



Advocate

September 11, 2019

PORTLAND ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS

Renew the Portland Teacher Levy! Yes for Teachers, Yes for Kids

This November, Portland Voters will be asked once again to renew the Teacher Levy. The Levy renews the current rate that has funded an average of 825 teaching positions a year in Portland Public Schools.

It is crucial for our students and our schools that the Levy passes. As educators, we are its best spokespeople. Here is some information to help you talk to community members about the Levy.

Maintains Over 800 Teaching Positions:

Renewal of the levy funds over 800 high quality teaching positions across the District, a third of all teaching positions in PPS.

Funding Programs for a Comprehensive Education:

Levy funds help support a well-rounded program, with enrichments for elementary and middle grades and electives in varied interest areas and disciplines for high school students.

Maintains Current Tax Rate:

This levy is a renewal. Meaning taxpayers would continue paying the same local option tax rate of \$1.99 per \$1,000 assessed value they pay today.

Independent Oversight:

The levy renewal requires independent oversight by the Citizen Budget Review Committee to ensure tax dollars are used for purposes approved by voters.

Want to Learn More? Visit YesForTeachersYesforKids.org

President's Message: Putting New Funding Where It's Needed

For years, one of PAT's highest priorities has been reversing the thirty-year disinvestment in PPS and across the state. Securing more funding—exponentially more funding—is the only way we can truly deliver on our promise to our students and their families.

And the Student Success Act is an important down-payment on the schools our students deserve.

This fall we have the opportunity to shape the District's priorities for Student Success Act funding. In October and November, PAT will convene a series of discussions—both among educators and with our community partners—to really sift through what PPS should do with the additional revenue, and make sure this money is going to address what our students really need.

We also will kick off contract negotiations with the District in January, which will be another chance to advance our priorities and ensure the things that are best for teachers and students are backed up with enforceable contract language.

And whether it's setting Student Success Act priorities or bargaining our next contract, we're going to **keep our racial equity priorities front and center.**

We know from hard experience that PPS won't do the right thing just because we ask nicely—we're going to have to organize our colleagues and community partners to push. Over the next few months we're going to be working on several pieces of our campaign and we need your help. Be on the lookout for:

- End of September: **Bargaining Survey #1** (For all active PAT members to give input on contract priorities)
- October-November: **Community Meetings** (Hosted meetings throughout the city for any family or community members invested in PPS students to give input on vision, both for contract as well as SSA priorities)
- October-November: **Building Level Meetings led by reps** (An opportunity for any active PAT member to give feedback on SSA priorities, to inform both our bargaining team as well as SSA priorities)
- Mid-November: **Bargaining Survey #2** (For all active PAT members to give more detailed input on contract priorities to help the bargaining team refine proposals)

We'll need your input at each of these stages of the process, so don't let it slip through the cracks. And if you're interested in doing more to boost our community outreach and engagement this fall, contact our Racial Equity organizer, Nichole Watson at nichole.watson@oregoned.org.

I can't wait to see what we accomplish together.

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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Bargaining Update

Our contract for certified educators expires June 2020 and we have agreed to exchange proposals with PPS starting in January. Your Bargaining Committee is meeting on September 18th to finalize our 1st bargaining survey. It will be electronic and you can expect to receive it by the end of September. Please take the time to make sure your voice is heard.

As a democratic union, it's a goal and core value of the PAT that we have input from our full membership regarding our bargaining priorities. Your Bargaining Team needs this input in order to properly advocate for everyone. To achieve that goal, our PAT Bylaws call for a Bargaining Team and a Bargaining Committee.

The Bargaining Team

The Bargaining Team is the group of members who actually negotiate our contract with the District. They commit to fully participating in every part of the bargaining process, including all-day (and sometimes all-night) sessions, for as long as it takes to reach an agreement.

The Bargaining Team receives feedback from bargaining surveys and the Bargaining Committee, writes and tracks our proposals, and meets with the District during negotiations. Their commitment is to winning the strongest contract they can for the entire membership.

Our Bargaining Team has not yet been selected. However, Steve Lancaster, a teacher at Lincoln High School, will continue as Bargaining Chair. And John Berkey, OEA consultant assigned to PAT, will be our chief negotiator, replacing Marty Pavlik who has retired.

Determining the size of the team, as well as negotiating ground rules, is one of the first steps we will take once we begin bargaining with PPS. As per bylaws: *The president shall appoint the members ... of the collective bargaining teams; these appointments shall be subject to the approval of the Executive Board.*

The Bargaining Committee

Our Bargaining Committee is much larger than our Bargaining Team, and allows for broad representation. The Bargaining Committee will help compile survey results, research possible contract proposals, and generally provide subject matter expertise to the Bargaining Team.

Currently our Bargaining Committee includes educators with expertise from the following areas: Alternative Ed; Art/ Music; Counselor; DLI; Elementary classroom; ELL; High school classroom; Librarian; Middle school classroom; School Psych; SLP; SMS/Climate; Social Worker; SpEd; SpEd Focus program; and Wilcox.

If you do not see your job type listed and are interested in joining the Bargaining Committee, please email PAT President Suzanne Cohen at patpresident@oregoned.org. We are especially interested in PE and Health Educators as well as TOSAs.

From our bylaws: *The Bargaining Committee shall assist the collective bargaining teams in research and the development of the Association's proposals under guidelines established by the Executive Board.*

If you are interested in learning more or getting involved in a committee, email PAT Vice President, Elizabeth Thiel at pat_vp@oregoned.org.