



CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION

Jesse Sharkey
President

Stacy Davis Gates
Vice President

Christel Williams-Hayes
Recording Secretary

Maria 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

March 29, 2021

VIA Electronic Mail

Dr. Janice Jackson
Chief Executive Officer
Chicago Public Schools
42 West Madison Street
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Re: Covid-19 Testing at CPS Charter Schools

Dear Dr. Jackson:

This letter concerns the Chicago Public Schools' refusal to provide Covid-19 testing to CPS charter school employees and students as they, like CPS district-run schools, resume in-person instruction during the Covid-19 pandemic. As you are aware, the CTU represents bargaining units of teachers and paraprofessional staff at several dozen CPS charter schools at 13 CPS charter school networks. During the course of negotiating agreements around the resumption of in-person learning with the operators of those schools, CTU has learned that CPS has refused the requests of charter schools to be part of CPS's Covid-19 testing program. Some charter schools have been able to secure tests on their own, with varying success, while others are forced to resume in-person learning without any satisfactory testing program because, without CPS's help, it is cost-prohibitive.

The provision of one of the most basic tools – Covid-19 surveillance testing – to keep our school communities safe should not be something where any schools operating under the authority of CPS are left to their own devices. Just as CPS district-run schools were not forced to come out of their local school budgets for Covid-19 testing, CPS charter schools should not either. This is particularly the case in view of the vastly expanded general availability of Covid-19 tests and the nearly \$2 billion CPS just received in federal relief funds under the American Rescue Plan Act. Though CPS can certainly now afford to extend Covid-19 surveillance testing to its affiliated charter schools, we are informed that some charter networks would agree to reimburse CPS for its added incremental expense to extend surveillance testing to their networks.

On behalf of the CTU and all CPS school communities, I respectfully request that CPS immediately provide Covid-19 testing to CPS charter school students and staff on the same terms as CPS is providing testing in district-run schools. Provision of this most basic Covid-19 safety step is in the best interest of all CPS school community stakeholders.

Sincerely yours,

Jesse Sharkey
President

cc: CPS Board Members
CPS Charter School Operators