Stephanie Price

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00:00:02.550 --> 00:00:12.929

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): hi my name is marcella and I am here with stephanie price to talk about her experience in the Oklahoma walkouts of 2018 so thanks so much stephanie for talking with us.

2

00:00:13.980 --> 00:00:15.269

Steph Price: hey happy to be here.

3

00:00:16.139 --> 00:00:23.100

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): um I thought we could start off just by you, giving us a little bit of information about your early life and how that led you into teaching.

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00:00:24.390 --> 00:00:38.910

Steph Price: yeah absolutely so I want to start by saying that I am a speech language pathologist and I use she her pronouns so like when I talk about my experiences in like.

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00:00:39.420 --> 00:00:47.310

Steph Price: we're growing up, and as I am older and in my profession, I often tend to use the term educator because I do consider myself an educator.

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00:00:47.760 --> 00:01:06.360

Steph Price: But i'm not a classroom teacher, so I just feel like it's important to to preface that i'm early life that's a lot like that go way way back for that um I was born in Germany we live there for a few years, my parents were in the military, so we moved around a little bit, but ultimately.

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00:01:07.590 --> 00:01:16.590

Steph Price: I started my schooling in New York and Staten island and then we moved to Oklahoma my mom and I did when I was in first grade.

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00:01:18.360 --> 00:01:31.440

Steph Price: And I was pissed and I was like my very first week at school, a little girl like I accidentally stepped on her shoes in the line to go home and she called me the N word.

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00:01:32.370 --> 00:01:53.250

Steph Price: And so, as a first grader like coming from my school in Staten island, which was fairly diverse, you know, but never feeling like I was different from anybody else to like the first week in a new school being called the N word and knowing what that was so.

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00:01:54.450 --> 00:02:04.200

Steph Price: I think that that is kind of the theme throughout my experience right racism and having to deal with.

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00:02:05.610 --> 00:02:16.140

Steph Price: Not having teachers who listened to me not having teachers who looked like me having teachers minimized my issues my son is not being adored give me one second.

12

00:02:21.420 --> 00:02:34.560

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah so you were just talking about how your experiences in Oklahoma and not having representatives in your experiences as a student led you towards that direction of being an educator.

13

00:02:35.490 --> 00:02:45.330

Steph Price: yeah absolutely So when I went to school, I honestly have no idea like what I went to college, I had no idea what I wanted to do and I ended up in an introduction to speech pathology class.

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00:02:45.900 --> 00:02:54.120

Steph Price: And I stuck with it, but like throughout my education there weren't people who looked like me in higher ED.

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00:02:55.290 --> 00:03:12.540

Steph Price: My field is like 90% white women so both in speech pathology and in education, like so you know that is the lens that I come from, and ultimately I wasn't going to work in the public schools but.

16

00:03:13.260 --> 00:03:32.010

Steph Price: I wanted to be able to make a difference for kids like myself who didn't have people who look like them growing up and didn't have people who understood just who they were on a deeper level so yeah that's kind of some of the reason i'm an educator.

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00:03:32.220 --> 00:03:37.500

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah definitely that makes sense, so without one of the reasons that you decided to stay in Oklahoma as well.

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00:03:39.660 --> 00:03:41.250

Steph Price: You mean like for college.

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00:03:42.030 --> 00:03:43.170

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): And I started.

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00:03:43.440 --> 00:03:46.920

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): To start your career in the state.

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00:03:48.300 --> 00:03:54.840

Steph Price: yeah you know I got pregnant, when I was in graduate school and i'm.

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00:03:55.980 --> 00:04:08.310

Steph Price: It was it was harder, I was like that's just the reality of the situation right, I thought, initially, when I started Grad school that I would take a job in another state that maybe I would do travel therapy.

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00:04:10.290 --> 00:04:12.300

Steph Price: But then I had a child.

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00:04:12.690 --> 00:04:31.200

Steph Price: And being a single parent is harder yeah so my father is also a part of the reason I stayed with being able to be near him and he helped me a lot raising my son and then for my son to also continue to be near his dad was important.

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00:04:33.030 --> 00:04:36.930

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah definitely definitely that makes sense, so then.

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00:04:37.980 --> 00:04:41.370

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): What happened in between graduate school and then you entering.

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00:04:42.510 --> 00:04:44.910

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): The Oklahoma public schools.

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00:04:46.590 --> 00:04:59.160

Steph Price: yeah so there was nothing in between right like I graduated from I graduated from Grad school I ended up doing one internship in the public school system where I ended up working.

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00:04:59.460 --> 00:05:10.770

Steph Price: So I went to Grad school and immediately got a job in the public schools in the place that I, one of the places that I had interned and I worked there for 11 years.

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00:05:12.180 --> 00:05:19.770

Steph Price: Though I want to say it was 2009 is when I graduated from college, so I started in 2009 and.

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00:05:20.790 --> 00:05:31.560

Steph Price: I moved to Washington state little over a year ago, so I was there until then like one job one district that has been my experience.

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00:05:33.270 --> 00:05:37.170

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): So what was it like working there before the walkouts.

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00:05:39.150 --> 00:05:55.650

Steph Price: um there's so the personal aspects and then there's like the work aspect, so you know from from the personal side, I feel like I experienced a lot of.

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00:05:56.760 --> 00:06:15.510

Steph Price: That racism that we talked about earlier like in my early life, I had a lot of that too, and in my work setting being asked questions about things like during the 2016 presidential election why black people don't like trump because we all get free education and healthcare.

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00:06:16.650 --> 00:06:38.580

Steph Price: And i'm being told at the lunch table like in response to people protesting over the deaths of black men at the hands of police brutality right like being told black people are always overreacting and that's a direct quote so I was working in a white flight town.

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00:06:39.690 --> 00:06:42.630

Steph Price: with people who had no idea.

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00:06:45.540 --> 00:06:49.170

Steph Price: What that what these kinds of things did to damage.

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00:06:50.340 --> 00:07:02.250

Steph Price: their peers and their students right, because if you could say something like that to me, you can say something like that to your students right like just end the micro aggressions and that's a whole other level but.

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00:07:03.810 --> 00:07:04.290

Steph Price: So.

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00:07:05.310 --> 00:07:10.140

Steph Price: Really that kind of began my process of getting involved with the Union.

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00:07:11.130 --> 00:07:19.260

Steph Price: is trying to find a place where there were other black educators, that I could have community with because of what I was experiencing at work.

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00:07:19.890 --> 00:07:29.760

Steph Price: And then there was that other side of work that's like this constant we don't have any money there's no funding these things are changing this is changing.

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00:07:30.210 --> 00:07:37.230

Steph Price: The people who are making the decisions don't seem to have an understanding of what the people in the classrooms are actually going through.

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00:07:37.590 --> 00:07:46.740

Steph Price: Like listening and hearing stories over the years of educators who are just struggling because, like there's too many kids in their classes and.

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00:07:47.100 --> 00:07:58.110

Steph Price: they're they're stressed out because they feel that kids aren't getting the services that they need or things take a really long time to get rolling it's just like.

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00:07:59.460 --> 00:08:12.090

Steph Price: loving, the ability to work with my students but hating that I was experiencing constant micro aggressions constant racism having to like defend myself.

