Erica Schatzlein

1

00:00:01.170 --> 00:00:11.250

Joel Berger (he/him): Alright, so I was hoping, you could start by just telling us a little bit about yourself and how and why you got into teaching and into the St Paul public schools.

2

00:00:12.389 --> 00:00:33.330

Erica Schatzlein: Sure, my name is Erica shots line I teach English learners in the St Paul public schools have been doing it since 2004 I went into teaching specifically because I was very interested in the process of acquiring English as an additional language.

3

00:00:34.890 --> 00:00:42.180

Erica Schatzlein: When I was in high school I did psu so I post secondary enrollment options, I went to the Community college.

4

00:00:43.080 --> 00:01:02.970

Erica Schatzlein: For most of my senior year and it was a place where a lot of new immigrants were starting their post secondary education, and so I saw their needs and how they were or weren't being met, and so I specifically went into teaching to work with immigrants, refugees.

5

00:01:04.230 --> 00:01:13.320

Erica Schatzlein: Their children learning English learning how to read, for the first time that's been my passion and I love doing it.

6

00:01:14.400 --> 00:01:23.160

Joel Berger (he/him): Well that's like a very deep rooted passionate it sounds like, and so you grew up in the minneapolis St Paul area or.

7

00:01:23.310 --> 00:01:32.490

Erica Schatzlein: yeah I grew up in the twin cities um my dad was a disability activist he's since passed on my he was paraplegic and very active.

8

00:01:32.940 --> 00:01:43.440

Erica Schatzlein: In the Community and and he would always talk about access to know whether it was education or government or or access in the workplace and.

9

00:01:43.890 --> 00:02:00.570

Erica Schatzlein: So disability rights wasn't my specific calling, but I think that that idea of ensuring that people have access kind of transferred over into my passion to make sure that you can access the educational system, and then the workforce, no matter what your first language was.

10

00:02:02.280 --> 00:02:11.490

Joel Berger (he/him): that's incredible I mean that's the come from a family with those values and that really lived those values of sync that's incredible.

11

00:02:12.840 --> 00:02:16.230

Joel Berger (he/him): i'm wondering, you know, so you got into the schools and.

12

00:02:18.210 --> 00:02:20.700

Joel Berger (he/him): What are some of the the.

13

00:02:21.960 --> 00:02:35.400

Joel Berger (he/him): kind of most special things about teaching and St Paul and that you've you've noticed over the years and what were some of the challenges that you started noticing that in what ways did those challenges start leading you into your activism as a teacher.

14

00:02:36.540 --> 00:02:40.200

Erica Schatzlein: I think one of the most amazing things.

15

00:02:40.710 --> 00:02:51.030

Erica Schatzlein: about teaching and St Paul is our family and student population, so I grew up in the suburbs of the twin cities.

16

00:02:52.050 --> 00:03:11.550

Erica Schatzlein: And it wasn't until college and then starting to work in the schools that I ever met a single person who was among and the majority of my student population at my current school is smiling, and I think that that's really special we have one of the largest populations outside of California.

17

00:03:12.960 --> 00:03:22.350

Erica Schatzlein: And I think that that that transfers into so many student groups that aren't necessarily at my particular school and large groups that are in St Paul public schools.

18

00:03:22.680 --> 00:03:35.730

Erica Schatzlein: In large groups Minnesota is a welcoming place for immigrant and refugee families, so we have a really large Somali population, we have a fast growing qur'an population, a large population.

19

00:03:37.050 --> 00:03:50.280

Erica Schatzlein: That makes us special and it's helped me learn so much as a teacher about different cultures and languages and that's one of the things I really love about being in St Paul.

20

00:03:51.840 --> 00:04:07.530

Erica Schatzlein: And it also leads directly into our challenges right so when you have students either who are first generation and just came over from a refugee camp themselves or who are generation 1.5 whose parents were possibly.

21

00:04:08.430 --> 00:04:20.430

Erica Schatzlein: came here as children or young adults there's different educational needs and different things that we need to provide for those students and.

22

00:04:21.540 --> 00:04:28.740

Erica Schatzlein: There have been times in St Paul that we've done a fantastic job of that and times that we haven't done a great job of that and so that.

23

00:04:30.030 --> 00:04:42.390

Erica Schatzlein: Making sure that we're actually looking at the students and families in front of us and meeting their educational needs instead of a generic like this is what a student is and what that student needs.

24

00:04:44.400 --> 00:04:55.380

Erica Schatzlein: Those are some of our biggest challenges in the school district, and that is definitely what led me into my Union work was just seeing with the kids.

25

00:04:56.640 --> 00:05:10.440

Erica Schatzlein: What could be and sometimes is and then what sometimes isn't happening that's where that's where I learned the unionism can be activism for my particular passion.

26

00:05:12.660 --> 00:05:23.790

Joel Berger (he/him): that's that's really that's really powerful how so how how did you first get involved in i'm assuming you got involved with the Union when it was SPF 30.

27

00:05:24.540 --> 00:05:25.710

Joel Berger (he/him): What was.

28

00:05:26.310 --> 00:05:32.910

Joel Berger (he/him): That like for you were you did you go to meetings were you ever a building REP how did you kind of get into the mix.

