



Advocate

December 6, 2017

PORTLAND ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS

Welcoming Teachers for a Day

On December 12th, the PAT will hold this year's *Teacher for a Day* event. We invited community leaders from the legislature, city government, business, and the non-profit world to become "guest teachers" in our schools.

Teacher for a Day gives community members a ringside seat for the important work we do every day, as well as the many challenges we face as educators. If your school has a "guest teacher," please take a moment to introduce yourself to them and to be frank about what you need to be even more successful in your work.

We are pleased to report that we have fifteen elected officials and community leaders who have agreed to attend!

OEA Promising Practices Grants

Do you have a plan that could enhance your classroom skills or boost student achievement? An idea for a site-based professional development activity that could build partnerships?

OEA's Center for Great Public Schools awards *Promising Practice Grants* to individual PAT members.

There are four \$500 grants available to PAT members. To apply, please complete the short application form available on the PAT website: pdxteachers.org.

The completed grant application form must be sent to kelli.williams@oregoned.org by December 11th.

Building Safe and Supportive Schools

As you heard earlier this week, one of the tough topics still in front of us in bargaining is the issue of **school safety**.

As educators, we want our schools to be a place where students can make mistakes and be welcomed back into their classroom communities. But we know that interventions are needed for this to work, and many students will require ongoing support.

Educators also need to be involved in the process, whether it's developing and implementing school climate plans, or being able to track what happens to referrals we write.

Unfortunately, the District has been all over the map in terms of responding to the serious safety concerns in our schools, and has backtracked on whatever forward progress we made in the past two years.

Last week's announcement that PPS is closing the middle and high school Pioneer program has District-wide implications for school safety and special education. PAT is hard at work assessing what this closure will mean for our members, as well as what it means for our current contract negotiations. However, one thing is clear: **This move flies in the face of many of our union's long-standing principles.**

First, our new Superintendent is repeating the mistakes of his predecessors, **making important decisions behind closed doors**, based on little on-the-ground information, and without any engagement of frontline educators, parents, or the community.

Closing the Pioneer program also raises **serious financial concerns**, which the Superintendent and the School Board need to address, since there is no question that providing comparable services to students displaced from the Pioneer program will be far more expensive. This comes at a time when special education services have already been shortchanged across the District, and the problems this has created are rippling across entire buildings. Closing the Pioneer program will only exacerbate this situation.

Finally and most importantly, we believe **PPS must provide the federally-mandated full continuum of services for all students**. For years we've been pushing PPS to restore services in the middle of the continuum, such as behavior classrooms, so students can be placed in the least restrictive environment possible. But now the District is proposing to eliminate services on the higher end of the continuum, which will no doubt leave many students in more restrictive environments, and others in unsupported placements. As we've always argued, the IEP team should base their recommendations on what a student needs, not just what placements are available.

The District needs to live up to this obligation to our most vulnerable students.

In Solidarity,

Suzanne Cohen
PAT President





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Not receiving important PAT updates or has your home email changed? Give us your home email address to receive the latest bargaining information, member benefits, and other news you need.

The Advocate is published periodically by the Portland Association of Teachers for PAT/OEA/NEA members. Send news tips and photos to portlandteachers@gmail.com

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Vote Yes on Measure 101!

On January 23rd, Oregon voters will participate in a special election to decide State Measure 101. The Oregon Education Association and the PAT have joined over 90 groups, including Oregon Nurses Association, AARP, and the Oregon Medical Association in endorsing Measure 101 for a healthy Oregon.

Measure 101 guarantees healthcare for Oregon's most vulnerable – children, seniors, and people with disabilities – who otherwise wouldn't be able to see a nurse or doctor when they get sick.

As educators, we know how important access to healthcare is for student success. Something as easy to address as a toothache can keep students out of school when they don't have insurance. And when families don't have access to care, they often end up in the emergency room, costing far more than preventative measures.

Measure 101 will impose a temporary assessment on health insurance companies, hospitals, managed care organizations, and the Public Employees' Benefits Board. These funds will bring in hundreds of millions of federal dollars to provide healthcare for low-income Oregonians and stabilize health insurance premiums.

More than 400,000 Oregonians count on the Oregon Health Plan, which will be funded with Measure 101.

Without Measure 101, the state legislature will be forced to make some very difficult budgetary choices, potentially jeopardizing education funding.

If you are new to Oregon or are not registered to vote, the voter registration deadline is January 2, 2018. You may register to vote by going to the Oregon Secretary of State Voter Registration webpage: <http://sos.oregon.gov/voting/Pages/registration.aspx>

Join educators from around the state in **voting YES on Measure 101 for critical healthcare funding for our students** on January 23rd.

Help PAT Engage!

As you may have heard, PAT is partnering with OEA and PPS to run a listening campaign called *Engage!* We have an ambitious goal of listening to 75% of our members, and we are off to a good start, having already visited 9 schools.

PPS is now allowing us to conduct our listening sessions on Tuesday afternoons during the two-hour staff meeting time. This means you can become a listener without writing sub plans and spending a day out of your classroom. However, participants still have the choice of a half-day release on Tuesday afternoons or simply commuting to the listening site after dismissal.

Though we have only met with a small portion of our membership so far, we have already found some consistent themes, such as concerns over workload and many appreciations of coworkers. If this sounds like something that you'd like to be a part of, please sign up to be a listener on the PAT website: pdxteachers.org

Member-to Member Specials

Do you have a house you would like to rent? Furniture you would like to sell? A side job you would like to promote? Put an advertisement in our new *Member Specials* page on the pdxteachers.org website. Please go to the PAT website (pdxteachers.org) and fill out the form with all the necessary information. We look forward to providing these specials for you. Check back monthly for new specials. This is another benefit of being a PAT member!