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00:08:12.540 --> 00:08:22.950

Steph Price: And then also being in in a system where it was just like underfunded, and it made everything that much harder there was one year, I remember teachers like.

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00:08:23.430 --> 00:08:38.400

Steph Price: couldn't even I feel like they're what they're learning in any supplies, like in the supply closet teachers were having to buy band aids and stuff for their classrooms like simple things so there's just like this, this very large scope of.

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00:08:39.840 --> 00:08:43.230

Steph Price: solved issues within the education system.

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00:08:44.460 --> 00:08:58.950

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah definitely so, you said that you initially got involved with the Union to find a space to collaborate and discuss with other educators of color and do you feel like the Union was receptive to that how did that process unfold.

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00:09:00.300 --> 00:09:02.610

Steph Price: yeah so I was a member.

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00:09:04.020 --> 00:09:16.650

Steph Price: Like a distant member of the Union, because of some of the issues I was having I joined so that I would have helped if I needed it um but there was a group that have formed.

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00:09:17.490 --> 00:09:32.880

Steph Price: And that group had formed within the Union under the previous Union leadership in my local so they were actively trying to build that group and helping that group with their work.

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00:09:34.200 --> 00:09:53.550

Steph Price: And then I joined under the new leadership, but was definitely encouraged to be part of that group to help it grow and I eventually ended up being the Chair of that committee um so yeah that the local union was very receptive the State Union and that's.

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00:09:54.630 --> 00:09:55.620

Steph Price: that's a different story.

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00:09:57.480 --> 00:10:07.410

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah and maybe we can talk about that a little bit later, when we talk about all the dynamics of the walkout and those kind of discussions around support at the state level.

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00:10:09.210 --> 00:10:11.970

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): Okay, so what What would you say in.

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00:10:13.650 --> 00:10:16.350

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): Maybe the year or months leading up to the.

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00:10:17.610 --> 00:10:22.590

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): walkouts was the dynamic on an everyday level within the school.

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00:10:24.870 --> 00:10:26.550

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): Like what would a typical day look like.

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00:10:31.020 --> 00:10:44.760

Steph Price: I mean, I think that's very different for me versus for other educators, because what I do is different and I don't have a classroom and I was feeling a lot of stress, I was feeling a lot of stress about.

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00:10:46.260 --> 00:10:50.970

Steph Price: My paycheck number one right like the money and to support.

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00:10:51.060 --> 00:10:55.140

Steph Price: myself in my child and always feeling like I was struggling.

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00:10:55.350 --> 00:11:07.410

Steph Price: Financially, and like why I have a master's degree Why am I struggling right so like I think that was a very constant theme for a couple years before the walkout for me i'm.

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00:11:07.980 --> 00:11:23.670

Steph Price: Seeing the frustration that teachers had about state testing and the high stakes of the testing that was being pushed on them, they felt like feeling like there wasn't the ability to be creative in their teaching, but they had to like follow this.

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00:11:24.720 --> 00:11:34.440

Steph Price: pattern of you know stuff that was dictated to them, so I think for me and my daily work was just like trying to help my kids reach their goals.

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00:11:34.860 --> 00:11:45.480

Steph Price: and trying to navigate like how to talk to teachers about things that were going on and how to like be empathetic towards that and then also thinking about.

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00:11:46.860 --> 00:11:54.450

Steph Price: Do I need to change my job, like that was a daily thing for me for a while, like can I really keep working here.

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00:11:56.730 --> 00:12:06.840

Steph Price: I do want to say in all of that, though I absolutely love my students, and that is what has best what brought me there and that's what kept me there.

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00:12:07.500 --> 00:12:25.050

Steph Price: Is them like that they need love that they need support that they looked at me as somebody that they could trust and who believed in them and, like that is incredibly important to me so like my days were really about just being there for the kids.

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00:12:26.550 --> 00:12:28.980

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah definitely and then in terms of.

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00:12:30.300 --> 00:12:40.320

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): You know, all these sentiments about lack of a lack of ability to work in this environment and, potentially, I think, to move out of state where these kind of conversations being had between colleagues at work.

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00:12:41.640 --> 00:12:45.630

Steph Price: yeah definitely I will say you know I.

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00:12:46.680 --> 00:12:47.820

Steph Price: kind of took.

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00:12:49.230 --> 00:12:54.000

Steph Price: i'm trying to think about, but because of the things that were happening I didn't always feel safe.

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00:12:54.870 --> 00:13:08.520

Steph Price: To say the things that I bought or to have conversations with people you know, so there were some people that I could have those conversations with but I overheard a lot and like through the Union, I also picked up a lot of other things that were happening.

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00:13:09.960 --> 00:13:23.520

Steph Price: A lot of teachers were feeling that way it was definitely like a very large scale issue within buildings within districts within the state just teachers feeling a lack of respect.

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00:13:24.030 --> 00:13:36.930

Steph Price: And like they're struggling to make ends meet or you know, maybe they have partners at home, who make more money than they do so they're not as worried about it, but still it's just like.

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00:13:37.980 --> 00:13:46.410

Steph Price: It definitely became something that was talked about more the funding, not just for salaries, but for schools in general.

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00:13:47.820 --> 00:13:52.140

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah Do you remember when the first conversation started arising over a potential walkout.

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00:13:54.330 --> 00:13:59.130

Steph Price: And I really don't remember like the exact.

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00:14:01.620 --> 00:14:02.310

Steph Price: I.

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00:14:03.900 --> 00:14:06.030

Steph Price: it's been a while it's been a while.

84

00:14:06.270 --> 00:14:14.400

Steph Price: I slept since then there were several initiatives that we're trying to get more funding.

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00:14:15.450 --> 00:14:27.300

Steph Price: And I remember going to the capital with the Union, it was like the very first time that I was like yes, I will go to this Union thing to support this initiative.

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00:14:28.620 --> 00:14:37.560

Steph Price: that's really kind of when it started to change, for me, and I remember watching that get voted down at the state Capitol.

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00:14:39.000 --> 00:14:39.900

Steph Price: and

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00:14:41.100 --> 00:14:52.500

Steph Price: That moment for me, is when I started to see more people having conversations about what was next, so I feel like.

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00:14:53.130 --> 00:14:58.530

Steph Price: It was building for a while and I wish I could remember what that initiative was called so I could tell you, but like.

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00:14:59.490 --> 00:15:11.760

Steph Price: I just remember after that moment people saw oh OK, so the lawmakers are not going to support us and they're giving us ridiculous reasons as to why So what are we gonna do about it.

91

00:15:12.930 --> 00:15:17.130

Steph Price: And I think that's I started to see more talk circulating after that.

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00:15:19.980 --> 00:15:29.430

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): And so, did the dynamic change within your school, do you feel like there was a shift at that point, or how did that really push for mobilization happen.

93

00:15:30.600 --> 00:15:51.720

Steph Price: yeah you know I started to realize a lot more people were talking about it, and not just in my school, but like on Facebook and teacher groups and other places, you know I knew, educators and other districts, who were also talking about it and commenting on it, so I think that.

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00:15:53.340 --> 00:16:00.930

Steph Price: That kind of sparked it was like two failed initiatives, maybe within like a year or two of each other or something.

