



Contact: Jared Labell (773) 766-4947
(312) 427-0087
info@taxpayereducation.org

April Fools Take to the Streets of Chicago

CHICAGO – Last Friday, April 1, the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) orchestrated a mass, one-day pseudo-strike in conjunction with other likeminded activists and unions. Together, they aired a litany of grievances during what they called “Day of Action” demonstrations, but their collective temper tantrum trampled all over their message and further revealed the intellectual bankruptcy of those who worship at the altar of omnipotent government.

Witnessing the masses of CTU rank-and-file don Soviet Red union shirts would be humorous if Chicago’s financial reality weren’t so miserable. The self-assured chants and signs displayed by the protestors lack a certain level of awareness, mainly that [middle-class teachers playing faux revolutionaries](#) in the streets is not on par with other great struggles for rights or for freedom in our recent past. That point is only underscored by the fact that these are government employees fighting with government bureaucrats over how many of your property tax dollars will be [confiscated](#) by the government and how they are to be divvied up among the [plunderers](#). This is not “for the children,” nor does it bode well for Chicago.

This spat is not about more choices in learning and alternatives to government schooling, nor is it about funding exceptional education or the advancement of students, which is unfortunate for those nearly four-hundred thousand children currently caged in compulsory government daycare, err, [Chicago Public Schools \(CPS\)](#). In fact, the “Day of Action” events became an [unwieldy list](#) of tangentially related left-leaning causes and teach-ins across Chicago, some marginally more laudatory than others, but undertaken in an attempt to appeal to a broader constituency that lives and works outside of the CTU echo chamber. Again, this is not for the children.

CTU’s unfocused reasons for instigating the protests, always draped in rhetoric proclaiming the best intentions for the working-class, weren’t made any better by burdening parents and students with greater uncertainty and school closings, or by harassing taxpayers who are extorted to pay their already ridiculously generous salaries and [lavish pensions](#).

The vast majority of the educators, government union members, and activists agitating for school reform are looking for government to solve problems with more government solutions. Rather than liberating teachers, students, and taxpayers from the bureaucratic grip strangling us all, they call for tax hikes. Considering the pitiful [return on investment](#) for taxpayers, CPS’ decades-long [credit ratings plunge](#), Cook County’s [population decline](#), and CPS’ [unsustainable](#) combination of lucrative salaries, benefits, and pensions – handing more tax dollars over to the government is ill-advised, to say the least. Taxpayers’ costs for education – salaries, benefits, pensions, and



TEF COMMENT



Volume 22, Issue 2

April 6, 2016

operating expenses – cannot continue as currently structured. Students are not benefiting from a system that is this [politicized](#) and improperly managed, even for a government institution. And the cost to society can be measured by the substandard performance of students, the financial burden placed on the taxpayers of Chicago, and the loss of future opportunities for every day that passes without reform.

In the end, it was helpful for CTU to engage in a “Day of Action” on April Fools’ Day. Although their laughable demands were no joke, one can’t fault them for choosing that date, after all, truth in advertising is important. Their demonstrations assisted, albeit clumsily, in crystalizing the message from angry taxpayers and distraught parents to the union and school district: systemic reforms are necessary. The current system is insolvent. Go ahead and strike next month, CTU, and be prepared to lose everything.

Taxpayer Education Foundation

205 W. Randolph St. • Suite 1305 • Chicago, IL 60606

Phone: (312) 427-0087 • Fax: (312) 427-5139 • Email: info@taxpayereducation.org