



May 6, 2026

Dear Richmond community,

We know that families are experiencing a range of emotions about Portland Public Schools' recent announcement that Principal Eto-Tharp is on sudden and unscheduled leave. Folks may be feeling confusion, concern, sadness, anger, curiosity, interest, and everything in between. We feel you, and we are right there with you.

Students and families have benefited from Principal Eto-Tharp's calm, knowledgeable, student-centered approach. Teachers and staff have benefited from her strong advocacy for funding and skillful staff support. The entire community has benefitted from her steady, caring, inclusive, and professional leadership, building and rebuilding trust and raising our school's profile within the region and beyond.

Regardless of your opinions about Principal Eto-Tharp, her sudden leave is a major disruption for our community, right at the end of the school year. As PPS observes protocols related to confidentiality, we also don't have much information, and that can add to folks' worry.

Despite the unknowns, nothing about this situation changes the positives about our community nor the cohesion and stability that Principal Eto-Tharp has helped strengthen. Now, more than ever, is the time for our community to lean into all that we have built together and that Principal Eto-Tharp and the other hard-working teachers and staff have grown and sustained for the benefit of our students.

So while we wait for more information from PPS and determine next steps to support our community, we are focusing on supporting students, staff, teachers, and each other in finishing out the last 21 days of the school year strong, unified for each other, and full of gratitude.

- This week is Staff Appreciation Week! Families are encouraged to work with their kiddos to make cards and recognize the incredible work that teachers and staff do every day!

- Families are donating snacks and refreshments for upcoming staff meetings and similar events. The PTA is catering a meal for the teachers and staff.
- Spring Festival, a community highlight, is coming up on Saturday May 9 from 12-4pm at Richmond! Join us for bouncy castles, student performances, and spring merriment with the community.
- Our PTA continues to meet and strategize about next steps and how we can best support our community. Attend our PTA board meeting on Thursday May 21 at 7pm and the advocacy committee meeting right afterwards at 8pm. Links will be posted on our website soon!
- Families are volunteering at Field Day at the end of May! They are volunteering at lunchtime to help students open their milk cartons and support our awesome cafeteria staff! Families are also supporting our art room staff with weekly volunteer slots.

Our community is strong, adaptable, and invested in support of our students. With the steady and involved presence of families, teachers, and staff, we are finishing out the year strong - Richmond Strong!

With gratitude,
The Richmond Elementary School PTA