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September 30, 2019

Via Electronic Mail (JesseSharkey@ctulocal1.com)

Jesse J. Sharkey, President
Chicago Teachers Union
1901 West Carroll Avenue
Chicago, IL 60612

Dear President Sharkey:

This letter responds to your letter of September 27, 2019 to CEO Dr. Janice Jackson. We acknowledge receipt of your statutory notice of intent to strike.

We appreciate your commitment to settle a new labor agreement. However, “eventually” is not satisfactory when the education of over 360,000 children threatens to be disrupted; nor is “eventually” satisfactory when the lives and livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of students and their families threatens to be thrown into turmoil. A new agreement can and must be reached this week.

On Friday, September 27, we presented a 42-page comprehensive proposal which included the richest compensation and benefit package in CPS/CTU history. Despite the failure of CTU to give any reasonable responses to our many proposals over the last few weeks and months, we also included, as part of the package, our previous proposals as well as significant proposals on class size and privatization, among other areas.

If the Union is serious about its commitment to reach an agreement without a strike, we strongly urge that the Union manifest that commitment by presenting to the Board a comprehensive written response to our proposal which prioritizes and identifies those issues which are absolutely essential to reaching an agreement. Continuing to have discussions on individual issues, rather than the package as a whole, is not conducive to reaching a complete agreement. We must point out again that we have received no comprehensive proposal from CTU since its original proposal dated January 15, 2019. In fact, we have received no written proposals from CTU since its very limited proposal on September 5.

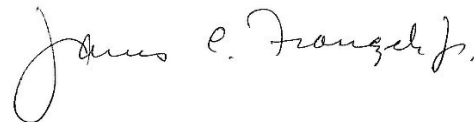
Your letter also states that the Union will only strike over non-mandatory subjects of bargaining. Your statement is belied by the scores of instances where you and other Union officials

have stated that class size, staffing and other non-mandatory subjects of bargaining are “strike” issues. Indeed, just yesterday you were quoted yet again in the Chicago Tribune that the Board was “. . . daring us [CTU] to strike over these issues [i.e. class size/staffing].” Your website and many other official Union communications have likewise made it clear that these issues are strike issues. Absent the Union withdrawing its proposals on class size, staffing and similar issues, we can only conclude based on the Union’s repeated statements publicly and at the bargaining table that any strike will be in furtherance of the Union’s proposals on those issues. If you are not going to strike over non-mandatory subjects of bargaining, then let’s identify, address and resolve the mandatory subjects of bargaining that you are prepared to strike over. As you know, any strike over non-mandatory issues would be illegal.

A strike or even the threat of a strike is devastating and destabilizing to the entire school community. We are encouraged by your statement that you desire to reach an agreement without a strike. But, if a strike is to be avoided, now is the time for the Union to give us a serious proposal. Give us a serious and comprehensive proposal this week and rest assured that we will meet day and night to bring these negotiations to a successful conclusion.

We share the same ultimate goal – to recognize the importance of the work of your members and to be fair and responsible to the students, parents and the taxpayers of Chicago.

Very truly yours,



James C. Franczek, Jr.

JCF:mp

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