

RESOLUTION
By Wonsley Worlobah

Expressing support for Minneapolis educators, and strongly urging the Minneapolis School Board and the Minneapolis Federation of Teachers Local 59 to continue bargaining in good faith and reach a fair contract agreement to end the strike.

Whereas, the Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) district has an enrolled student population of 31,598 for the 2021-2022 school year; and

Whereas, the COVID-19 pandemic has seriously impacted the health and wellbeing of students, teachers, and the financial resiliency of governmental institutions; and

Whereas, schools that are fully staffed with quality educators best serve students, creating stable communities and the bedrock of a successful next generation of Minneapolis residents; and

Whereas, MPS employs 3,266 teachers and 1,223 Education Support Professionals (ESPs) who are at the core of educating students; and

Whereas, employee salaries and benefits represent at least \$482 million of the more than \$655 million MPS annual budget; and

Whereas, teachers and ESPs have been working without an active contract since July 1, 2021, as they work through the Minneapolis Federation of Teachers and Educational Support Professionals, Local 59 (MFT), to reach a collective bargaining agreement with MPS; and

Whereas, MPS and MFT both share the priority of higher wages for ESPs, more mental health supports for students, a teaching staff that better reflects the diversity of our students, and, competitive wages for teachers; and

Whereas, having not yet reached agreement after ongoing negotiations, members of MFT voted on February 17, 2022, to authorize a strike, and MFT filed intent to strike on February 23, 2022; and

Whereas, union representation has historically secured important benefits for workers, particularly for workers of color, including better pay, benefits, working conditions, and job security; and

Whereas, public workers organizing together have been at the forefront of peoples' struggles for racial, gender, and economic justice throughout our history; and

Whereas, a report released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics on January 22, 2021, found that in 2020 non-union workers had median weekly earnings that were 84 percent of earnings for workers who were union members; and

Whereas, on July 20, 2022, the City of Minneapolis declared racism as a public health emergency; and

Whereas, the working people who make our city run deserve to have good jobs that can support families; and

Whereas, Minneapolis has some of the starkest racial inequities in the country ranking as one of the worst regions for racial inequities in home ownership, poverty, median income, and obtaining a high school diploma; and

Whereas, 40% of the City of Minneapolis is comprised of BIPOC community members; and 63% of MPS students identify as black, indigenous, Latino, or students of color; and

Whereas, 75% of the members of the Minneapolis Federation of Teachers (MFT) Educational Support Professionals (ESP) make under \$29,000 a year; and

Whereas, fairly compensated ESPs are best able to support students, and fair compensation helps attract and retain quality employees to ensure a fully staffed school system; and

Whereas, under current wages, three quarters of ESPs reported working two or more jobs just to get by; and

Whereas, the social and emotional effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have hit students particularly hard; teachers and ESPs are uniquely able to provide the supplementary academic and social-emotional supports crucial to meeting the needs of students; and

Whereas, the City of Minneapolis, as an employer, recognizes the rights of workers to organize collectively for fair wages, safe working conditions, dignity at work and a voice on the job;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved by The City Council of The City of Minneapolis:

That the Minneapolis City Council strongly urges the Minneapolis School Board and the Minneapolis Federation of Teachers Local 59 to continue bargaining in good faith and reach a fair contract agreement to end the strike.