29

00:05:34.050 --> 00:05:34.950

Erica Schatzlein: You know I have.

30

00:05:35.250 --> 00:05:36.240

Erica Schatzlein: somewhat of a.

31

00:05:36.510 --> 00:05:48.060

Erica Schatzlein: Typical coming to the Union story we call it a bad boss story right and and so for a years our school district had a history of like if.

32

00:05:48.570 --> 00:05:58.560

Erica Schatzlein: If an administrator building principal was struggling instead of giving them the support that they needed to be an effective leader, they just kind of moved him around like they're trying again at this school try again at this school.

33

00:05:59.070 --> 00:06:08.790

Erica Schatzlein: And so i'm at a previous school that I worked out, we had one of those principles who's been shuffled around was definitely struggling and.

34

00:06:10.260 --> 00:06:17.490

Erica Schatzlein: I started learning a little bit about our contract by asking the question wait, can they do.

35

00:06:18.780 --> 00:06:30.810

Erica Schatzlein: And so there were some things that would come up particular to English learners that I knew like nope there's a supreme court case about that they can't do that, but then other things that just seemed.

36

00:06:32.400 --> 00:06:37.590

Erica Schatzlein: Not right, and so I started asking questions and sometimes I would call.

37

00:06:38.700 --> 00:06:47.010

Erica Schatzlein: Our organizers and other places they're called like business agents right who knew a lot about our contract and starting to ask like.

38

00:06:47.820 --> 00:07:01.260

Erica Schatzlein: Can they do, that is not a thing and then, once I started looking into our contract I started being the person who was like wait so right here, it says, you know it's probably not a way to be popular with administrators, but just kind of like.

39

00:07:02.310 --> 00:07:17.310

Erica Schatzlein: pushing back on some of those bad ideas that sometimes aren't even illegal ideas right or are things that we've worked as a Union to to have protections against what are poor working conditions.

40

00:07:18.690 --> 00:07:20.970

Erica Schatzlein: And so it was after.

41

00:07:22.110 --> 00:07:32.250

Erica Schatzlein: Several of those phone calls that I think my my name was kind of known and and one of the organizers approached me and said, you know we're looking for an esl teacher to be on the bargaining team.

42

00:07:33.060 --> 00:07:49.320

Erica Schatzlein: And I at the time was also working on my national board certification, so I was like nope busy like I was still working a second job to pay off my educational loans, plus trying to get this certification and I was like no way I did not have time for that.

43

00:07:50.610 --> 00:07:58.800

Erica Schatzlein: But the question that he asked or the the way that he said it was not like Oh, we need somebody he said, we need an esl teacher.

44

00:08:00.210 --> 00:08:09.630

Erica Schatzlein: And so now my organizing brain is like nope can't do it, but i'll find you someone, but my organizing brain back then, was not developed and I thought.

45

00:08:10.320 --> 00:08:25.500

Erica Schatzlein: If I don't do this there won't be a voice for English learners and teachers on the bargaining team, so I did it and it turns out i'm a huge policy nerd and I really like.

46

00:08:26.190 --> 00:08:37.680

Erica Schatzlein: To bargain and it really feels powerful that we can make positive changes for our students and for our profession at the bargaining table and that.

47

00:08:38.250 --> 00:08:51.180

Erica Schatzlein: Like that's what keeps me going through all of this right through trying to teach full time and be a Union officer trying to teach full time and bargain, or you know, the idea of.

48

00:08:52.170 --> 00:09:04.260

Erica Schatzlein: Going on strike and and giving up you know you're paying your benefits and everything for who knows how long it is that idea that, like, I see that we make positive change.

49

00:09:05.820 --> 00:09:06.960

Erica Schatzlein: That keeps me going.

50

00:09:08.340 --> 00:09:19.170

Joel Berger (he/him): that's you know one thing that really strikes me as you're talking is, as you talk about the kind of bad boss situation and the type of policies that we're really making you start question.

51

00:09:19.800 --> 00:09:29.610

Joel Berger (he/him): You know whether this was was actually even legal, let alone in the contract is is how much of it did Center on the students and the needs of your students and.

52

00:09:30.750 --> 00:09:38.370

Joel Berger (he/him): And that's also what brought you into the the bargaining team is this idea that you could you could advocate for your students through that this avenue and.

53

00:09:39.510 --> 00:09:49.980

Joel Berger (he/him): You know reading about St Paul reading, you know articles were you're quoted that that phrase bargaining for the common good comes up all the time, and I was just curious if you could talk more about.

54

00:09:50.910 --> 00:09:59.970

Joel Berger (he/him): What that means to you and and how that you know what would importance that has to SPF fee at the at the bargaining table.

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00:10:00.630 --> 00:10:06.090

Erica Schatzlein: So there are two phrases that will come up again and again, and one is bargaining for the common good.

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00:10:06.690 --> 00:10:21.960

Erica Schatzlein: Which is about making positive change for the Community at the bargaining table, but the other phrase that we use all the time comes from our Union siblings the Chicago teachers union, and that is the schools, our students deserve.

57

00:10:23.040 --> 00:10:45.990

Erica Schatzlein: And so the round that I started bargaining back in 2013 we were doing a lot of Community conversation we had booked groups and we had meetings with family and community and some of the questions that we were asking are what are the schools, our students deserve.