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00:16:01.680 --> 00:16:13.680

Steph Price: And then you know, here we are still in the same position, so I think that, like watching that watching those things not pass at the state legislature and.

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00:16:14.250 --> 00:16:30.870

Steph Price: Continuing to have to be teaching in the same conditions was a spark for a lot of people like wait a minute i'm not getting respected i'm not getting paid our kids don't have the things they need we don't have supplies our schools are falling apart.

97

00:16:32.760 --> 00:16:34.200

Steph Price: it's like when you see.

98

00:16:35.790 --> 00:16:46.830

Steph Price: Things that can help, but the people in positions of power aren't willing to do that, then you start realizing that you have to do something yourself.

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00:16:48.780 --> 00:16:51.360

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah, and so what happened after that realization.

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00:16:53.220 --> 00:17:10.380

Steph Price: I want to preface this by saying I absolutely hate this group, I do not like the person who started the group and that person ended up going to jail for inappropriate interactions with children for whom he was teaching.

101

00:17:11.670 --> 00:17:15.870

Steph Price: But there was a group, like Oklahoma teacher walk out now or something.

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00:17:16.260 --> 00:17:17.310

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): The time is now yeah.

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00:17:17.910 --> 00:17:21.210

Steph Price: yeah that that one there was another one to.

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00:17:23.490 --> 00:17:31.440

Steph Price: Oklahoma teachers unite and that one got less following had.

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00:17:34.740 --> 00:17:51.600

Steph Price: People in Oklahoma the culture is different there and it's it does have a strong Union history, but like it's not it's work that the right to work, state it's not currently like a strong Labor Union state, so you know a lot of people don't have this tradition of like.

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00:17:52.650 --> 00:17:56.640

Steph Price: militancy or just anything that's like.

107

00:17:58.140 --> 00:18:08.910

Steph Price: If they see something that they perceive as whoa that's a little too harsh or too much, then they don't they asked questions I don't like it, they don't you know.

108

00:18:09.660 --> 00:18:15.540

Steph Price: So I think they were scared away from the Oklahoma teachers unite group because of that, because.

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00:18:15.990 --> 00:18:31.050

Steph Price: The person who is running that group was maybe you know a little bit more and Milton asking different kinds of questions and I really do believe their intentions were great like I do at the time I was also kind of like right.

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00:18:32.520 --> 00:18:44.730

Steph Price: But knowing what I know now that this person was actively out in the Community, like actively driving to different towns to have conversations with people to try to mobilize people um.

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00:18:45.360 --> 00:18:59.010

Steph Price: And my partners actually like communicated with that individual a lot and i've got a good history of that, but the other group was the one because it was more mild it was more like.

112

00:19:00.750 --> 00:19:02.940

Steph Price: appealing to people and.

113

00:19:04.500 --> 00:19:08.010

Steph Price: I think that one of the first things I started seeing was.

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00:19:09.030 --> 00:19:16.260

Steph Price: Pay everybody post your paycheck stove or post your w two How much are you making that kind of stuff.

115

00:19:17.760 --> 00:19:25.140

Steph Price: So I think that had a place in the movement at because a lot of people were there, a lot of people were seeing what was going on.

116

00:19:25.590 --> 00:19:46.920

Steph Price: But moving forward from that I didn't see the leadership in that group actually like actively doing the work within their own community, so it was a place on Facebook, to get people to start to realize, but in terms of like larger scale actions it wasn't doing that.

117

00:19:47.760 --> 00:19:57.240

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): Right, so the way that these Facebook groups were organized was it that they were clear leadership that were running them it wasn't just a Community forum type of.

118

00:19:59.370 --> 00:20:00.240

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): platform.

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00:20:00.720 --> 00:20:14.730

Steph Price: yeah no so i'm Oklahoma teacher walk out the time is now was pretty much run by one person specifically one person who controlled everything, who went on that went on the page.

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00:20:15.750 --> 00:20:24.090

Steph Price: So, like certain things that were important wouldn't be shared or wouldn't be posted because that person didn't want to post it.

121

00:20:25.170 --> 00:20:26.310

Steph Price: was very controlled.

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00:20:27.360 --> 00:20:33.900

Steph Price: And that's one thing that I really didn't like about it, and I feel that anytime you have.

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00:20:34.230 --> 00:20:37.290

Steph Price: Thousands and thousands of people involved.

124

00:20:37.740 --> 00:20:45.660

Steph Price: In a group, and you have one person who is directing all what happens that's a problem.

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00:20:47.340 --> 00:21:00.210

Steph Price: it's not transparent, is not democratic, and it leads to misinformation, but also not getting the appropriate information right.

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00:21:00.780 --> 00:21:08.400

Steph Price: The other group and also had like a clear leadership, and I know there were a couple people who were initially involved in that.

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00:21:09.300 --> 00:21:20.070

Steph Price: But I don't know as much about it, I do know at one point, there was a conversation, which is part of the reason people kind of got turned off from that group about like trying to raise money to do organizing work.

128

00:21:20.580 --> 00:21:36.180

Steph Price: Which is absolutely something that we have to do and when we organized right like it's just a fact, if you want to go and travel talk to people and, like make change, maybe they needed money for gas, but people were turned off by that and started asking questions.

129

00:21:37.740 --> 00:21:41.430

Steph Price: And I think that kind of hindered the the growth of that group.

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00:21:43.350 --> 00:21:50.070

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): So these two groups kind of popped up after the West Virginia walkouts is that the way that you remember it.

131

00:21:51.720 --> 00:21:52.710

Steph Price: I think so.

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00:21:52.830 --> 00:22:02.490

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): Okay, do you do you recall, if if what was going on nationally was being discussed locally or.

133

00:22:03.630 --> 00:22:16.110

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): How much of an influence West Virginia really had on the walkout or if you all were kind of just organizing because of your grievances at the local level and it happened at the same time, you know what I mean like what were the what was the connection there.

134

00:22:17.940 --> 00:22:26.130

Steph Price: For me personally, I didn't know much about what was happening in West Virginia, but I did start to hear people talking about.

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00:22:26.850 --> 00:22:39.960

Steph Price: Whether their structures are starting in West Virginia, you know I heard very basic conversations and i'm sure there were others that were happening, but what I was hearing was mostly just this is happening like if they are doing it.

136

00:22:41.130 --> 00:22:45.540

Steph Price: Maybe we can those those kinds of conversations.

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00:22:47.040 --> 00:22:52.320

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): So there was a big debate around the actual date you all were going to choose for the walkout right.

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00:22:53.190 --> 00:22:55.530

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): Yes, will you talk a little bit about that.

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00:22:56.160 --> 00:22:58.590

Steph Price: yeah you know I don't remember like.

140

00:22:58.920 --> 00:23:00.840

Steph Price: All the details surrounding lists.

141

00:23:01.470 --> 00:23:04.830

Steph Price: But what I feel like happened is.

142

00:23:06.060 --> 00:23:14.190

Steph Price: educators started mobilizing and having more conversations, right now, one of it was through this Facebook group that I talked about.

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00:23:15.270 --> 00:23:22.860

Steph Price: As much as I dislike it, and so there were conversations happening educators started kind of changing.

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00:23:23.910 --> 00:23:24.810

Steph Price: Their.

