

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 15, 2018

CTU, legal advocates, special ed parents will respond to ISBE decision Wednesday on outside monitor for CPS

State board ruling could impose record oversight, penalties on district for denying services to students in violation of federal law

CHICAGO--Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) Vice President Jesse Sharkey will join legal advocates, and parents on Wednesday to respond to an historic Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) ruling on whether Chicago Public Schools (CPS) special education program should be overseen by an independent monitor for the next three years to fix problems identified during a five-month state probe.

ISBE is expected to rule on the investigation at its Wednesday morning board meeting in Springfield. The groups who brought the complaint, including the CTU, will respond to the state board's decision later that afternoon and call on CPS to own up to the problems it created and work with parents and teachers to solve them.

WHAT: CTU, special ed parents and legal advocate press conference to respond to ISBE decision on CPS Special Ed investigation.

WHEN: Wednesday, May 16, 1:30 p.m.

WHERE: State of Illinois Building, Thompson Center Lobby, 100 W. Randolph

WHY: ISBE will rule on the findings and proposed remedies from a five-month probe into CPS's special ed program.

ISBE launched the probe in response to a written request from a coalition of special education advocates, parent groups, teachers, administrators, and the CTU, who documented how CPS has been routinely denying and delaying special ed services to students, in violation of federal law. The groups asked ISBE to impose an outside monitor for at least five years, to order compensation to students who lost services, and to insure that any future special ed overhauls be done in consultation with teachers and parents.

While ISBE is not expected to approve all the remedies sought by the advocate team, approval of its staff recommendations will be a major step toward protecting the most vulnerable students in CPS and the teachers and administrators who serve them.

The special education advocates' coalition includes: Access Living; Chicago Principals and Administrators Association; the Chicago Teachers Union; Equip For Equality; Legal Assistance Foundation; Legal Council for Health Justice; Matt Cohen and Associates; Ounce of Prevention Fund; Parents 4 Teachers; Potter and Bolanos, LLC; Raise Your Hand for Illinois Public Education; Shriver National Center on Poverty Law; 19th Ward Parents for Special Education, and Sharon Weitzman Soltman.

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