58

00:10:47.160 --> 00:11:04.860

Erica Schatzlein: Who are the teachers that our students deserve educators and what is the profession that those educators deserve and that leads to a lot of really overarching conversations that feed right into bargaining for the common good.

59

00:11:05.970 --> 00:11:22.590

Erica Schatzlein: So the schools that our students deserve include services like social workers and licensed school nurses to meet their mental health their physical health their emotional health.

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00:11:23.520 --> 00:11:27.240

Erica Schatzlein: But then it also means that we create a school system that.

61

00:11:28.110 --> 00:11:37.890

Erica Schatzlein: helps the health of the Community, that we are not like super public schools we're providing education to our students but we're also a large employer.

62

00:11:38.340 --> 00:11:48.810

Erica Schatzlein: In the city right So are we creating good jobs that pay a living wage because those employees are also our parents right like.

63

00:11:49.260 --> 00:12:01.260

Erica Schatzlein: How do we use our contract and our school system to create a rising tide for the Community, because it it's all connected.

64

00:12:01.920 --> 00:12:15.540

Erica Schatzlein: Right like as one of the largest employers, then we need to have a voice in ethical banking, are we working with banking institutions who are supporting our Community or exploiting our Community.

65

00:12:16.560 --> 00:12:25.620

Erica Schatzlein: And even though i'm a licensed educator and my contract only covers licensed educators, it also matters to me the.

66

00:12:26.430 --> 00:12:36.210

Erica Schatzlein: The way that we are treating and employing and compensating our bus drivers, because if we don't have good bus drivers my kids don't make it to school.

67

00:12:36.990 --> 00:12:52.890

Erica Schatzlein: Right and and we've seen now encoded like how important it is to have a stable, healthy workforce that we can train to keep everyone safe I think we've learned how interconnected, we are even more than we used to know.

68

00:12:56.010 --> 00:12:57.210

Joel Berger (he/him): I think that.

69

00:12:58.680 --> 00:13:16.380

Joel Berger (he/him): That makes a lot of sense and I, I wonder if, and maybe this will come up as we start talking about the I would say, maybe multi year build up to what ended up being the strike in 2020, but I would really like to hear at some point more about the work about.

70

00:13:17.520 --> 00:13:24.660

Joel Berger (he/him): Ethical working, making sure you're working with ethical banks and the type of campaigns you all ran around around that and and.

71

00:13:26.130 --> 00:13:38.940

Joel Berger (he/him): and also the the idea of the rising tide for everyone and curious if that played it all into the decision to become SPF fi instead of SPF T.

72

00:13:39.750 --> 00:13:55.710

Joel Berger (he/him): Or if that was that was part of it, and so I don't know if you have any thoughts on either I know Those are two separate questions, but before I because i'll probably get into the long questions about the long build up for the strike next, but I am curious about both of those things.

73

00:13:56.610 --> 00:13:57.900

Erica Schatzlein: So we.

74

00:13:57.930 --> 00:13:58.860

have done.

75

00:13:59.940 --> 00:14:06.000

Erica Schatzlein: A number of things integrated into our COMP contract campaigns about.

76

00:14:08.160 --> 00:14:16.710

Erica Schatzlein: Ethical business and the way that our corporations support public education.

77

00:14:18.810 --> 00:14:36.000

Erica Schatzlein: Some talk now about corporations paying their fair share right but we've been looking at that, for years, like the amount of property in St Paul that was either built with tiffs with just tax increment financing or the for one reason or another pain, no property taxes.

78

00:14:37.140 --> 00:14:45.840

Erica Schatzlein: i'm in St Paul it's it's a larger percentage than in many other areas, and so, if you're not paying property taxes.

79

00:14:46.320 --> 00:14:53.370

Erica Schatzlein: you're not supporting our schools right and so that's like we're blessed in the twin cities to have a huge number of colleges.

80

00:14:53.820 --> 00:15:13.080

Erica Schatzlein: But they also don't pay taxes right and then there's all these buildings downtown that were built with tax increment financing and there's all sorts of ways that the corporations are there's not paying their fair share and that's hurting our students and so we've done a number of.

81

00:15:14.730 --> 00:15:16.320

Erica Schatzlein: kind of campaign.

82

00:15:18.090 --> 00:15:22.260

Erica Schatzlein: Integration to our contract we've we've marched on us bank.

83

00:15:22.860 --> 00:15:32.730

Erica Schatzlein: i'm asking them to be better partners either to sign a pilot agreement, which is a payment in lieu of taxes that would fund our schools.

84

00:15:33.060 --> 00:15:48.990

Erica Schatzlein: Or to just enter into an agreement to say like until we fix this tax system like you know we, we know that we need to contribute to the schools and will contribute this amount, you know and and there's lots of Community partners that have participated.

85

00:15:49.860 --> 00:16:03.240

Erica Schatzlein: In those marches with us to just say like we have huge corporations in the twin cities and US bank ecolab wells fargo they're not paying their fair share and it hurts our kids.

86

00:16:04.140 --> 00:16:17.010

Erica Schatzlein: And it's so interconnected to so many other issues right like we've we've got the banks, and then the school to prison pipeline and the prison industrial complex and and connected to.