145

00:23:26.070 --> 00:23:30.900

Steph Price: Changing that track of the conversation like we need to do this, we need to do this, what are we doing this.

146

00:23:32.670 --> 00:23:44.670

Steph Price: I believe the Union put out a date that was like weeks after like weeks down the road, and I want to say that it, it was after.

147

00:23:46.140 --> 00:23:56.280

Steph Price: My my memory is really fuzzy on this, I remember a something around state testing like they were trying to push the date to after state testing.

148

00:23:56.790 --> 00:24:18.570

Steph Price: and educators started having a conversation of like know why, like, why are we going to wait until a time that's more convenient to walk out and make a difference, why are we gonna wait till till the time it's more convenient to actually get something done like we need to do this now.

149

00:24:20.880 --> 00:24:24.600

Steph Price: Is kind of how I remember it but it's been a few years.

150

00:24:26.130 --> 00:24:40.560

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah so the whole funding issue around the state testing was a big part of it and you all felt like you needed to do that before, so there was leverage, or what was what was the discussion around that.

151

00:24:41.130 --> 00:24:59.010

Steph Price: yeah I think that was part of it, like leverage in you know if, why are we going to give them what they want, when they're not giving us anything um that was definitely a part of that conversation, and you know if, why are we.

152

00:25:00.210 --> 00:25:13.980

Steph Price: First of all, why are we doing high stakes testing anyway because it's racist and it just is that conversation wasn't really happening, but you know that's just a personal aside for me um.

153

00:25:14.790 --> 00:25:37.620

Steph Price: But like, why are we basing our schools funding on these high stakes tests and we need actual funding from the state so maybe we should just not do the test and good pressure, I think that was the goal like we need to put pressure on them to to start making change.

154

00:25:39.750 --> 00:25:50.310

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): So let's talk a little bit about that divide between national or the state level union and then your experience with the Union at a more local level so.

155

00:25:52.890 --> 00:26:06.240

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah I guess leading up to the walkout what were the dynamics within those two sectors in your feelings in terms of conversations in those spaces, you could just give a little bit of detail about that.

156

00:26:07.680 --> 00:26:08.940

Steph Price: yeah you know.

157

00:26:10.320 --> 00:26:31.770

Steph Price: I didn't know as much going in as I think I started to learn after because the walkout was really when I radicalized like the walkout was what caused me to want to change the Union to want to be in leadership.

158

00:26:34.710 --> 00:26:42.150

Steph Price: Because the people that were there just weren't doing what we need, it is, in my opinion um.

159

00:26:43.620 --> 00:26:44.430

Steph Price: So.

160

00:26:48.000 --> 00:26:59.520

Steph Price: I think the issue was the the Union tried to take ownership of the walkout.

161

00:27:00.540 --> 00:27:17.730

Steph Price: I really do feel like the walkout was mobilized by educators in Oklahoma you know, educators, were the ones who were saying we need to do this, we need to walk out, we need to show up at the Capitol and then the Union kind of like came in and said well okay.

162

00:27:18.780 --> 00:27:37.530

Steph Price: Let me pause on this so there's a fit so they are like Oklahoma city Oklahoma city area and other places, but oh yay Oklahoma education Association, which is affiliate of Nea and represents the majority of educators in Oklahoma.

163

00:27:38.730 --> 00:27:50.040

Steph Price: kimmy and so oh yay came in and started saying well we're all going to do this on this day, and we need to like.

164

00:27:51.930 --> 00:27:56.640

Steph Price: Basically, trying to control some of what was happening.

165

00:28:00.270 --> 00:28:01.230

Steph Price: Today answer your question.

166

00:28:03.420 --> 00:28:11.490

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah I think so, so you feel like the big push to walk out was through the educators, but the Union.

167

00:28:12.690 --> 00:28:14.190

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): My co opted in away.

168

00:28:14.700 --> 00:28:15.270

Absolutely.

169

00:28:16.560 --> 00:28:17.010

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): Okay.

170

00:28:18.480 --> 00:28:21.030

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): So can we talk a little bit about.

171

00:28:22.140 --> 00:28:35.460

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): What happened in terms of funding and why you all decided to still walk out right because they passed the budget that gave you all or gave educators, a raise but not support staff right.

172

00:28:36.450 --> 00:28:46.770

Steph Price: yeah not support staff and not like more large scale funding change for our schools for our students so.

173

00:28:48.450 --> 00:28:51.450

Steph Price: What I remember about, that is.

174

00:28:52.470 --> 00:28:55.200

Steph Price: They were getting pressure to make.

175

00:28:55.980 --> 00:28:57.090

Steph Price: Some decisions.

176

00:28:57.540 --> 00:29:07.170

Steph Price: and give us some funding, because they knew I think that the walkout was imminent like it was going to happen and as a result.

177

00:29:07.710 --> 00:29:18.210

Steph Price: They basically tried to appease us by giving us a raise by giving us some extra money our paychecks right which is great.

178

00:29:18.780 --> 00:29:24.360

Steph Price: But it doesn't fix the problem like it doesn't take care of the fact that.

179

00:29:24.840 --> 00:29:33.390

Steph Price: Taxes in Oklahoma are not equitable that the people who have the most money and the oil companies are not paying their fair share for our state.

180

00:29:33.690 --> 00:29:41.280

Steph Price: That we have districts that you know, like the amount of funding that's going to their schools is based on local property taxes so guess what that means.

181

00:29:42.420 --> 00:29:51.120

Steph Price: poor children a lot of whom tend to be black and brown or you know not always but that's the thing like they don't get as much money because there's not.

182

00:29:51.600 --> 00:30:02.640

Steph Price: wealthy people in their neighborhoods and you know just like you can give us money for our paychecks and that's great, but what are you going to do to get us supplies and paper and toner and.

183

00:30:03.120 --> 00:30:15.300

Steph Price: books and classrooms with air conditioners, and roofs and you know I just it was a bullshit attempt to stop us from showing up but they happen.

184

00:30:17.130 --> 00:30:17.490

Steph Price: So.

185

00:30:17.760 --> 00:30:23.370

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): So, so what happened on that first day of the walkout and what did it feel like at the capital.

186

00:30:24.930 --> 00:30:25.980

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): Can you give us a little.

187

00:30:27.060 --> 00:30:27.420

Steph Price: yeah.

188

00:30:27.960 --> 00:30:41.670

Steph Price: yeah yeah Okay, it was it was interesting um I took a bus, so I carpooled with several of my co workers to a high school parking lot in Oklahoma city.

189

00:30:42.300 --> 00:30:57.660

Steph Price: We parked and then they had buses running to come and pick people up to take them from different locations to the capital, so I was on like this big charter bus with one of my good friends and several other educators and my son.

190

00:30:59.190 --> 00:31:01.620

Steph Price: Driving to the Capitol and I just.

191

00:31:02.640 --> 00:31:10.290

Steph Price: I remember pulling up and seeing thousands of people, I mean it's like.

192

00:31:11.700 --> 00:31:19.020

Steph Price: I was shocked at the number of people who were standing in front of the Capitol it was.

193

00:31:21.000 --> 00:31:22.800

Steph Price: A big anxiety producing.

