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# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2016

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## Remarks in Response to CTU's Rejection of Tentative Agreement

### *Remarks as Prepared For Delivery by Chicago Board of Education President Frank Clark*

Good afternoon. My name is Frank Clark; I am the President of the Chicago Board of Education. Thank you for being here.

Before I turn it over to Forrest, who will talk about the path forward, I want to make a few comments on behalf of the Board of Education about the events of the past few days.

Every one of us is disappointed by yesterday's outcome. While CPS and CTU may come from different perspectives, I believe our goal is the same: to reach an agreement that allows our children to continue receiving a world class education.

But to do that, we must first put CPS on a stronger and more stable financial foundation. This agreement would have done just that. Having been a part of many deals and negotiations in the business world, I believed this represented a compromise in the truest sense of the word. It would have asked both sides to give in on something so neither side would have to give in on everything.

But while we are all disappointed, we are not discouraged. We understand that we have an issue of trust and we remain more determined than ever to address that issue and build on the strong foundation of the tentative agreement.

So, we have returned to the bargaining table. That work continues.

I believe both sides would also agree that the status quo is not acceptable. So, I remain confident that we will reach an agreement that will be good for teachers, parents, and, most importantly, our students.

Finally, I want to thank my fellow Board Members for their commitment. And, of course, Forrest Claypool, CEO, and his bargaining team for their tireless and steadfast leadership throughout this process.

In addition, I want to recognize Dr. Janice Jackson, Chief Education Officer, Denise Little, Senior Advisor to the CEO, and Vice President of the Chicago Board of Education, Jaime Guzman, who are all standing with us this afternoon.

I will now turn it over to Forrest, who will talk a little more about where we go from here.

*Remarks as Prepared for Delivery by CPS CEO Forrest Claypool*

Thank you for being here. Yesterday was a disappointing day. The decision by the Big Bargaining Team to reject the tentative agreement was disheartening. But, we'll be back at the table, and, in fact, conversations have begun; I spoke to Karen Lewis this morning. Despite yesterday's decision, we are both committed to getting a deal done.

Before I get into specifics and next steps, I want to take a moment and speak directly to the parents and anyone who has a child in CPS. My message to you is simple: our work is not finished.

We owe it to you and especially to your children to remain at the negotiating table around the clock. And you have my word that we will continue working to find a deal that keeps your children inside the classroom where they belong.

We will not be deterred from working with CTU towards an agreement for the sake of our children and their education.

Let me repeat: we will remain at the bargaining table and will keep working around the clock to get a deal done.

We heard CTU yesterday, and like President Clark said, we will work to restore trust necessary to reach an agreement.

Despite facing unprecedented financial challenges that threaten our classrooms, we had reached a tentative agreement with the CTU leadership. We negotiated in good faith for 14 months, including 18 consecutive days leading up to the agreement. I want to personally thank all of the negotiators who have given up nights, weekends, and a lot of sleep – and continue to do so – to reach a deal.

Our agreement met the key demands of the teachers' union.

It was an agreement that was good for teachers, good for parents, good for taxpayers, and more important, good for our children.

It would have raised teachers' pay – both for seniority and cost of living adjustments. It would have prevented teachers from being laid off due to a lack of funding. It would have provided more autonomy for teachers. And it would have restricted charter school expansion.

While we had obviously hoped for a different outcome yesterday, again, my commitment to the parents and students is that we will not dwell on this setback.

Even as we remain at the negotiating table, we will keep doing what is necessary to keep our children in the classroom and learning.

This means a few things:

First, we're going back to the bond market tomorrow to raise the necessary resources to restore the financial stability of the district. We have good momentum with investors.

Second, we'll have to cut \$100 million from school budgets in order to help decrease our deficit. This is something I hoped to avoid at all costs. We'll do our best to prevent teacher cuts and will work schools to keep class sizes small and prevent mid-year disruptions – but it means school support staff will be disproportionately affected.

Lastly, we cannot afford to continue the current practice of paying both teacher and employer pension payments.

These are very tough – and drastic – choices that were not made lightly. In fact, these are not changes we want to make, but must do so without an agreement.

Together, the \$45 million we cut from the Central Office a few weeks ago, as well as the \$100 million in cuts to school budgets and the \$170 million a year in savings from pensions - \$315 million in total - are the serious steps we must, and will, take to close our immediate budget gap and make progress towards eliminating our structural deficit.

But, at the end of the day, our guiding principal remains doing what is right for our children and what is necessary to keep them learning. Our teachers provide an essential service to CPS, and we are mindful and appreciative of their dedication and service to our children.

So we will remain working for as long as it takes to reach a deal that will ensure that our children can continue to receive an education that will allow them to reach their full potential.