



Advocate

March 8, 2017

PORTLAND ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS

School Board Votes Yes on Contract Changes

On Tuesday March 7th, the School Board voted to approve both our snow day agreement and the mini-package of tentative agreements. There are several key issues that we continue to work on in Interest-Based Bargaining.

However, these changes do have some immediate benefits for PAT members including: increasing hours in the sick leave bank; compensation for classroom moves; improved benefits for temporary educators; improved member protections; and new mother-friendly workplace language. Bargaining continues with the District and we are still hoping to wrap up negotiations in April.

March 15th Stipend Deadline for Early Notice of Retirement or Resignation

Our contract includes a stipend if members give early notice of retirement or resignation. If members give early written notice of retirement/resignation prior to March 15th, the professional educator will receive \$700 in the final paycheck. See Article 15, Section B1 on page 45 for more information.

April 15th Deadline for Requests for Full-Year Unpaid Leave

Requests for a full-year personal, exchange or career development leave of absence—whether part-time or full-time for the next school year—must be submitted to the PPS Human Resources prior to April 15th. Requests submitted after that date will not be approved, except in extenuating circumstances. See Article 14, D, on page 40.

The Leadership We Need at PPS

In the next few months, PPS will have a new superintendent and could have as many as three new school board members. Given these big changes in our District, it's an **important time for us to reflect on our values** and work to ensure our future leaders are prepared to deliver the schools Portland students deserve. We also have to make sure they are ready to lead the fight for great public schools for all Oregonians.

OPENING UP THE PROCESS

So far, our involvement in the superintendent search has been productive. We pushed the Board to open up the process, and with the announcement of the finalist, Dr. Donyall Dickey, there will be time for public vetting.

We will be reaching out to educators in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Atlanta to learn more about Dr. Dickey. During the interview, I was impressed with Dr. Dickey's clarity and vision for teaching and learning. Now we need to confirm that his track record matches the vision of educational leadership he spelled out during the interview process.

STRONG PUBLIC EDUCATION ADVOCATES

Make no mistake, regardless of who our next superintendent or school board members are, the threat to our public schools is immediate and real. In an era of Betsy DeVos, a secretary of education who does not value public schools, **we need leaders who are prepared not only to say they support public schools, but are ready to actively fight for them.**

It's hard to predict what we will need to do to preserve Portland's public schools. It may mean refusing federal dollars, or actively fighting against vouchers and other privatization measures. At the state level, we need fierce advocates for additional funding. The failure of Measure 97 spells cuts for PPS unless our future leaders stand up for our schools. As long as corporations aren't paying their fair share, our students will suffer.

Our priority has always been clear: **we need administrators who trust educators.** We need someone at the head of PPS who understands that the people on the front lines are the ones who know what our students need to succeed.

Furthermore, **our leaders must have union values and support collective bargaining.** Several federal policies on the horizon are a threat to our union and we need leaders who understand the role of collective bargaining in protecting our students' learning conditions. Portland Public Schools must be led by people who will make our schools safe and healthy. They must understand educational issues, paying extra attention to equity issues affecting our diverse populations and addressing the impact of poverty in the classroom.

With so much upheaval in our District over the past year, I'm excited to see what a strong superintendent and school board could do to secure the future of Portland Public Schools.

In Solidarity,

Suzanne Cohen





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Building Utilization and the Upcoming Bond

The School Board voted to refer a \$790 million bond to voters in May. The bond would continue PPS' Long Range Facilities Plan, and includes money to rebuild Madison, Benson, and Lincoln High Schools, and Kellogg Middle School, as well as \$150 million to address health and safety issues across the District.

At the last RA, representatives from the District presented the bond package, and building reps asked questions and voiced concerns.

A central concern to educators has been the District's model for building utilization in the redesigned high schools, which is based on the idea that teachers will not have their own classrooms. Instead, they would have shared office space for use during planning time, and would move between classrooms during the day. This design concept has been referred to in the past as "100% Utilization," although the District is no longer using that term.

Educators at Franklin, Marshall, and Lincoln have been teaching under conditions similar to the "100% Utilization" model, and have found it to be harmful to teaching and learning.

In September, reps brought forward and passed a [Resolution on School Design and Utilization](#), spelling out a shared belief that school buildings should be designed so educators can have dedicated spaces in which to teach.

The District has told us that the "Education Specifications" (the guidelines that architects are given to design our school buildings) will be revised in response to this resolution and that we will see new Ed Specs in early March. Our hope is that the revised Ed Specs will reflect the priorities of classroom teachers.

At the March 22nd RA we will discuss the bond, and will take a formal position if we have enough information. In the meantime, please consider how the bond will impact your school and your students, and share your hopes and concerns with your building representative.

2017 PAT Members' Scholarships

The 2017 PAT Members' Scholarship Application is now available. If you are a member of the Portland Association of Teachers and you have a high school senior who is planning on attending college in the fall of 2017, they would be eligible to apply.

Six of these scholarships will be awarded in 2017.

The Portland Association of Teachers (PAT) sponsors college scholarships for its members' children who will be graduating from high school - students who not only demonstrate academic excellence, but are also actively involved in extra-curricular activities and supporting their communities.

The application (Part 1 & 2) is posted on the PAT website and may be accessed online. The PAT website is: pdxteachers.org.

Please do not submit prior year forms – they will not be accepted.

The deadline for submitting completed PAT Scholarship applications is 4:30 PM on Monday, April 3rd in person at the PAT office or postmarked no later than April 3, 2017.