194

00:31:25.200 --> 00:31:41.850

Steph Price: yeah I remember like stepping out of the bus and honestly like within the first minute or two of being in that space, there was an announcement over the speaker, because there was a child who was lost and.

195

00:31:43.050 --> 00:31:53.490

Steph Price: Everyone in the crowd got down on their knees like well bent down in order to help this parent find their child and I just remember it was like.

196

00:31:54.210 --> 00:32:07.170

Steph Price: Okay, we have a kid who's lost, this is their name everybody get down get down, and I remember the mom like saying the kid's name she could tell how scared she was and literally the entire crowd just went.

197

00:32:08.580 --> 00:32:10.350

Steph Price: And it was almost silent.

198

00:32:12.150 --> 00:32:18.240

Steph Price: And the kid I mean within seconds, like the mom had her kid and everybody was like.

199

00:32:20.430 --> 00:32:39.180

Steph Price: So that very first moment of the walkout like pulling up and then being in this this place where, like all these educators realize that they have to just stop what they're doing immediately and find this child that's what educators to rate like.

200

00:32:40.320 --> 00:32:50.190

Steph Price: That that doesn't sum up why we were there, what does like it's about the kids nobody even questioned it and so.

201

00:32:51.270 --> 00:32:55.110

Steph Price: It really started for me with that realization of like.

202

00:32:56.670 --> 00:33:07.920

Steph Price: what can happen when we do come together, like when we do act together as one that we can make change.

203

00:33:09.840 --> 00:33:12.900

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah I love that story, you can just like it feel the solidarity in it.

204

00:33:13.320 --> 00:33:15.810

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): Yes, Danny what happens when you all.

205

00:33:15.930 --> 00:33:19.530

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): work together so on that note actually.

206

00:33:20.670 --> 00:33:39.690

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): How did you how do you feel like you all came together to find the such unity in this moment, especially like on a State level, because you were talking earlier about you know the marginalization and alienation that was happening within your own school So how do you feel like.

207

00:33:40.800 --> 00:33:43.560

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): How do you feel like that changed with the walkout or did it.

208

00:33:45.420 --> 00:33:52.530

Steph Price: um that didn't change I don't think you know I don't think we talked enough about.

209

00:33:53.100 --> 00:34:13.560

Steph Price: The impact that we could have on black and brown communities, I don't think we talked enough about how this was an opportunity to put racial and social justice at the forefront of any demands that we have and I didn't know enough at the time.

210

00:34:14.580 --> 00:34:21.210

Steph Price: To really speak up about those things like I remember when I had that realization but, at the time.

211

00:34:22.350 --> 00:34:24.780

Steph Price: It wasn't really a developed for me.

212

00:34:26.910 --> 00:34:28.410

Steph Price: What I think is.

213

00:34:30.840 --> 00:34:35.880

Steph Price: Yes, okay Oklahoma is a red state right, we know that, like.

214

00:34:38.010 --> 00:34:46.800

Steph Price: there's a lot of religion that plays into politics there there's a lot of old ideas.

215

00:34:50.790 --> 00:35:04.920

Steph Price: At the end of the day, I think the thing that was uniting is like in that moment, I talked about with trying to find that kid right it's like we're all educators, because well.

216

00:35:05.730 --> 00:35:18.480

Steph Price: Not all people there are some educators who just really shouldn't be educators, but you know, like ours majority of educators do it because they love kids and they want to make a difference in the lives of kids right so like.

217

00:35:20.130 --> 00:35:30.600

Steph Price: We chose this as our profession, for that reason, and because of that we were united in that goal of how do we help our students.

218

00:35:31.530 --> 00:35:43.740

Steph Price: Like that love for our students cross all of those political and social divisions that were there, and we were doing this thing like for the common good of oklahoma's future.

219

00:35:44.310 --> 00:35:53.760

Steph Price: Because our students are the future and if we're not giving them the education they deserve that our state isn't going to be able to like.

220

00:35:54.660 --> 00:36:09.570

Steph Price: make progress and keep up with the other places, and how you know the economy it's just going to impact many other areas, and I think the thing that's interesting about, that is, you know we saw like the governor.

221

00:36:11.340 --> 00:36:20.280

Steph Price: republican Governor, who was making absolutely ridiculous like completely ludicrous comments about teachers being greedy we're just like teenagers, who want a new car.

222

00:36:20.850 --> 00:36:32.070

Steph Price: I literally remember being in the capital that day slush like a sardine amongst all these people and everybody had their keys out and was just like where's our car where's because she had come into the building.

223

00:36:33.510 --> 00:36:43.290

Steph Price: All these people who were so upset that the lawmakers that they had voted for we're not funding education right and everybody thought this is going to change.

224

00:36:44.160 --> 00:36:54.150

Steph Price: This is this is going to change things and we're going to make change and yeah we did, but also, then they turned around and elected yet another republican governor.

225

00:36:55.980 --> 00:37:01.470

Steph Price: who literally is just continuing to drag the state down into the mud with.

226

00:37:02.640 --> 00:37:03.510

Steph Price: So it's like.

227

00:37:04.560 --> 00:37:09.780

Steph Price: We united because of our love for students right, but at the core of it like.

228

00:37:11.640 --> 00:37:31.890

Steph Price: How much does it take to start changing people's minds and hearts about the religion and the old notions and the other things that keep them from voting for people who are actually maybe going to make a difference and not just give us more of the same.

229

00:37:35.250 --> 00:37:38.280

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah yeah that's really good point um.

230

00:37:39.540 --> 00:37:48.240

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): I think that that statement, you were making about you know centering the students was really apparent from an outsider's perspective.

231

00:37:48.510 --> 00:37:57.420

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): Like, especially the ways that you felt like you know, decided to continue with the walkout to get funding for schools, because it wasn't just about your pay, but also about the students.

232

00:37:57.870 --> 00:38:06.540

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): And I was wondering, I mean you touched a little bit on this, but what effect did that have on Community support and parents support as well for for the walkout.

233

00:38:07.740 --> 00:38:08.970

Steph Price: yeah if.

234

00:38:09.060 --> 00:38:09.480

Steph Price: There was.

235

00:38:10.050 --> 00:38:13.650

Steph Price: A lot of support, especially in the beginning, from the Community from parents.

236

00:38:14.970 --> 00:38:19.530

Steph Price: I do remember one time getting clipped off and yelled at by some guy who was angry and I was.

237

00:38:21.000 --> 00:38:25.080

Steph Price: Okay, obviously you didn't get a public education, but whatever you know.

238

00:38:28.170 --> 00:38:36.270

Steph Price: yeah I think that people realized, and there was talk about that, like and I got off track add.

239

00:38:36.780 --> 00:38:44.940

Steph Price: There was talking about that, like we have to be careful how we frame this because if we frame this as we just want salary.

240

00:38:45.570 --> 00:38:52.200

Steph Price: The Community and parents are not going to support us which, like that's obvious this isn't just about salary, this is about our students.

241

00:38:53.070 --> 00:38:59.400

Steph Price: But I do think that there is part of that messaging that is important because we do want the Community to know.

242

00:38:59.730 --> 00:39:07.980

Steph Price: We are doing this for you like we're doing this, for your children so that they can have what they need, and I think that really they were behind that.

