



Local 634, School Cafeteria Employees & Noontime Aides

Doris Smith, President
Shirley Robinson, Secretary-Treasurer
www.local634.org

1122 Spring Garden St. (215) 765-2781, Ph
Philadelphia, PA 19123 (215) 765-2782, Fax

*** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ***

Unite Here Local 634 to City Council: Support higher wages for all who work in Philadelphia schools

Contact: Antony Dugdale, (215)779-4404, adugdale@unitehere.org

October 8, 2009 — Today, UNITE HERE Local 634, the union of Philadelphia School Cafeteria Employees and Noontime Aides, called for passage of a City Council resolution applying the City Minimum Wage to all who work in the Philadelphia schools.

“We applaud any effort to improve working conditions in Philadelphia Schools. We wish SEIU did the same for high school custodial staff,” said Doris Smith, President of Local 634.

“It is just wrong for SEIU 32BJ custodial staff at twenty-two Philadelphia High Schools to earn wages that fall far short of the City’s minimum wage of \$10.88,” said Emily Pridgen, a food service worker at Hardy Williams school.

On September 30, hundreds rallied for Local 634 at the School District to deliver a petition signed by over 1400 cafeteria workers and noon time aides, demanding higher wages and a fair contract with Local 634.

Meanwhile, SEIU issued a misleading and erroneous press release that attempted to make a case that the School District could owe millions of dollars in back pay. Though Council’s nonbinding resolution does not include SEIU’s claim for back pay, the call for higher pay is long overdue.

In 2006, over 250 jobs cleaning twenty-two Philadelphia High Schools shifted from Local 1201 to SEIU Local 32BJ, when they were subcontracted out to Sodexo Team Clean. Wages dropped below the city minimum wage (the starting wage went down \$2.45/hour), slashed health benefits, cut days off by half, and lost the pension completely. SEIU has represented these custodial staff for years without challenging their pay below the city minimum wage.

Unite Here Local 634 has represented the Philadelphia School District’s 2,300 cafeteria workers and noontime aides since 1977. SEIU is raiding Local 634, and has forced a labor board election. The PA labor relations board will count the ballots from this vote on October 27.

For more information visit: www.local634.org

###