



CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION

March 12, 2020

Jesse Sharkey
President

Stacy Davis Gates
Vice President

Christel Williams-Hayes
Recording Secretary

Maria T. Moreno
Financial Secretary

Affiliations
American Federation of
Teachers, Illinois Federation
of Teachers, American
Federation of Labor -
Congress of Industrial
Organizations, Illinois
Federation of Labor -
Congress of Industrial
Organizations, and Chicago
Federation of Labor,
Industrial Union Council

VIA Electronic Mail and Hand Delivery

The Honorable Lori Lightfoot
Mayor of Chicago
Chicago City Hall
121 North LaSalle Street, 4th floor
Chicago, IL 60602

Dr. Janice Jackson
Chief Executive Officer
Board of Education of the City of Chicago
42 West Madison Street
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Dear Mayor Lightfoot and Dr. Jackson:

We are writing to express extreme concern about plans for the continued safe operation of Chicago Public Schools in the midst of the COVID-19 health pandemic.

We have been in close communication with CPS officials about the district's response to the COVID-19 occurrence at Vaughn Occupational High School. We understand this is uncharted territory. This moment, however, demands **leadership and partnership** among those of us charged with maintaining the health and safety of students and educators, and we request ongoing meetings with each of you and relevant City health officers regarding care for our school communities.

Our foremost concerns are as follows:

- 1) The Illinois primary election is scheduled for Tuesday, March 17. We have received no direction from the City or CPS about the school district's plan to keep students and educators safe from the spread of COVID-19, nor have we received information on plans regarding the care of medically fragile individuals. We believe there are more than 540 separate polling locations in Chicago schools. Given the serious health risks this situation represents, **the Chicago Teachers Union hereby demands that schools be closed for students on March 17, and that CPS schedules overnight deep cleaning at each school that serves as a polling place starting on March 17.**

- 2) **In the increasingly likely event that CPS will need to close additional schools in response to the pandemic, the Union hereby demands that no educators, support staff, part-time workers (including parent workers) or other contract workers who serve our schools suffer any loss of pay or benefits.**
Workers should be able to stay home – including with affected children or dependents – without loss of job or income. We stand ready to meet with you to bargain specific contingency plans for CPS to meet state requirements for minimum annual instructional days, for the school district to meet its contractual obligations, for postponing or suspending state-required standardized tests, and to meet the needs of public health and safety.

- 3) The Union further demands that CPS and the City take all action within their authority to support fifteen days of paid sick leave for all CPS parents and Chicago residents, immediately suspend all evictions, urge IHSA to cancel sporting events, and join us in supporting the community demands listed here: <https://www.ctulocal1.org/posts/ctu-allies-lay-out-common-good-platform-to-protect-students-families-workers-as-coronavirus-threat-spreads/>.

- 4) Given the impact of the pandemic on attendance and the perverse incentives created by the School Quality Ratings Policy (SQRP), the Union demands that CPS suspends use of SQRP immediately.

We look forward to meeting with you as soon as possible.

Sincerely yours,



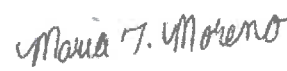
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Cc: All members of the Chicago Board of Education
J.B. Pritzker's Office

JS:yv