243

00:39:08.580 --> 00:39:18.660

Steph Price: Now I know it started to get a little more tense, as the walkout continued because people were more impacted and I kind of look back on it now, after coven and thank.

244

00:39:20.340 --> 00:39:25.320

Steph Price: You really didn't know what nine days with your kid was right, like.

245

00:39:29.010 --> 00:39:37.860

Steph Price: that's because teachers are worth it, educators are worth it schools are worth it, and so we're students and you have to be inconvenience to her two weeks leg.

246

00:39:39.210 --> 00:39:48.900

Steph Price: Is a lot easier than the past year you just went through right maybe that sounds insensitive I don't um I remember one day I had to.

247

00:39:49.560 --> 00:40:00.300

Steph Price: So I actually had a child support adjustment hearing from the capital, like, I called in to the hearing and my ex was there at the office.

248

00:40:00.660 --> 00:40:13.140

Steph Price: And I had to like get permission first right because I wasn't going to miss the walk out hell no right, I was there and the person that I first talked to was like thank you.

249

00:40:14.130 --> 00:40:30.480

Steph Price: Thank you for being there because it wasn't just been that robberies for teachers, if we were trying to get more money for State employees also right like that's solidarity and yeah she thanked me for being there and said she wishes, she could be there and that's Community support.

250

00:40:33.690 --> 00:40:40.380

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah definitely so how did you were all out there for nine days and you were at the Capitol all nine of those days.

251

00:40:41.190 --> 00:40:42.240

Steph Price: I was there every day.

252

00:40:42.480 --> 00:40:44.070

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah how did, how did that.

253

00:40:45.090 --> 00:40:51.090

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): I guess how did it progress How did the energy change well, what was the trajectory like over those nine days.

254

00:40:53.160 --> 00:40:59.970

Steph Price: yeah we started out strong and we stayed pretty strong till almost the very end, you know people started to get.

255

00:41:01.680 --> 00:41:05.670

Steph Price: districts, I think some districts were like retaliating against teachers.

256

00:41:06.660 --> 00:41:21.300

Steph Price: threatening to fire them for being at the walk out there were lots of things happening there's one district that was like pretty well known Western heights for like threatening to fire multiple teachers and it was a whole fiasco um.

257

00:41:22.320 --> 00:41:23.400

Steph Price: I think that.

258

00:41:24.420 --> 00:41:35.940

Steph Price: district started putting pressure on educators, like some of my friends were getting called back into work to do, standardized testing i'm.

259

00:41:37.740 --> 00:41:50.820

Steph Price: Just stuff like that you know our district superintendent was emailing like a survey asking us if we still wanted to participate in the lockout if they thought it was time to go back.

260

00:41:51.270 --> 00:42:07.200

Steph Price: We were pushing we were still pushing for things like change the way that taxes happen in our state changed capital gains like dude What else can we do, we can do more like, why are we giving oil companies a continued break just.

261

00:42:09.210 --> 00:42:17.310

Steph Price: yeah and then there was one day, where the people from my district all got a letter that basically said we're going back so tomorrow.

262

00:42:18.000 --> 00:42:30.600

Steph Price: If we didn't get a survey we didn't get asked, they just made a blanket decision that we were going back and a lot of people just said, a big Fuck you to that and showed up at the Capitol.

263

00:42:31.140 --> 00:42:48.690

Steph Price: And I remember that, like we all took a picture together and it's just like hundreds of people sitting on the steps of this building and, like the schools had to have like people from the admin office go into buildings to substitute for teachers and all it was just like.

264

00:42:50.520 --> 00:43:10.650

Steph Price: You didn't give us a choice you didn't, let us say that we wanted to continue and that caused some I think for other districts to like just the pressure that was put on them and the fear, but if they didn't listen that they would be terminated, or they would have repercussions.

265

00:43:14.490 --> 00:43:25.590

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): We talk a little bit about the decision of oh yay to end the walkout and what sentiments around that were in your for you and also just those close to you.

266

00:43:27.270 --> 00:43:27.720

Steph Price: That I was.

267

00:43:29.040 --> 00:43:37.740

Steph Price: I was pissed I remember sitting on my couch listening to what they were saying and crying because I was so mad, I felt like.

268

00:43:39.150 --> 00:44:00.240

Steph Price: There were educators who still wanted to fight, there were educators who still were ready to to do more, and the leadership wasn't willing to budge and I remember feeling that I was mad at the leadership of oea and.

269

00:44:01.650 --> 00:44:11.100

Steph Price: You know I wasn't in the room, so I don't know what happened, but I feel like I heard later that they basically didn't have a choice like they were told.

270

00:44:12.180 --> 00:44:29.190

Steph Price: you're going to do this, or else kind of kind of thing um I think we always have a choice you know who has a choice, but I got the impression that there was something happening behind the scenes from like the government side.

271

00:44:30.720 --> 00:44:45.300

Steph Price: Where they were basically told like nope you can't do this um and then, in my district, specifically, we had a meeting like we had a meeting when our superintendent decided to send us back.

272

00:44:45.720 --> 00:45:00.750

Steph Price: And it was a shit show say the least um people were so mad at him and it caused like a ripple effect within the local Union.

273

00:45:01.620 --> 00:45:16.650

Steph Price: Because I think that he felt that the Union was responsible for the way that he was treated in that moment, like the Union didn't do anything to like support him as the leader of the district.

274

00:45:18.420 --> 00:45:20.130

Steph Price: So I don't know that caused other issues.

275

00:45:23.250 --> 00:45:27.000

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): So what do you mean exactly about a ripple effect within the Union.

276

00:45:27.810 --> 00:45:28.530

um.

277

00:45:29.640 --> 00:45:37.590

Steph Price: Basically, like the meeting that we had was very heated lots of educators Community members showed up to to.

278

00:45:38.130 --> 00:45:50.100

Steph Price: say you know we don't want to go back like why didn't you give us a choice and he stood up there, I will give him credit, you know I know that he is a man who deeply cares about like.

279

00:45:50.850 --> 00:46:02.520

Steph Price: The district, and the students and the schools and truly does want what's best for them, and I know that he made that decision based on information that was coming up from above him um.

280

00:46:03.840 --> 00:46:13.020

Steph Price: But because of the reaction of the Community and the educators and the way that they responded to him and to that directive from him.

281

00:46:13.770 --> 00:46:23.940

Steph Price: It wasn't it was hard, but people were mad people were very mad, and he stood up there, for I don't even know, an hour and like try to answer questions, and if it wasn't.

282

00:46:25.410 --> 00:46:26.100

Steph Price: It was rough.

283

00:46:28.830 --> 00:46:33.210

Steph Price: So I think after that there was.

284

00:46:36.330 --> 00:46:45.720

Steph Price: Basically, I believe, and I don't know for sure, but I believe that he felt that the Union was responsible for the way that he was treated.

285

00:46:46.470 --> 00:47:04.500

Steph Price: And then there started to be things that happened within the local like we couldn't go as a Union, in order to like sign up new teachers at the new teacher events or like certain things that we had done in the past, all of a sudden, we were being told that we couldn't do them.

286

00:47:05.730 --> 00:47:06.540

Steph Price: and

287

00:47:09.240 --> 00:47:13.800

Steph Price: There were just a lot of things like that I wish I could remember more specifics, but it was basically like.