87

00:16:17.460 --> 00:16:28.620

Erica Schatzlein: How we respect and treat black lives in Minnesota right, so one of the first marches on us thing we did was in 2016 was right after Lando Castillo, was killed.

88

00:16:30.240 --> 00:16:40.260

Erica Schatzlein: In you know, on our streets, he was a St Paul public schools employee like he was a nutrition services worker in our schools.

89

00:16:42.150 --> 00:17:02.490

Erica Schatzlein: His murder directly affected our students it affected the students that jj hill Montessori where he worked so deeply but it reverberated across our entire city made with all of our students of color looking and asking like Am I safe do I matter.

90

00:17:04.380 --> 00:17:22.560

Erica Schatzlein: And so, in conjunction with the AFP American federation of teachers Convention, which was in minneapolis that year we did a march educators for black lives March we marched to us bank and and we had a list of demands about how we.

91

00:17:24.600 --> 00:17:30.840

Erica Schatzlein: How we want to function as a community and how that is so deeply connected to our public schools.

92

00:17:34.710 --> 00:17:49.980

Joel Berger (he/him): Thank you, so I yeah That was something I was definitely gonna come back to and I probably will, and the second part of the interview, is how integral racial justice work is to this this bargaining for the common good and to the work that SPF is is doing.

93

00:17:51.540 --> 00:17:52.200

Joel Berger (he/him): and

94

00:17:53.520 --> 00:18:00.810

Joel Berger (he/him): or even when it comes to fighting you know the school to prison pipeline with trying to pilot the restorative practices so.

95

00:18:01.620 --> 00:18:18.780

Joel Berger (he/him): I was curious I don't know if it makes sense to just start with the 2020 strike and move back or maybe just start, but you know, seeing that restorative practices, but especially student mental health, which were really kind of the crux of what you all were arguing for.

96

00:18:20.070 --> 00:18:34.020

Joel Berger (he/him): And and and so curious as to kind of the lead up to the strike, and maybe the campaigns and in the what every two years before then that kind of led up to to what happened in 2020.

97

00:18:35.430 --> 00:18:42.750

Erica Schatzlein: So in the schools are students deserve, which was a document we we put out several campaigns ago where we looked at.

98

00:18:44.100 --> 00:18:45.780

Erica Schatzlein: What our kids need we talk about.

99

00:18:47.160 --> 00:18:53.430

Erica Schatzlein: Educating the whole child and when we first started that campaign educating the whole child.

100

00:18:54.660 --> 00:19:16.980

Erica Schatzlein: meant things like having access to a social worker and a licensed school nurse but also having access to a license librarian and having art and music and physical education during the school day, like all of those pieces that give a student a well rounded education.

101

00:19:19.260 --> 00:19:42.180

Erica Schatzlein: And as we move through several campaigns, there were some areas that we made progress and and more progress than others, and so we've definitely had kind of our our finger on the pulse of of our students needing access to counselors and social workers and school psychologists.

102

00:19:43.440 --> 00:19:46.320

Erica Schatzlein: But as we moved through.

103

00:19:48.390 --> 00:19:52.920

Erica Schatzlein: The process of continuing to define what our schools needed.

104

00:19:55.230 --> 00:20:07.470

Erica Schatzlein: There were so many things that came together and built up into this topic of student mental health, and so we had a time.

105

00:20:09.060 --> 00:20:10.980

Erica Schatzlein: in St Paul public schools were like.

106

00:20:13.770 --> 00:20:27.540

Erica Schatzlein: We used to call them discipline policies that's not the way they think about them now, but our discipline policies kind of like a pendulum that swung back and forth, and so we've had very disparate.

107

00:20:28.800 --> 00:20:39.420

Erica Schatzlein: Racial inequalities with suspensions and dismissals and explosions right and, and that is a problem and it needed to be addressed.

108

00:20:39.690 --> 00:20:48.060

Erica Schatzlein: Until then, the pendulum swung the other way, which is basically we came to this point where like, no matter what happened in the classroom.

109

00:20:48.690 --> 00:21:01.860

Erica Schatzlein: Like the desert was just looking the other way, like kids need to be in class to learn just keep them in class which kids need to be in class to learn is a truth.

110

00:21:03.120 --> 00:21:14.490

Erica Schatzlein: And if you have students who are emotionally just regulated such that they're not learning in class and they're disrupting the entire class that's also a problem right and it was creating.

111

00:21:15.240 --> 00:21:23.070

Erica Schatzlein: safety problems there were fights there was a teacher who was largely recorded in the news was injured.

112

00:21:24.600 --> 00:21:31.320

Erica Schatzlein: And so there was this conversation about school safety and and our schools safe for.

113

00:21:32.400 --> 00:21:36.060

Erica Schatzlein: A lot of the conversation was around staff right like do staff feel safe.

114

00:21:38.370 --> 00:21:46.440

Erica Schatzlein: But neither of those sides of the pendulum were just.

115

00:21:47.610 --> 00:21:58.560

Erica Schatzlein: Neither of them were meeting students needs, and neither of them are meeting educators needs and so as part of contract negotiations.

116

00:21:59.460 --> 00:22:13.770

Erica Schatzlein: We needed a new path right like it wasn't just finding a happy medium between like doing nothing and trying to suspend and expel your way out of an issue it needed to be a completely different path.

