: not only does it broker partnerships between the philanthropic community and our 81 individual school communities, it is also making possible a whole new magnitude of private investments to help shape PPS into an exemplary, 21st-century public school system that will provide all 50,000+ students with an equitable, inspired, intellectually rigorous educational experience, preparing them to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

About Portland Association of Teachers

The Portland Association of Teachers (PAT), represents more than 4,000 professional educators in the Portland Public School system. As an affiliate of the Oregon Education Association, the PAT works to create the best possible learning environment for our students, by protecting our profession and advocating for frontline educators.

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