288

00:47:14.850 --> 00:47:33.630

Steph Price: The unit people started to drop their Union memberships or there seem to always be this pushback with things that union was trying to ask for our negotiating session, which is confidential i'm not allowed to say anything you know, but like it was more difficult, I think, as a result.

289

00:47:36.150 --> 00:47:48.840

Steph Price: And he actually told me himself, like the superintendent and I had a conversation, because there was something that had happened, where I met with several of the leadership within the district, and I.

290

00:47:50.160 --> 00:47:52.020

Steph Price: Basically, said, like.

291

00:47:54.120 --> 00:48:09.000

Steph Price: Sometimes, I wonder, like if I should just quit this job because I am a mixed race black woman who is and I don't feel like I belong here because of the experiences that I had, and I think about that more than I should.

292

00:48:10.020 --> 00:48:13.470

Steph Price: And this, the superintendent basically said something to the effect like.

293

00:48:14.580 --> 00:48:21.030

Steph Price: I know how it feels to have to wonder if you should leave kind of thing.

294

00:48:22.680 --> 00:48:23.280

Steph Price: So.

295

00:48:24.570 --> 00:48:36.390

Steph Price: I think he felt an intense sense of pressure, but I also think, after the walk out the district started to change the way it related to and worked with the local Union.

296

00:48:38.970 --> 00:48:42.060

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): And there was more animosity basically afterwards.

297

00:48:42.480 --> 00:48:42.690

yeah.

298

00:48:43.770 --> 00:48:54.450

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah it's interesting because I mean one of the reasons that the strike clock out but strike was not illegal was because the.

299

00:48:54.900 --> 00:49:04.500

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): superintendents and school boards decided to close the schools right so did that, how did that friction happened was it was it in those decisions to stay out when they tried to reopen.

300

00:49:06.720 --> 00:49:18.210

Steph Price: that's part of it yeah and I think you know, like we I talked a little bit about Oklahoma like Palais not the strong organizing background right, so a lot of people.

301

00:49:20.430 --> 00:49:26.790

Steph Price: When, given the choice of you may be to lose your job or maybe they could take action against you, or the fear tactics.

302

00:49:27.300 --> 00:49:34.680

Steph Price: And people started to feel like they have to go back like they didn't have another choice because they needed to protect their income.

303

00:49:35.190 --> 00:49:46.110

Steph Price: which I get but, again, like that's just the tactic that people in positions of power, use and what would have or what could have happened if we all just would have said nope.

304

00:49:47.730 --> 00:49:55.110

Steph Price: nope we're shutting it down like we don't need permission I told people that so many like we don't need permission to walk out.

305

00:49:56.280 --> 00:50:03.450

Steph Price: We don't need permission and that that's one of the conversations that was happening in the other group on Facebook teachers unite.

306

00:50:04.440 --> 00:50:18.030

Steph Price: Like that people were saying you don't need permission like we can do this, we can wild cat and being like the polite rule following oklahomans were like, no, no, we need the superintendent's to tell us we can go on strike.

307

00:50:19.170 --> 00:50:19.890

Steph Price: No, you don't.

308

00:50:21.030 --> 00:50:23.520

Steph Price: But that that definitely put pressure.

309

00:50:24.690 --> 00:50:25.080

Steph Price: yeah.

310

00:50:26.460 --> 00:50:38.400

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): So you mentioned a little bit earlier that you know the walkout is really what made you get more involved with the Union, so can you talk a little bit about that, and how that happened after the end of the walkout what your role was.

311

00:50:39.180 --> 00:50:40.980

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah um.

312

00:50:41.190 --> 00:50:44.880

Steph Price: So during the lockout I actually was connected to.

313

00:50:45.930 --> 00:50:51.360

Steph Price: A woman who is was in the international socialist organization.

314

00:50:52.800 --> 00:50:59.040

Steph Price: which no longer is a thing, unfortunately, there was a lot of stuff that happened, but she.

315

00:51:00.090 --> 00:51:07.410

Steph Price: Like invited me to solidarity calls and asked me to speak and would talk to me about my experiences and what was going on and like.

316

00:51:07.740 --> 00:51:14.370

Steph Price: I learned that like there were people sending pizza the capital like there are so many people in Oklahoma.

317

00:51:14.670 --> 00:51:27.720

Steph Price: Who ate pizza at the Capitol for days on end, while we were there, and still have no idea like that it was provided by a lot of it was provided by like socialist dsa like that's the beauty is like solidarity pizza is a thing.

318

00:51:28.950 --> 00:51:40.410

Steph Price: And a lot of people still don't know that so you know, I think that my building a relationship with her and her name is Elizabeth, by the way, she's fantastic amazing organizer.

319

00:51:41.550 --> 00:51:43.650

Steph Price: I started to learn more about.

320

00:51:45.060 --> 00:51:48.270

Steph Price: Labor I started to learn more about.

321

00:51:49.800 --> 00:52:10.800

Steph Price: The history about like what happens when workers mobilize I started to learn more about the importance of the Union, like I started to have more conversations with people from other places from other states who had maybe like a stronger Union background and I.

322

00:52:11.940 --> 00:52:25.140

Steph Price: was like okay it's time for change, I guess, this is time for change something, and my experiences at the walk every day to like watching these lawmakers, some of whom had no clue.

323

00:52:25.830 --> 00:52:29.370

Steph Price: What we were even talking about like they didn't they couldn't even tell you like.

324

00:52:30.270 --> 00:52:39.240

Steph Price: The bills that we were bringing up the things that were happening like they didn't seem to know or care, some of them who acted just completely like.

325

00:52:39.900 --> 00:52:54.090

Steph Price: disrespectfully and I thought I think I have to do something, because if I don't I will always wonder so yeah I just started to get more involved in the Union, I.

326

00:52:55.560 --> 00:53:01.200

Steph Price: was asked by the local President to like be on the Executive Committee of our local and then.

327

00:53:02.220 --> 00:53:08.340

Steph Price: I took on the role of chair, as the racial equity committee and then.

328

00:53:10.170 --> 00:53:19.770

Steph Price: I was Vice President of the Union for a year and a half, like the other person I guess stepped down, and so I was asked to fill that role.

329

00:53:21.810 --> 00:53:24.210

Steph Price: which I gladly took on.

330

00:53:25.230 --> 00:53:34.290

Steph Price: I also started like organizing for racial and social justice, on a broader scale, like trying to organize within my state local to.

331

00:53:36.360 --> 00:53:48.870

Steph Price: I one point was trying to apply for a grant to do some like large scale anti racist work in my district, and I really feel like the the State Union kind of met me with like a wall.

332

00:53:53.580 --> 00:53:57.390

Steph Price: yeah that's that's the whole thing too, but like.

333

00:54:02.250 --> 00:54:14.220

Steph Price: realizing that there is a lot of power in the Union, and when people are coming together to do the work and to be in solidarity with each other and with others.

334

00:54:15.360 --> 00:54:19.050

Steph Price: But that, ultimately, like the people in positions of power.

335

00:54:20.520 --> 00:54:21.750

Steph Price: are always.

336

00:54:23.310 --> 00:54:27.540

Steph Price: looking out for the best interest of people that are oppressed.