117

00:22:15.300 --> 00:22:18.900

Erica Schatzlein: And that was where the conversation about restorative practice started.

118

00:22:19.980 --> 00:22:34.200

Erica Schatzlein: It was talking to our brothers and sisters at the Chicago teachers union, it was talking to our brothers and sisters in oakland and some of the places where they had tried something completely different.

119

00:22:34.890 --> 00:22:54.660

Erica Schatzlein: And so there are members of the bargaining team, I was part of that group that started investigating this and it was like probably my first zoom meeting ever years ago we we had an online meeting with with teachers in oakland and they started to share their experience.

120

00:22:56.640 --> 00:22:57.480

Erica Schatzlein: and

121

00:22:58.770 --> 00:23:06.120

Erica Schatzlein: The radical nature of finding ways to welcome students in instead of pushing them out.

122

00:23:08.610 --> 00:23:11.070

Erica Schatzlein: was just it was a game changer.

123

00:23:11.760 --> 00:23:13.410

Joel Berger (he/him): it's a whole paradigm shift it's.

124

00:23:13.470 --> 00:23:16.530

Erica Schatzlein: it's a complete paradigm shift and and I don't think.

125

00:23:17.640 --> 00:23:21.390

Erica Schatzlein: I know that we didn't understand.

126

00:23:22.980 --> 00:23:26.790

Erica Schatzlein: the depth of that change when we started exploring it.

127

00:23:28.320 --> 00:23:32.250

Erica Schatzlein: But we saw what the effects of that change could be.

128

00:23:33.270 --> 00:23:49.140

Erica Schatzlein: And we knew that we wanted to be there, we wanted to be in a place where our students felt welcomed, but also empowered they felt ownership belonging they felt an experience leadership and so.

129

00:23:50.730 --> 00:24:01.530

Erica Schatzlein: That was where at the bargaining table we came up with our first proposal was to have three pilot schools that that would start to integrate restorative practices.

130

00:24:04.200 --> 00:24:21.030

Erica Schatzlein: i've been extremely lucky as those number of pilot schools increased that my school became a restorative practice site and so i've had the ability to really deep in my own training and understanding in that.

131

00:24:22.290 --> 00:24:26.430

Erica Schatzlein: and see the transformative impact that it can have.

132

00:24:27.900 --> 00:24:30.090

Erica Schatzlein: On educators and when we say like.

133

00:24:31.110 --> 00:24:48.210

Erica Schatzlein: it's it's not a doing it's a being like restorative practices is not something you do it is a way of being and envisioning your life at school and the way you interact with people i've been incredibly lucky to experience that.

134

00:24:49.980 --> 00:24:58.290

Joel Berger (he/him): And maybe really quickly, for you know those that aren't in the profession or might not know, can you maybe give a brief rundown of.

135

00:24:58.980 --> 00:25:14.640

Joel Berger (he/him): Say like someone you know does some is emotionally just regulated in some way in a classroom what might like a restorative practices approach look like to dealing with the concerns of that student versus the more punitive end of the pendulum that you were talking about earlier.

136

00:25:15.270 --> 00:25:16.050

Erica Schatzlein: And I think that.

137

00:25:16.470 --> 00:25:27.930

Erica Schatzlein: When we started investigating restorative practices we talked about it in terms of like okay so bad thing happens, and this is the restorative approach to what you do with it right, but.

138

00:25:28.320 --> 00:25:44.100

Erica Schatzlein: The deeper you get into it, you learn that it starts like 10 steps before that and it's building a foundation of like this is who we are, as a community, this is how you belong in this Community, this is how we function.

139

00:25:45.120 --> 00:26:03.750

Erica Schatzlein: In this space together and we build these relationships, such that, like when harm happens and and it does, rightly, we are all human we in our interactions hurt each other in ways that we you know, maybe try to do, but maybe don't.

140

00:26:06.090 --> 00:26:14.280

Erica Schatzlein: If you've built that foundation of communication and how we work together, then.

141

00:26:15.750 --> 00:26:18.960

Erica Schatzlein: you're much more able to sit in a space.

142

00:26:20.820 --> 00:26:27.210

Erica Schatzlein: and ask the restorative questions, so the first question is, are you okay.

143

00:26:29.040 --> 00:26:30.990

Erica Schatzlein: The next question is what happened.

144

00:26:32.130 --> 00:26:41.010

Erica Schatzlein: You know what were you thinking when that happened, but I think in the previous like discipline approach.

145

00:26:42.570 --> 00:26:51.750

Erica Schatzlein: Even stopping to ask the first question, are you okay to everybody involved right to to see the humanity in the situation.

146

00:26:52.110 --> 00:27:03.090

Erica Schatzlein: and acknowledge the emotion in the situation versus like what did you do, or what do we need to do now like right like go to the principal's office or you know all of those things.

147

00:27:06.510 --> 00:27:16.560

Erica Schatzlein: because sometimes you know, we find that, when someone is hurt you know the student didn't realize kind of the impact.

148

00:27:17.070 --> 00:27:32.910

Erica Schatzlein: Right like they had the intention of doing one thing, but the impact was another and and i've seen too many gardeners that can pass a talking piece back and forth and work out their own situation with without even needing an adult present.

