



# Advocate

October 20, 2017

PORTLAND ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS

## PAT Engage Update

Have you heard? PAT is doing a listening campaign and we need your help.

With so much going on in our District, and in education nationwide, there couldn't be a better time to talk seriously with our members about the challenges they're facing and their hopes for the future.

We set an ambitious goal of talking with 75% of our members about what's working in our schools, and what's getting in the way of teaching and learning.

### **Our Engage-ment begins Friday, October 20<sup>th</sup> at Abernethy and Llewellyn.**

If you're interested in being a listener and helping out with this project, sign up on our website: [pdxteachers.org](http://pdxteachers.org).

### **Attendance at Staff Meetings**

Professional educators are generally required to attend staff meetings or trainings for up to two hours beyond the workday on Tuesdays. Such meetings are a part of the workweek and attendance is a professional responsibility. Any educator who establishes a pattern of non-attendance may subject him/herself to potential disciplinary action.

However, an educator may have to be absent from a staff meeting/training for a medical appointment, personal matter, or other reason. On such occasions, the educator is **not** required to use accumulated leave if they miss all or a part of a Tuesday afternoon meeting/training. Please see new contract language in Article 14.A.1.d. on our website which makes that clear.

## Add Your Own Flair to Organizing

Buttons! We've asked you to wear them, but I wanted to highlight some examples of creativity and collective solidarity we've seen as part of this campaign.

### **Mt. Tabor United**

At Mt. Tabor, a special assembly was announced. No one knew what it was about, but staff knew media would be there. The building organizer made sure everyone was wearing their *2<sup>nd</sup> Year, No Contract* buttons.

It turns out the assembly was to announce our own Mathew Bacon-Brenes is Oregon's 2018 Teacher of the Year.

Of course, we are so excited to have a PAT member represent us at the state and national level—but we are also excited that Mt. Tabor staff picked up on a natural organizing opportunity, drawing attention to our struggle to win a fair contract.



### **Franklin Opening—An Organizing Opportunity**

During their grand opening event Franklin educators seized the moment, making sure they were all wearing buttons for evening activities with families, school board members, and so many other community members. Way to go Franklin!

Principal for a Day was on Thursday, October 12<sup>th</sup>. I had the privilege of going to Scott School where everyone I met wore their buttons. Afterwards, I attended a debrief (where I wore my button with pride) and many participants noted that at their building, they also saw educators wearing their buttons. Bridlemile was mentioned as one school where the principal for a day thought everyone was buttoned up!

Thanks to you, our message is getting out to Portland parents, political leaders, and the public.

### **Markham Seizes the Moment**

A key part of organizing is responding quickly when opportunities arise. Markham educators are expecting a visit from our Superintendent on a Monday. Their building organizer is rescheduling "Bluesday" to a Monday. Some of you might be asking, "Wait, what! You can do that?"

Yes you can—especially if it's your chance to get noticed for a special event. Go Markham!

Thanks for supporting your bargaining team. The District is taking note of all your efforts and the pressure is working.

Check out the video of our action at the last school board meeting on the PAT website: [pdxteachers.org](http://pdxteachers.org).

Let's keep the pressure on!

In Solidarity,

Suzanne Cohen  
PAT President



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## PAT Supports Puerto Rico

Hurricane Maria's devastating impact on Puerto Rico is still unfolding, but one thing is certain—the island's most vulnerable communities have been pummeled the hardest and face the longest road to recovery. **That's why your Executive Board voted to contribute \$1,000 to support frontline Puerto Rican communities in the recovery from Hurricane Maria.**

Vulnerable communities often face the worst destruction and slowest recovery and have fewer resources to safeguard homes, vehicles, and other property. When the winds die down and the floods recede, these communities are often forgotten.

We encourage you to support the [Hurricane Maria Community Relief & Recovery Fund](#), housed at the Center for Popular Democracy (CPD). 100 percent of monies raised will be used to support immediate relief or long-term equitable rebuilding in Puerto Rico for the communities hit hardest by the storm.

In addition to delivering critically needed supplies to the island, the Maria Fund has already made grants to local organizations that are both providing immediate relief needs and laying the foundation for an equitable rebuilding. These include Taller Salud in Loíza, the G8 of Caño Martín Peña in San Juan, and Centro para Desarrollo Político, Educativo, y Cultural in Caguas.

Please donate today—an injury to one is an injury to all!

## Donate to the PAT Sick Leave Bank!

During the 2016-17 school year, PAT members helped 30 colleagues in need thanks to contributions to the PAT Sick Leave Bank. These colleagues had exhausted their accumulated leave balances, but were unable to work due to extended or recurring personal illness. But thanks to our contributions to the Sick Leave Bank, they were able to avoid the additional hardships of lost salary and lost insurance coverage.

Thanks to your generosity, last year we met our goal of receiving the maximum number of voluntarily-donated hours allowed under our new contract language. For the first time in years, we were able to fulfill almost all applications for assistance prior to running out of Sick Leave Bank hours.

This shows the District that PAT members act on their belief that an injury to one is an injury to all.

**It's a new school year, with new needs, and a new Bank to fill. We can accept up to 4000 hours and have a long way to go to reach that goal.**

**Please donate on the PAT website - [pdxteachers.org](http://pdxteachers.org) - and thank you!**

## PERS Bubble and Mid-Year Retirement

We have completed a PERS Bubble Agreement for this school year.

This Agreement allows members to retire and work until the end of the school year while collecting PERS benefits. Members may start as early as December 1, 2017.

To retire by December 1, **you must submit your intent to retire by November 6<sup>th</sup>**. Please review the complete PERS Bubble Agreement on the PAT website for more details: [http://www.pdxteachers.org/know\\_your\\_contract](http://www.pdxteachers.org/know_your_contract).