

An Open Letter to Mayoral and Aldermanic Candidates

We are Special Education Classroom Assistants, Bus Aides and Monitors, Custodians and Security Guards in Chicago Public Schools. Our jobs are critical to providing a safe, clean and positive learning environment for our community's children. This is particularly true for diverse learners in Special Education Programs. We are committed to our students and the success of our schools, but are often treated as invisible or less important to that success.

We are among the lowest paid workers in the Chicago Public Schools. We are overwhelmingly from the same Black and Brown communities where the mayor and School Board chose to close schools and disinvest in our neighborhood.

In our current contract negotiations with the Chicago Public Schools administration and beyond, it is our intention to stand together and do whatever it takes to hold the political leadership of our city and schools accountable to our communities and our students, particularly, those in Special Education Programs. Our contract must achieve the following:

- No more takeaways. The decisions in the past to cut our pay and benefits was a choice based on an expectation that our families should be forced to pay for bad budget and political decisions of others.
- Pay increases that respect our work and restores the cuts made in the past few years. Those cuts were a loan, not a charitable contribution. It is time the School Board paid us back.
- Stop using Evaluations punitively in order to fire long term employees.
- Better Staffing so we can provide the service our students need rather than being pulled away from our jobs to cover short staffing in other areas or work off the clock to get our work done.
- A fair system of Transfers that emphasizes voluntary transfers to other work locations rather than involuntary ones. We need stability and so do our students.

We are asking you to support us in our struggle for better schools for our children and a better workplace for us.