



For Immediate Release

Contact: Adrian Rojas, arojas@seiu73.org

SEIU Local 73 and the Chicago Teachers Union Support Striking LAUSD Workers

CHICAGO, IL – The fight against unfair labor practices in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) began in earnest on Tuesday, March 21, with 30,000 school workers walking off the job. These workers, represented by Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 99, encompass the support staff across the entire school district. LAUSD's continued disrespect, and their inability to care properly for the workers who make their mission possible, has also led to a solidarity strike by the 35,000 teachers represented by United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA). SEIU Local 73, which represents over 8,000 support staff members in the Chicago Public School system, and the Chicago Teachers Union, which represents nearly 30,000 teachers and clinicians, are therefore proud to share our message of solidarity with SEIU Local 99 and UTLA.

This moment is particularly important for the labor cause. In the nation's second-largest school system, 65,000 workers have united to fight against the intimidation, surveillance and harassment the LAUSD has subjected them to. Moreover, this strike is a fight for a wage that respects the livelihoods of the people who keep schools safe, clean, and supported. In one of the costliest cities to live in, it is unfathomable to think \$25,000, which is what much of LAUSD's support staff take home per year, is a living wage. No one can survive off that, especially in a city where the cost of living is 41% higher than the national average, according to recent statistics. It is not unreasonable to demand that the workers who keep our school systems running deserve the basic right to live without worry of being dragged into poverty.

"This strike is emblematic of what many school systems across our country face," says Dian Palmer, President of SEIU Local 73. "We support these workers because they face the same issues our CPS members face: the threat of privatization, low wages, lack of support and resources, and short-staffing. Striking LAUSD workers are asking for the basic protections every worker should have afforded to them. SEIU Local 73 is proud to call Local 99 family, and we hope LAUSD realizes how vital these workers are and gives them the respect they've long-deserved."

"The almost 30,000 rank-and-file members of the CTU are proud to stand in solidarity with our SEIU Local 99 siblings on strike in Los Angeles because we understand that the support staff — the workers who are the backbone of our school communities — deserve to earn a living wage and have their work respected and valued," CTU President Stacy Davis Gates said. "The historic CTU and SEIU strike of 2019 showed the world what was possible when the workers in our schools stand together with a shared resolve to support each other in struggle. The workers in LAUSD face the same challenges our SEIU siblings faced, poverty wages, lack of respect in the workplace and privatization schemes that have outsourced jobs and left our schools filthy. But by standing strong in solidarity, the workers of LAUSD will send a powerful message the district will be unable to ignore."

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SEIU Local 73 represents more than 31,000 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. We are dedicated to improving the lives of workers and their families.