

For Immediate Release:

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Press Availability with Striking CPS Staff Workers Starting at 6:00 AM

BREAKING NEWS: ON LAST DAY OF BARGAINING, CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOL STAFF WORKERS REJECT CPS CONTRACT PROPOSAL

MORE THAN 7,500 SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS, CUSTODIANS, BUS AIDES, AND SECURITY OFFICERS ARE SET TO STRIKE THURSDAY

After Months of Negotiations, Workers Are Disappointed with Mayor Lightfoot and the City's Proposals that Keep School Staff Living in Poverty and Does Not Ensure the Clean, Safe Schools Chicago's Students Deserve

When:

Thursday, October 17, 2019 – **interviews available starting at 6:00 AM**

Where:

Christopher Elementary School, a magnet school with special education programming
5042 S Artesian Ave, Chicago, IL 60632

Who:

Special education classroom assistants, custodians, bus aides, security officer with SEIU Local 73
SEIU Local 73 Officers

What: Press Availability & Press Conference

CPS support staff on strike and officers and leaders with SEIU Local 73 will be available for interviews starting at 6 AM.

Dian Palmer, SEIU Local 73 President issued the following statement after failed negotiations:

Today's bargaining session with Chicago Public School Board was a disappointment to the more than 7,500 Chicago Public School staff who dedicate themselves to providing clean and safe schools and to help special education students obtain the education they deserve.

We wanted to negotiate a fair contract to bring Chicago the schools that children deserve and to win economic justice for all our workers without going on strike. However, the city's unwillingness to bring equity and fairness to workers have given us no other choice than to trike on Thursday.

There is no reason why a Bus Aide should have to get two or three more jobs in order to survive.

There is no reason why a Special Education Classroom Assistant should be taken away to do other duties because of understaffing at school.

There is no reason why custodians should be struggling for resources while Aramark and Sodexo receive millions of dollars from the school district.

There is no reason why in Chicago, a city of such wealth and resources can't properly invest in good jobs for school staff.

The Mayor had an opportunity to fulfill her campaign promises to bring educational equity to Chicago students and bring economic justice to the workers who work in the Chicago Public Schools. But unfortunately, today she chose not to.

We are going on strike tomorrow and will stay on strike as long as it takes to ensure a bright future for Chicago's students, especially special education students, and fair working conditions for the thousands of staff who work in the halls of our schools.

Background on CPS Support Staff:

SEIU Local 73 represents 7,500 Chicago Public Schools support staff. These educators and workers are coming together to stand in solidarity with the city's 25,000 teachers represented by the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) to demand good jobs and the schools and parks that Chicago children and families deserve.

SEIU proudly fights for over 7,500 special education classroom assistants (SECAs), bus aides who help special education children go to and from school, custodians, and security officers who are striking for clean and safe schools, justice for students and families, dignity and respect.

In addition, workers from the Chicago Park District who just approved a tentative agreement on October 16 are planning to join the strike line to stand in solidarity with SEIU members and teachers in the morning before going to work and after their shifts end.

CPS workers demand clean and safe schools, that SECAs stop being pulled into random assignments so their special education students can receive the care and instruction they deserve, and to end giving millions of dollars to Sodexo and Aramark while custodians are struggling for resources, bus aides are being forced to work multiple jobs in between shifts to make ends meet.

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SEIU Local 73 represents more than 29,000 workers, primarily in public service and publicly funded positions in school districts, municipalities, social service agencies, and many other job classifications in Illinois and Indiana. SEIU Local 73 represents 7,500 Chicago Public School staff and more than 2,500 Chicago Park District Workers. For more information please visit the SEIU LOCAL 73 website at