



March 17, 2022

Dr. James J. Henderson
Proviso Township High School District 209
8601 Roosevelt Road
Forest Park, Illinois 60130

Dear Superintendent Henderson,

We are disappointed that a resolution has not been reached with the Proviso Teachers Union Local 571.

Today marks the 9th day of a strike that could have been avoided. Proviso Township High School District 209 received \$94 million in revenue this year, in addition to last year's budget surplus of \$14 million. The district is on track to bank nearly \$12 million this year. District 209 can clearly afford the educators' proposal and stay under budget, so we are appalled that a school system with the resources you have is not willing to end this strike.

PTU Local 571 educators and staff have been bargaining in good faith for nearly a year. Each bargaining session, they brought several viable proposals to the table to end the strike and return students to classrooms. Your refusal and apparent unwillingness to seriously bargain a settlement in good faith with the Union only our students who need a well-resourced and supportive learning environment, reduced class sizes, and the stability that comes from a consistent workforce.

We are concerned that Proviso has the lowest teacher retention rate (82 percent), lowest starting pay and lowest average salary in the area. There are also numerous teacher vacancies in math, English, science, social sciences, health and the arts.

Our students and parents deserve the same resources and learning environment as the students and parents in wealthier – and whiter – neighboring Cook County suburbs.

We urge you and the Board to prioritize our students' education and bring this strike to an end by finally starting to negotiate in good faith to reach a compromise with PTU Local 571.

Sincerely,

Signed

City officials in formation: Mayor Katrina Thompson (Broadview) Mayor Andre Harvey (Bellwood) Mayor Rory Hoskins (Forest Park) Mayor Nick Steker (Westchester) Clerk Jennifer Hall (Westchester) Trustee Andrea Senior (Broadview) Trustee Patricia Choa-Malave (Broadview) Trustee Jarry Shelby (Broadview) Trustee Judy Miller (Broadview) Michael J. Ciavattone (Bellwood) Annie Delgado (Bellwood) Gloria Holman (Bellwood) Ronald Nightengale (Bellwood) Jophelia Boston (Bellwood)

M.C. Robinson (Bellwood) Trustee Maria Maxham (Forest Park) Trustee Robert Morales (Westchester)
Trustee Tracy Markey (Westchester) Trustee Cathy Kuratko (Westchester) Trustee Tracy Jennings
(Westchester) Trustee Evelyn Slavic (Westchester)

County officials in formation: Clerk Karen Yarbrough (Cook County) Commissioner Brandon Johnson
(1st District Cook County) Commissioner Frank Aguilar (16th District Cook County)