



For Immediate Release

Contact: Jazmine Salas, jsalas@seiu73.org
(407) 791-1566

Local 73 Workers Demand More Safety Protocols at Nathan Hale Middle School

Crestwood, IL – Nathan Hale Middle School custodial and maintenance workers stood together to hold the Cook County School District 130 Board of Education accountable after a safety incident on campus. During the April 20 District 130 Board Meeting, parents and workers alike demanded answers about the lack of communication from the District and solutions to prevent future incidents.

On April 19, the school was put on lockdown after a student was found with a firearm. The District failed to notify workers about the safety incident, and some workers were left confused and unaware. The District broke its promise to communicate with staff during lockdowns, which was made after a similar incident seven months ago.

The April 20 Board meeting began with a board member reading a statement about the April 19 incident. The Board said they would not release any additional information or a timeline of events, and all proper protocol was followed.

During public comments, teachers, staff, and parents slammed the district for delaying communication for hours after the lockdown occurred and for a lack of clear safety protocol.

“Our union has repeatedly told Superintendent McKay that a process for informing all staff is needed to ensure all workers who are moving between buildings are alerted and not put in unnecessary risk. In fact, when the hard lockdown was announced at 10:30 AM, staff in the middle school maintenance room would not have heard the announcement because there is no PA system in that room, another issue that needs to be addressed,” testified Local 73 State Division Director Shea Marshall

The Board ended public comments and went through the agenda as usual, upsetting meeting attendees who weren’t receiving clear answers to their questions. Parents interrupted the meeting by expressing their frustration, prompting the Board to enter into a closed session for nearly an hour.

The Board returned with a timeline of events and next steps answering parent and staff concerns, but many questions remained. The meeting was adjourned within 30 minutes.

Local 73 members will continue this fight for accountability and change. Custodial and maintenance staff play a vital role in campus safety, and their voices should be heard and included in the development of all safety protocols.

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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.