



SEA Strike FAQ

Why are we on strike?

We have worked at the table to move the district to do the right thing and accept our proposals to support students and educators but they haven't come to agreement. Striking is the most powerful way for us to show the district they must meet our students' needs.

What's at stake:

- Student supports in Special Education
- Workload including mental health professionals and nursing
- Competitive/respectful pay

Are we still bargaining?

Yes – our Bargaining Team has been working every day for the past few weeks to reach a tentative agreement (TA). Our bargaining team will continue to negotiate in good faith until they reach an agreement. Currently SPS and SEA are working with a state-appointed mediator in hopes we'll reach a TA faster.

How are we updating families? Are we translating in their home languages?

SEA has created a [webpage](#) for community and families and encouraging them to sign up for communications from us directly. SEA is also translating some of our public communications into five languages and sharing them over social media. If you have language skills and are willing to help translate more materials, please let us know at sea@washingtonea.org!

How would the strike end?

The strike ends when SEA and SPS bargaining teams reach a tentative agreement (TA) and our General Membership either votes to suspend the strike or votes to ratify the TA. To reach a tentative agreement means that SPS agrees to put in writing their plan to improve students supports, provide workload/caseload relief, and pay a respectful wage.

Do we have to wait 72 hours after we reach a TA to go back to work?

Our SEA Standing Rules state our Bargaining Team should distribute a summary of the Tentative Agreement as soon as possible after the conclusion of negotiations, but at least 72-hours in advance of a General Membership vote. The Standing Rules continue to say if we're on strike when a TA is reached, members have the power to vote to waive the 72-hour window. The membership could choose to waive that and then ratify a TA immediately.

Will we meet on Zoom again to ratify the tentative agreement when it's reached?

Yes, after the last General Membership Meeting, SEA purchased a larger Zoom license to use because we believe it will streamline the registration process and enable members to join more quickly and more smoothly. Continue to read your emails for the latest updates. As soon as we reach a tentative

agreement (TA), our General Membership will be called together to discuss and ratify the TA. If our General Membership does not ratify the TA, we will continue to strike and we'll continue to bargain until we reach a new TA

Can SPS fire us?

Part of the power of a strike is the fact that the district couldn't function if it attempted to fire all of us. No teacher in Washington has ever been fired for going on strike, and SEA would vigorously challenge any attempt by the district to fire employees. The district also would have to treat all employees equitably so highly visible participants are protected in all strike activities.

What about SAEOPs who work year-round? Won't we lose pay if we participate in the action?

SAEOPs, depending on the position, may miss days of work. We expect any tentative agreement to include make-up days for most SAEOPs. For 260s, SEA will reimburse lost wages.

Will we make up the days we miss?

State law requires districts to complete the full 180-student day school year unless the district seeks a waiver, so we can expect to make up instructional days from when we are out during a strike and to earn our full year's pay.

What will happen to our benefits?

Public employee benefits are protected in the event of a strike. We can expect our SEBB benefits to remain in place with no interruptions.

Do I enter my missed hours in ESS?

No, do not enter your time into ESS while on strike. Do not use district devices or check your email. A strike is a complete work stoppage.

Can I go work in another district? Can I get out of my contract?

We do not recommend violating the intent of our contract by working in another district while we're on strike.

What if I already have appointments/conflicts?

We'll be on the picket line fighting for what students and educators need. Members should reschedule conflicts whenever possible to ensure we're united and strong.

What about time-sensitive requirements at the start of the school year or hiring teams?

A strike means we withhold our labor until a tentative agreement is reached. Accommodating these issues would be part of any back-to-work agreement. Come to the picket line to learn more from your picket captain and AR.

What about school sports?

Since athletics coaches are not covered by our contract, practices and games will continue on schedule. (Athletic directors/coordinators are represented, but they don't run day-to-day games and practices.) SEA members should not engage in coaching during contractual school hours.