



SEIU Local 73 Calls on CPS CEO to Honor Agreement

Chicago, IL – SEIU Local 73 is calling on Chicago Public Schools CEO Martinez to honor our Memorandum of Agreement for the nearly 8,000 support staff we represent to work remotely during the current shutdown.

“We represent Special Education Classroom Assistants (SECAs) and Security Officers in schools who are now being asked to come into schools in some instances with no teachers in the room to help with ‘basic math’, art, music, or gym,” said Dian Palmer, President of Local 73. “This is a clear violation of our contract and state law which states that ‘Each paraprofessional shall be under the direct supervision and control of a fully licensed teacher when assisting with instruction, whether this occurs in classrooms, laboratories, shops, playgrounds, libraries, or other educational settings where instructional judgment requires the supervision of a fully licensed teacher.’”

“We are deeply concerned the dedicated staff supports for special education children may be taken away if SECAs are directed to supervise entire classrooms,” said Palmer.

“We urge CEO Martinez to come to the table with the Chicago Teachers Union in good faith and settle or offer open remote learning next week,” said Stacia Scott, Executive Vice President of Local 73.

Chicago's area children's hospitals are seeing dramatic spikes in the number of children requiring hospitalization for COVID.

“We are most concerned about the safety of our members and the students they serve,” said Scott. “It is in everyone's interest to ensure we get back to providing Chicago's children the education they deserve as safely as possible. Even if that means moving to remote learning for a couple of weeks to ensure proper testing.”

“Our members are being left with more questions than answers about how things will work next week. How many students are coming in? How long will the school day last? What new testing and mitigations are taking place? Many of our members are also parents, and they want answers,” said Palmer.

“We strongly encourage CPS to take advantage of Governor J.B. Pritzker's offer of masks, tests and vaccination clinics.”