Ready to Bargain!

HAPPY SUMMER!
We survived this brutal winter, and we have even had a little bit of spring this year before it gets really hot. You know what that means. Yes, it’s time to bargain our contracts again! This is an exciting time of the year for our members as we prepare to organize to win the gains we deserve at the bargaining table!

We are passionate about the work we do and the children we support every day. As union members, we have the opportunity that most workers only wish they had, which is sitting down across from our bosses to negotiate the terms and conditions of our employment. That means wages, working conditions and benefits.

WORKING TOGETHER
Some of our units are working across districts to help build their power, because we know that the challenges we face in our buildings are often the same as the challenges faced by school employees in the next town over. We also are working with members from other unions to ensure no one gets left behind. We really are strong together!

If you have never been on a bargaining team before that is ok, we would love to have you join us! Negotiations are open to all members and you can come and just be an observer if you would like. We would be more than happy to answer your questions. Just respond to this email if you’d like to get involved and aren’t sure who to talk to.

WINNING A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR ALL WORKING FAMILIES!
Did you know that Unions like ours have played a huge role in laws that protect you at work? Yes, that means over time, wage theft, sick leave, vacations and having a pension! All these benefits have happened because working people fought and won on their issues. And having a union where we can combine our voices is the best way to make real change happen.

So this year we rolled up our sleeves and went up to the Capitol to talk about the issues that affect us in our workplace and our communities. We talked to legislators about school employees finally getting unemployment, getting paid for all of the snow days, stopping
wage theft and working to fully fund our schools!

These issues all relate to making our schools better for our students and staff. Whether lunch shaming, class sizes, not meeting the needs of our non-typical students or wage theft, these are issues that matter to our families, no matter what part of the state we live in. Check your contracts to see if you are entitled to a break that is paid and you are not receiving your break. If that is happening it is considered wage theft and a contract violation. You are entitled to it, so contact your steward right away if this is happening to you or your co-workers.

We had a big rally for education at the Capitol on May 18th and we were heard! While we didn’t get everything we wanted, we did get money for education and that means we will not see the cuts to jobs that were being predicted. This year made clear that we need to keep fighting to make sure all of our elected officials understand the importance of getting funding for our schools.

WINNING THE PAY WE ARE OWED!
Last month, after finding out that despite getting money for all the snow days their administration wasn’t planning on paying their hourly employees for the 10 missed days like the legislature intended, Rochester Food Service employees organized a petition, attended a School Board meeting, and contacted the local news channels. And guess what? They were heard, and the District is going to compensate them! They organized and fought around their workplace issues, and they won this important victory. Together we are stronger!

FUN THIS SUMMER
I know that school is over and everyone is getting ready for summer vacations! But don’t forget to sign up online for our first annual Como Zoo Day! Mark your calendars for July 28th when we are having a BBQ lunch catered in and free wrist bands for the kiddos for the rides at Como Zoo (up to 4 wristbands per member). We will also be giving away a couple of bikes and some other great gifts. You have to register on our website www.seiu284.org so that we can reserve your wristbands and lunch.

I hope you have a safe and fun summer!

In solidarity,

Kelly Gibbons
Executive Director of SEIU Local 284