**Why Should ChiACTS Unify with CTU?**

**Context**

Next year all ten Chicago ACTS contracts will expire. The union did this purposefully to maximize the strength of all union charter school educators. This is an opportunity for us to significantly increase our voice. This is an opportunity to better serve our students while improving our standard of living.

ChiACTS has been talking about merging with CTU since its founding in 2009. Since Karen Lewis and the current leaders of CTU took office they have put large amounts CTU membership dues money into organizing charter school educators into ChiACTS. In July, ChiACTS signed a serving agreement with CTU which allowed CTU attorneys, Field Representatives, and Organizers to help us negotiate and enforce our contracts.

**Why Unify Now?**

While the early results of the ChiACTS servicing agreement with CTU have been spectacular, expenses are approximately ten times higher than revenues, as we seek to catch up our contracts with the CTU contract, in terms of compensation. The extra costs (around $750,000 this year) have been picked up by the CTU, but this is no longer sustainable. ChiACTS leaders want to put more, not less, resources into negotiations next year, negotiations that will determine how our jobs and schools improve, or don’t.

**What about Dues?**

Unless we accept weaker contracts and much less staff assistance, our union dues will need to go up, no matter whether we unify or not. However, unification with CTU will keep our dues at the lowest rate without a loss in service. If we unify, there would be no increase in dues until the CTU also agrees to unify, probably in the late Fall. Until then CTU would continue to subsidize ChiACTS. The increase would be phased in over three years and based on what your wages are. For most members, it would mean an increase of $6.94 per dues deduction in the first and second year after CTU votes, and no more, possibly less in the third year. Any ChiACTS member earning less than the lowest paid CTU teacher (currently $54,199 including pension pick up) will pay less than full dues.

If ChiACTS pays for its current services without unification, it would mean a tripling of union dues effective this Spring. If we cut our services in half, it would mean a doubling of union dues.

**Would we have to strike if CTU went on strike?**

No. We would continue to have our own contracts, negotiated and ratified by us.

**Wouldn’t we just be swallowed up by the CTU and lose our voice?**

Current ChiACTS Councils with each employer will be maintained and operate consistently with current practices. These councils through building representatives and officers will continue to be the primary way the union interacts with your employer. The elected leaders of ChiACTS will for the Executive Board of the ChiACTS Division, which will function largely the same as ChiACTS Local 4343 functions now, looking out for the interests of unionized charter school educators in Chicago.

Further, an agreement which you and all ChiACTS educators will vote on was worked out between educators from CTU and ChiACTS. It guarantees strong representation of ChiACTS teachers at every level of the unified organization.