337

00:54:30.570 --> 00:54:42.120

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): Definitely, and I think that that it's interesting because because of the decision to end the walkout when a lot of educators we're not ready to and we're pushing to continue for further demands.

338

00:54:43.470 --> 00:54:49.890

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): It seems that many people will kind of turned away from the Union, and you turned more towards it and i'm wondering.

339

00:54:51.090 --> 00:54:51.660

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): If you could.

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00:54:51.990 --> 00:54:59.400

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): You know, talk a little bit Why exactly, and you know about those two decisions of of how to move forward with mobilizing.

341

00:55:01.020 --> 00:55:04.380

Steph Price: yeah you know I think a lot of people were mad.

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00:55:04.650 --> 00:55:16.500

Steph Price: And chose to drop their membership, because they felt like the Union wasn't doing what it needed to do, I think the important thing to remember is we are the Union like.

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00:55:17.340 --> 00:55:40.590

Steph Price: The Union is its members and if we are able to come together, we can do whatever we want right so there's that my decision to move towards it was really just about, I think, who I am as a person right like I spent so long in this district in this state feeling like.

344

00:55:44.340 --> 00:55:51.990

Steph Price: Less than I guess seeing what was happening to me seeing what was happening to my students and like.

345

00:55:52.860 --> 00:56:14.430

Steph Price: If i'm not gonna do it, who is you know, like not that it's about me not that i'm some person that can like do all these wonderful things but that people have to step up and I chose to try to step up to make change because change needs to happen.

346

00:56:17.520 --> 00:56:18.210

Steph Price: I don't know.

347

00:56:18.480 --> 00:56:19.350

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): In.

348

00:56:20.220 --> 00:56:35.340

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): Go ahead Oh, I was just gonna ask them, you know you were talking about like the initiatives, since 2018 and some of the priorities that you've been a part of with the Union, and I was wondering if you know you could tell us a little bit about them and kind of if there's any success stories.

349

00:56:37.620 --> 00:56:39.660

Steph Price: yeah you know it's interesting um.

350

00:56:40.380 --> 00:56:44.280

Steph Price: So I actually had a Washington now, so I didn't stick around for too long after.

351

00:56:44.670 --> 00:56:55.530

Steph Price: The strike you know, but like I did have a little bit more time there um I think you know I mentioned earlier, like how something happened, which led me into a meeting with all these administrators at the district.

352

00:56:56.100 --> 00:57:07.080

Steph Price: And through that conversation and through some of the work that the committee was doing they started to look at some of their policies like for hiring and.

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00:57:07.800 --> 00:57:16.140

Steph Price: Like diversity like what kinds of materials we are using to try to bring new educators into our district like.

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00:57:16.710 --> 00:57:25.440

Steph Price: There are not enough educators color in that district at all, it is incredibly sad like half of the students in that district are black and Brown.

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00:57:26.220 --> 00:57:33.960

Steph Price: And well I shouldn't say that have the students in the district are black indigenous or people of color you know Asian that so you know not way.

356

00:57:34.950 --> 00:57:51.900

Steph Price: And I want to say it was like 4% of educators so yeah like I think that they did start to make some changes about how we're trying to recruit and the messages that we're sending out they heard the message of.

357

00:57:53.100 --> 00:58:02.520

Steph Price: What people think about our district, and maybe why we don't have more diverse applicants I think they started to hear.

358

00:58:04.380 --> 00:58:07.440

Steph Price: that we need to be thinking about the way that.

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00:58:08.640 --> 00:58:15.360

Steph Price: Students in the classrooms are being taught based on the biases of their teachers.

360

00:58:17.070 --> 00:58:25.410

Steph Price: You know I really think that it started to lay a foundation for them where they were realizing more like oh yeah.

361

00:58:26.610 --> 00:58:40.350

Steph Price: it's 2020 or you know it's 2020 and like we have a lot of kids who are not like in this district, and how are we supporting them and how are we supporting our Community, and how are we telling the Community that we value.

362

00:58:41.040 --> 00:58:51.060

Steph Price: All people, how are we bringing in diverse educators, to do the best job for our students that definitely started to happen, I don't know what's happened since.

363

00:58:53.160 --> 00:58:55.890

Steph Price: Because again it's not comfortable.

364

00:58:57.180 --> 00:59:11.040

Steph Price: And it's not easy and people don't want to have those conversations because they're hard, but now given who the governor is and the nonsense that's happening with the whole critical race theory like sometimes I wonder.

365

00:59:12.480 --> 00:59:13.830

Steph Price: You know I knew.

366

00:59:14.910 --> 00:59:21.720

Steph Price: So i'm glad that, like, I was able to be part of some of that and.

367

00:59:22.800 --> 00:59:23.760

Steph Price: I think that.

368

00:59:27.630 --> 00:59:29.970

Steph Price: is hard because, like.

369

00:59:31.890 --> 00:59:41.700

Steph Price: I wasn't liked as a result of the questions that I asked and the things that I said and the things that I pushed for and i'm.

370

00:59:43.170 --> 00:59:49.620

Steph Price: The i'm very sensitive ever really big heart i'm very sensitive so like that's really difficult for me to like.

371

00:59:51.390 --> 01:00:01.230

Steph Price: to know that people just don't like me because i'm trying to do what's right but also, I think it again like it highlights.

372

01:00:02.130 --> 01:00:19.980

Steph Price: The issues like because I am a black woman who is using her voice to advocate for like better practices and helping our students who look like me right, like, I was not liked.

373

01:00:21.210 --> 01:00:24.840

Steph Price: And was looked at as like challenging.

374

01:00:28.440 --> 01:00:40.980

Steph Price: I think, while i'm glad the word happened I wish that it didn't have to happen at the expense of me ultimately being like I can't function in this space anymore, I have to leave.

375

01:00:43.110 --> 01:00:47.400

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah so was that part of what resulted in your your moved to Washington State then.

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01:00:48.120 --> 01:00:57.960

Steph Price: that's part of it yeah and I had wanted to be in Washington for like 11 years we came to visit my son was young, as a family and.

377

01:00:58.380 --> 01:01:06.360

Steph Price: I just love it here like it's a beautiful place it has the things that I want that makes me happy there's mountains there's beaches there's.

378

01:01:06.720 --> 01:01:25.530

Steph Price: Beautiful trees, you know I mean it's just like everything that I appreciate about nature is here um and so you know I sisters you're also being closer to family and my partner was very important, but I don't know if I would have moved.

379

01:01:27.030 --> 01:01:30.450

Steph Price: If I hadn't had the experiences that I did.

380

01:01:31.470 --> 01:01:42.450

Steph Price: And hadn't felt like I couldn't be in the district, that I was anymore, I gave like 11 years of my life to that district and.

381

01:01:44.490 --> 01:01:44.880

Steph Price: yeah.

382

01:01:46.500 --> 01:01:47.250

Steph Price: It was hard.

383

01:01:48.990 --> 01:01:59.100

Marcella Loprinzi Hardin (She/Her/Hers): yeah well Thank you so much for talking with us today, I want to be mindful of your time, so we can go ahead and end it there, but I love to hearing your story and and yeah Thank you so much for sharing.

384

01:01:59.760 --> 01:02:02.400

Steph Price: Worse, thank you happy to share.