149

00:27:34.590 --> 00:27:44.580

Erica Schatzlein: But sometimes you know we need adults President and that's when you would bring in a circle keeper or one of your restorative practice needs to work to repair that harm.

150

00:27:45.270 --> 00:28:02.520

Erica Schatzlein: And so, sitting down with each party separately and going through those questions and trying to figure out what happened, such that when people come together and then make a plan to figure out how to repair that harm and how to restore each other into the Community.

151

00:28:03.780 --> 00:28:09.150

Erica Schatzlein: Then you know that if it's a complex situation that needs guidance and that's.

152

00:28:10.140 --> 00:28:29.400

Erica Schatzlein: One thing that our restorative practitioners specialize in but the other thing that they really specialize in that's been amazing is acting as a coach in that restorative impulse to the other staff in the building to help develop that restorative impulse in all of us.

153

00:28:30.810 --> 00:28:41.670

Erica Schatzlein: So that it's it's not like oh student you're super just regulated, you need to go see our restorative practice person right like the idea is.

154

00:28:42.900 --> 00:28:53.220

Erica Schatzlein: That we are all learning to create the Community and repair the harm students included um it's it's very powerful.

155

00:28:54.450 --> 00:29:04.260

Joel Berger (he/him): It really sounds like it and and as you're talking at the end there about the way that that staff is even.

156

00:29:06.390 --> 00:29:13.170

Joel Berger (he/him): I don't steps emotions and and are being tended to in some way in this it's it almost makes me.

157

00:29:14.250 --> 00:29:21.030

Joel Berger (he/him): Think my my question is one of my questions was like how how is SPF be able to get.

158

00:29:22.320 --> 00:29:26.730

Joel Berger (he/him): So many Members to buy and so completely to this idea of.

159

00:29:28.620 --> 00:29:33.180

Joel Berger (he/him): You know bargaining for the common good kind of seeing that big picture and and and.

160

00:29:34.590 --> 00:29:43.650

Joel Berger (he/him): It sounds to me like almost like the the restorative practices in the buildings have actually helped everybody kind of think about the bigger picture.

161

00:29:44.670 --> 00:29:46.680

Joel Berger (he/him): I don't know it's it's really interesting.

162

00:29:47.370 --> 00:29:48.450

Erica Schatzlein: One thing that's really.

163

00:29:48.450 --> 00:29:51.060

Erica Schatzlein: Important about the work that we've done.

164

00:29:51.360 --> 00:29:59.430

Erica Schatzlein: At SP a fee and restorative practices in particular because it is a huge shift is that.

165

00:30:01.440 --> 00:30:02.610

Erica Schatzlein: it's a choice.

166

00:30:03.900 --> 00:30:22.080

Erica Schatzlein: And so we started out with the three pilots schools, and so we had three slots, but schools had to apply, and so there was kind of a trigger mechanism where you take a vote as a staff and you need you know, a certain percentage of the staff to say yes i'm in I want to do this.

167

00:30:23.880 --> 00:30:42.810

Erica Schatzlein: And that the program was built that way and we intentionally had that at us, PFC such that it was something that the staff was doing together not something that was being done to them, and we have had a lot of really good experiences with.

168

00:30:45.420 --> 00:30:59.340

Erica Schatzlein: Mind shift and and huge change that we've instituted in our school system in this way that has been a choice so um another one is is the parent teacher home visit project.

169

00:31:00.720 --> 00:31:04.290

Erica Schatzlein: And, and we have you know, educators.

170

00:31:05.820 --> 00:31:16.410

Erica Schatzlein: Across the city going into homes and meeting with families and and talking about the hopes and dreams of their students and again building those relationships, but it's a choice.

171

00:31:17.850 --> 00:31:21.870

Erica Schatzlein: it's it's never a requirement it's compensated time.

172

00:31:23.070 --> 00:31:28.530

Erica Schatzlein: And we have another thing called academic parent teacher teams, which is a completely different way.

173

00:31:28.830 --> 00:31:38.700

Erica Schatzlein: To envision the idea of a parent teacher conference and they happen as a group, and this whole group of parents comes together with the educators and they have conversations about.

174

00:31:39.000 --> 00:31:50.310

Erica Schatzlein: What does school look like, what are we working together as as a classroom to learn and and all of these things that are really different ways of approaching the educational system.

175

00:31:51.510 --> 00:32:10.560

Erica Schatzlein: But they are all partnerships that we've entered into with the district where educators get to choose to participate and they choose the programs that are right for them, based on what their students need based on what they need we've seen really great success with that.

176

00:32:13.260 --> 00:32:14.850

Joel Berger (he/him): Wonderful Thank you so much.

177

00:32:15.930 --> 00:32:29.190

Joel Berger (he/him): And I guess my last question is just about the 2020 strike itself and and what you you recall kind of your your experience with it, I know you were at the bargaining table.

178

00:32:30.240 --> 00:32:35.400

Joel Berger (he/him): And so, whatever you can share, about your story of what happened in 2020 It would be wonderful.

179

00:32:36.690 --> 00:32:37.440

Erica Schatzlein: So during the.

180

00:32:37.980 --> 00:32:40.140

Erica Schatzlein: first days of the strike.

