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by electronic and U.S. mail  
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August 6, 2015

Mr. James C. Franczek  
Franczek Radelet P.C.  
300 South Wacker Drive  
Suite 3400  
Chicago, IL 60606-6785

Dear Mr. Franczek:

The Chicago Teachers Union has directed that I promptly respond to the maliciously false letter you issued today purporting to justify the decision by Chicago Public Schools to precipitously withdraw from its proposed one-year contract extension.

The misstatements in your letter are profound and disturbing. As you know, our last meeting on July 30 ended on the verge of an agreement pending resolution of two issues. President Lewis then met with the Mayor on August 2 to hear the Mayor's concerns. As we entered the room to resume negotiations today, CPS immediately withdrew the entire extension proposal without bothering to hear the Union's response, and now falsely suggests that we were at impasse.

How far were we apart? The Union had proposed that for one year a small subgroup of tenured teachers be added to the much larger group who, in the event of economic layoffs unrelated to pedagogy, would be laid off in order of seniority. Already, CPS currently provides over 80% of tenured teachers such protections. To contend that this small addition for a single year would "irreparably undermine the effectiveness of our evaluation system" is flatly untrue – though we had not in any event concluded our negotiations on this subject.

And the remaining issue? The Union's proposal that CPS commit \$10 million to a community-based anti-violence initiative at 20 local schools – a proposal your team heartily endorsed from the moment it was raised, and required only agreement on where to secure the funding. You now call it "an issue that divides us," but you know better.

Your misstatements continue with the false claim that we disagreed over matters about which total agreement was already achieved. Most particularly, you claim we “have disagreement” over pension pick-up, when you know that CPS had proposed, and the Union had agreed, that CPS would maintain the pension pickup for another year. How can you claim this issue divides us when the CPS itself proposed to maintain it?

CPS’s tragic shortcoming over the years has been its penchant for distortion and deception, and its well-earned lack of credibility in all corners of this State. Regrettably, once again CPS proves true to form in making more specious claims to support its perceived short term interests.

Sadly, CPS walks away from agreements that the Union was prepared to accept and submit to membership ratification, including *no increase to base salaries*, a commitment to achieve significant healthcare cost savings, mutually agreed reforms to evaluation practices, grading practices and student testing, plus CPS’s promises not to unilaterally open new charter schools, not to close more neighborhood schools or to impose disruptive school turnarounds – agreements CPS now throws out the window.

After four months of bargaining over an extension agreement that *CPS requested* and proposed to the Union, it has evidently decided to seek confrontation rather than compromise, setting us directly onto a collision course. We have no doubt that CPS will now seek to impose a 7% educator pay cut, destroy more neighborhood schools, and continue its ranking and sorting of teachers and children by unproven educational methods – all at the expense of CPS students and the dedicated professionals who educate them.

Sincerely,



Robert E. Bloch  
CTU General Counsel

REB/ms

cc: Karen Lewis  
Joe Moriarty

