

CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION PREPARING TO STRIKE TO PRESS FOR DEMANDS



The Chicago Teachers Union conducted a poll amongst its 25,000 members Thursday regarding unsolved problems and unanswered questions regarding the school board. One official called it a “dry run” for a potential strike vote, if the current situation remained unattended. Union officials said they conducted the poll to see what percentage of the workers, under it, were conducive to the idea of going on strike. Under a state education reform passed in 2011, it was mandatory of the union, to get consent to strike, from at least 75 percent of its members. The poll would also help them gauge the mood of the workers, in case the negotiations with the district ended in a stalemate. CTU President Karen Lewis, speaking to the Tribune editorial board on Thursday, said the union is just trying to be prepared, "We need to know right now how this is going to work. We want a 100 percent participation. You don't get that waiting around." Contract negotiations between the Chicago Public Schools and the teachers union are underway. Both sides have agreed to the appointment of a fact-finding panel that within 75 days, must issue a report, recommending solutions and terms for settlement of the labor contract. Their report is expected sometime in mid-July. Both the parties will have 15 days to study the report and to accept or reject it. However, setting up a fact-finding panel, is the first requisite, before teachers can go on strike. The poll asked its members if they believed that the district's contract proposal should be accepted or rejected and whether Chicago Public Schools Chief Jean-Claude Brizard should resign. A district spokeswoman said that the poll was avoidable and would only serve to further rouse passions. It was also not judicious on part of the unions, to part with confidential information that the union was giving to its members. CPS spokeswoman Becky Carroll said, "It's a push poll ... with questions written in a certain way to get a desired result. The union leadership is distributing falsely inaccurate and grossly misleading information to its members about contract proposals that are clearly designed to create fear." [Click here](#) to find out which Teacher jobs are available in Chicago.

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