181

00:32:40.500 --> 00:32:52.320

Erica Schatzlein: We actually weren't at the bargaining table we weren't meeting with the distress like we came to a point that we, like the strike is going to happen and we we left the bargaining table and.

182

00:32:53.820 --> 00:33:09.120

Erica Schatzlein: We hit the picket lines and I started out that first morning after very, very little sleep because we you know, decided that this was going to happen sometime in the middle of the night I don't know what time it was.

183

00:33:09.810 --> 00:33:22.020

Erica Schatzlein: But I didn't want to miss being at my own picket line at my school in the morning, so I got up and I got out there suited up for him my winter gear.

184

00:33:23.700 --> 00:33:31.110

Erica Schatzlein: My school started our picket line and circle, because we were striking for restorative practices.

185

00:33:32.580 --> 00:33:40.410

Erica Schatzlein: And we talked about the values that we brought to the line and and we you know kind of huddled together and talked about why we were there.

186

00:33:41.790 --> 00:34:00.180

Erica Schatzlein: Now we started walking the picket line outside of school back and forth up up and down the sidewalk chanting our physical education teacher brought her big speaker, and so there was some CHA CHA slide happening out there on the sidewalk and.

187

00:34:02.160 --> 00:34:10.500

Erica Schatzlein: I mean it was it was a celebration of all the things that bring us together and then on my way back to the Union office.

188

00:34:11.340 --> 00:34:17.850

Erica Schatzlein: I stopped at a couple other picket lines and there's one in particular this really stuck with me, because it was just like.

189

00:34:18.570 --> 00:34:29.460

Erica Schatzlein: It wasn't one of the lines that I was assigned to check in with but I drove by and I thought, like i'm i'm here, why wouldn't I stop like i'm passing this pickle i'm just gonna park my car and get out.

190

00:34:30.960 --> 00:34:31.830

Erica Schatzlein: and

191

00:34:32.940 --> 00:34:40.140

Erica Schatzlein: During this time, like as one of the Union leaders you're getting like hundreds of emails every day right like.

192

00:34:40.650 --> 00:34:45.630

Erica Schatzlein: we're not going to take this anymore, you need to go on strike and i'm really scared to strike.

193

00:34:45.960 --> 00:34:53.370

Erica Schatzlein: A why you just settle like I don't think this is it right, like every from every angle you're getting emails, and so I stopped at this picket line and.

194

00:34:53.970 --> 00:35:00.360

Erica Schatzlein: I come up, and I say hey do you guys want an update on what happened last night, and then they you know stop what they're doing, they all huddle and.

195

00:35:00.840 --> 00:35:15.690

Erica Schatzlein: We talked about some of the things that happened some of the things that we asked for and the responses from the district, and what our frustrations were and and we have you know just a nice five minute huddle and and then I moved on to the next picket line.

196

00:35:17.010 --> 00:35:24.510

Erica Schatzlein: And that afternoon as i'm going through the hundreds of emails I get an email from somebody and they said hey Erica.

197

00:35:25.530 --> 00:35:36.870

Erica Schatzlein: I work it at this school I emailed you last night, and I said that we shouldn't go on strike, and it wasn't the right thing to do and I begged you to settle.

198

00:35:37.560 --> 00:35:53.010

Erica Schatzlein: And the smarty when you came to our picket line and you told us what happened at the table, you told us what you asked for and the responses i'm so glad we're walking this picket line, we need to be on strike keep doing what you're doing thanks for coming to talk to us.

199

00:35:54.600 --> 00:36:02.400

Erica Schatzlein: And that, just like that will you know sit with me forever such that, like when our when our Members.

200

00:36:02.910 --> 00:36:16.410

Erica Schatzlein: You know knew what was happening, and they felt really updated as to you know what was going on at the table like they were out there, like we we had close to 95% participation.

201

00:36:17.340 --> 00:36:26.850

Erica Schatzlein: On the strike line and you could tell like driving through the city, as I was driving back to the SPF the offices that day.

202

00:36:27.360 --> 00:36:35.700

Erica Schatzlein: It felt like I don't think it was every single one, but it felt like every single freeway bridge overpass.

203

00:36:36.090 --> 00:36:54.180

Erica Schatzlein: There were strike signs out there, and you were just driving through and I don't think i've ever haunt my Horn so much like it was so powerful so in the morning, everybody went to their school and there was there was a picket line at every school.

204

00:36:55.260 --> 00:37:05.250

Erica Schatzlein: And then, in the afternoon we all came together in central places, and the second day of the strike, we were in downtown St Paul.

205

00:37:06.270 --> 00:37:08.310

Erica Schatzlein: And we had a march.

206

00:37:09.600 --> 00:37:15.240

Erica Schatzlein: And it was one of the most amazing things i've ever participated in first of all, there were so many of us.

207

00:37:15.600 --> 00:37:35.130

Erica Schatzlein: there that we wrapped around an entire downtown city block like as we were marching with our signs we looked down like an alley between the buildings and you could see our picket line like, on the other side still coming.

208

00:37:36.510 --> 00:37:48.450

Erica Schatzlein: We had solidarity from our brothers and sisters and Union siblings across the country, and so we had an amazing woman to me all from the Chicago teachers Union who came.

