

Jean-Claude Brizard
Chief Executive Officer

June 6, 2012

Dear CPS Parent:

You have probably heard a lot of rumors in recent days surrounding the Chicago Teachers Union’s (CTU) call for a strike authorization vote to begin today. I want to take this opportunity to explain why taking a strike vote at this premature point in the contract negotiation process is of concern, and how it will impact your children and the families we serve across the district.

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and CTU are in the middle of the contract negotiation process that was established in the recent Illinois Education Reform Legislation (SB7) and designed specifically to foster negotiation and avoid a strike. Today, we are in the early stages of a 75 day fact-finding process led by an independent fact finder whose role is to analyze CPS and CTU proposals before presenting a report on July 16 that can serve as a compromise contract for both parties. At the end of this process, teachers will have the opportunity to make an informed decision to either accept or reject the final proposal. That’s why teachers must be allowed to see the final independent compromise proposal before making the decision to authorize a strike.

CTU's actions to conduct a strike authorization vote before this process has concluded forces our teachers to make a decision without being informed of a final compromise proposal. A strike vote is not something to take lightly. This is an action that would impact every teacher, family and student in the district. Most importantly, a strike vote at this early time would be harmful to our children, and here is why:

- A strike vote causes disruption in our children's classrooms that are currently in session.
- Our children deserve this legal process to play out as intended by the Illinois Education Reform Law, which was agreed upon by the district and the Chicago Teachers Union. By not allowing this legal process to conclude, we send the wrong message to our children and disrupt student learning.
- An anticipated strike creates uncertainty throughout the district as to when classroom doors will open in the fall of 2012.

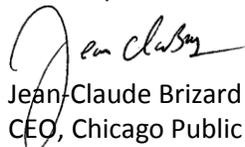
I was a teacher, my wife was a teacher, I was raised by teachers, and many of the members of my leadership team are former teachers. My respect for teachers runs deep and I have a genuine appreciation for the great work they do every day on behalf of our students. Our teachers deserve to be fairly compensated for their hard work, and that includes a raise, but our students do not deserve the ramifications of a strike vote, or a strike. We must wait for the release of the final compromise proposal by the independent fact finder so that we can achieve both goals.

For more information on the collective bargaining process please visit:

<http://www.cps.edu/Pages/collectivebargaininginformation.aspx>

Thank you for all you do to support your children and the district.

Sincerely,



Jean-Claude Brizard
CEO, Chicago Public Schools