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**For Immediate Release**

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**SEIU Local 73 Bargaining Update: 16 MONTHS. NO NEW PROPOSALS.  
NO CONTRACT. CPS NEEDS TO TAKE BARGAINING SERIOUSLY.**

**CPS has not responded to or made any changes to proposals. Leaves negotiation table after 12 minutes today.**

**Bargaining team is frustrated with Mayor Lightfoot's team, who's not taking the 7,500 Chicago public schools staff seriously.**

**CHICAGO**-The SEIU Local 73 bargaining team representing 7,500 Chicago public schools staff are frustrated with CPS who left the negotiating table today after only 12 minutes. CPS did not have any responses to SEIU's proposals or made any new counter proposals.

Today was the first official bargaining date between SEIU Local 73 and the Chicago Board of Education since last Wednesday. Public school staff have been working without a contract since June 30, 2018.

In response to Mayor Lightfoot's false claims that SEIU Local 73 does not want to negotiate, Dian Palmer, President of SEIU Local 73 said:

"Mayor Lightfoot said today that SEIU Local 73 is not willing to negotiate. Let me say nothing could be further from the truth. We came here today ready to work through the open issues of poverty pay, making sure Special Education Classroom Assistants are dedicated to special education students, and how to make sure our students have clean schools. It was the Mayor and CPS' committee that walked out today after twelve minutes with no proposals, no ideas, and no solutions...Mayor Lightfoot it's your decision. You are the Mayor of this city. You are the one who can settle this contract, all you have to do is direct your team to make SECAs, custodians, bus aides, security officers, and everyone else that works in the schools a priority."

CPS support staff remain resolute in their contract demands and ready to negotiate to settle a contract as soon as possible. **The current sticking points include:** pay increases for staff that create a pathway out of poverty pay and make-up raises that were taken away by CPS in the past, improved pay for special education classroom assistants (SECAs) that reflects their work and responsibilities, enforcement of SECAs' duties and responsibilities so they are not pulled away from their special education students, an end to using Sodexo and Aramark to manage the work of custodians, and addressing the lack of benefits such as paid days during Christmas break.

Chicago Public Schools employs some of the lowest-paid workers in the city. Mayor Lori Lightfoot herself stated that SEIU Local 73 school support staff are “[chronically underpaid](#).” Most are low-wage workers living paycheck to paycheck, with many -- especially bus aides -- working second or third jobs to make ends meet. Over half of CPS support staff make less than \$35,360.

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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. For more information please visit the SEIU LOCAL 73 website at [www.seiu73.org](http://www.seiu73.org)*