209

00:37:48.810 --> 00:38:05.250

Erica Schatzlein: And she wrote in the back of the old red pickup truck that was leading our line and she chanted and she saying, and like we were all rocking the long legs together um.

210

00:38:06.360 --> 00:38:08.160

Erica Schatzlein: It was it was.

211

00:38:09.720 --> 00:38:20.250

Erica Schatzlein: A powerful thing that we knew we were doing good for our students but also felt like just a celebration of who we were and who we could be.

212

00:38:23.760 --> 00:38:25.980

Joel Berger (he/him): ma'am just beautiful images.

213

00:38:26.880 --> 00:38:34.050

Erica Schatzlein: I have some video for you on that, and some of like I found some of the stuff so I I did collect some image.

214

00:38:34.050 --> 00:38:35.160

Joel Berger (he/him): Oh wonderful.

215

00:38:35.400 --> 00:38:38.100

Joel Berger (he/him): Oh that's so great i'm so i'm really excited.

216

00:38:39.390 --> 00:38:43.530

Joel Berger (he/him): yeah the red pickup truck I saw pictures of and the paper that is so cool.

217

00:38:44.700 --> 00:38:48.960

Joel Berger (he/him): But yeah, so I think probably my last question would be then.

218

00:38:50.880 --> 00:39:07.770

Joel Berger (he/him): it's so first of all, it seems like one of the victories of of 2020 is just like this shared experience of like that seems like a massive victory in and of itself, like the culture that that helps build the experience itself that you shared with one another.

219

00:39:09.090 --> 00:39:27.150

Joel Berger (he/him): What were some other you know victories that you all end up having at the at the table as well, and for your schools and then, what do you see is like the unfinished business that in some ways, that you are still are fighting for and St Paul, and I think that's that will be our last question.

220

00:39:28.410 --> 00:39:29.790

Erica Schatzlein: So for me, I think the.

221

00:39:30.390 --> 00:39:53.430

Erica Schatzlein: biggest win of this strike is how we see ourselves and our collective power as a Union, and so like immediately after we settled and end of the strike like co it just came rolling in right our schools never reopen there was never a normal after that.

222

00:39:55.200 --> 00:39:56.910

Erica Schatzlein: And that was really scary but.

223

00:39:58.170 --> 00:40:11.340

Erica Schatzlein: Instead of people contacting me or con union and saying what is the Union going to do about this, the question now is what are we going to do.

224

00:40:12.900 --> 00:40:22.830

Erica Schatzlein: And one of the chance that we say at you know all of our rallies and out on the strike line is who are we as PR fee and it's that.

225

00:40:23.730 --> 00:40:39.150

Erica Schatzlein: understanding that the Union is not an entity outside of us like we are the Union and we make things happen, and I think that that understanding and that ownership and feeling is stronger than it ever has been before.

226

00:40:40.860 --> 00:40:50.610

Erica Schatzlein: And so we leveraged that collective power to win mental health teams and our schools and more support for our students, which is.

227

00:40:51.120 --> 00:40:56.040

Erica Schatzlein: You know that's an ongoing issue now we've seen, like all of those.

228

00:40:56.490 --> 00:41:04.470

Erica Schatzlein: inequalities and our health system and our mental health care and how our communities experienced trauma like cove it is lead those there.

229

00:41:04.860 --> 00:41:18.720

Erica Schatzlein: Right and that's still a huge need in our schools, how we're going to meet our students social and emotional needs how we come back together after now a year and a half of being apart for some students.

230

00:41:20.130 --> 00:41:23.700

Erica Schatzlein: And, and so that that work has to continue.

231

00:41:24.870 --> 00:41:34.980

Erica Schatzlein: We won some really powerful language around staffing and supports for English learners and our special education students or students who receive special education services.

232

00:41:35.850 --> 00:41:44.340

Erica Schatzlein: But that work continues right like we know that federally and at the State level, neither of those programs are funded and supported in the ways.

233

00:41:44.700 --> 00:41:54.810

Erica Schatzlein: That they need to be which leads our students to not getting the support that they need, and it leads our educators to you know not having the support that they need.

234

00:41:56.190 --> 00:42:02.670

Erica Schatzlein: And so, those are areas that that we will continue to work and.

235

00:42:04.410 --> 00:42:17.640

Erica Schatzlein: It just all comes back to making sure our students have their needs, met, and so we will continue the conversation about keeping and supporting and expanding restorative practices in our schools.

236

00:42:19.020 --> 00:42:32.760

Erica Schatzlein: Like the perennial issue of class size, how many students, you have in front of you and and how much time and can devote to them like we have some really good language on class size and yet.

237

00:42:34.830 --> 00:42:42.030

Erica Schatzlein: Class size equals, how many educators, do you have to hire and so it's an expensive issue and something that the district is always pushing back on and.

238

00:42:42.420 --> 00:42:56.880

Erica Schatzlein: and saying you know either, then it doesn't matter or that they know it matters, but they can't afford it, or they can't go as low as is the research says so, then they just want to do nothing like these are issues that we will continue.

239

00:42:58.140 --> 00:43:03.330

Erica Schatzlein: continue to fight for to advocate for our students and the schools, they deserve.

240

00:43:06.330 --> 00:43:08.100

Joel Berger (he/him): awesome Thank you i'm going to pause the recording.