



FOR PLANNING PURPOSES

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Decatur School District #61 Custodians Call on BOE to Provide a Living Wage

Chicago, IL – Decatur SD #61 Custodians attended last night’s Board of Education meeting calling on board members and Superintendent Rochelle Clark to come to the bargaining table with a contract that offers a living wage.

SEIU Local 73 represents 80 custodians who have been bargaining since February while the board has claimed workers are overpaid compared to neighboring districts like Kankakee.

“Clearly Superintendent Clark and the Board failed math class,” **said Joseph Richert, SEIU Local 73 Secretary-Treasurer.** “Decatur’s budget is \$100 million more than Kankakee’s. They’re comparing apples and oranges.”

According to the MIT Living Wage Calculator, custodians with one child are currently underpaid by \$13.23 an hour. Health insurance cost increases will only increase the wage gap for these essential workers.

“I believe the wonderful turnout we had at the board meeting caught their attention,” **said Amanda Francis, Chief Steward and Custodian of six years.** “It showed the strength, determination, and commitment of our custodians that the district did not believe we had!”

“Our goal is to secure a fair contract and not disrupt the start of the coming school year. Unfortunately, management appears to be forcing us to consider a strike,” **said Richert.**

SEIU Local 73 has requested a federal mediator to attend negotiations.

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SEIU Local 73 represents more than 35,000 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.