

**For Immediate Release**

June 20, 2011

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## Superintendent's Statement on the Retirement of PFT President John Tarka

PITTSBURGH, June 22, 2011— Superintendent Linda S. Lane released the following statement upon the announcement of the retirement of Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers (PFT) President John Tarka.

“John Tarka has been an invaluable partner in our efforts to achieve our collective goal of *Excellence for All*. John has been an extraordinary leader in the education reform movement both here in Pittsburgh and across the country. Our success to date on the implementation of our plan to ensure that we have a great teacher in every classroom every day would not have been possible without John's leadership and determination. Further, our most recent collective bargaining with the PFT resulted in a landmark labor agreement that will enable us to begin the implementation of our reform agenda. Pittsburgh Public Schools will greatly miss John's passion and commitment to improving the lives of our students.”

Continued Lane, “At the same time, we know that our work continues, with many of our most difficult challenges still yet to come. I congratulate Nina Esposito-Visgitis on her selection as the next President of the PFT. I have enormous respect and admiration for Nina's contributions to the success of our ongoing partnership with the PFT. She has big shoes to fill, but I know she is up to the task.”

The Pittsburgh Public Schools and the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers crafted the *Empowering Effective Teachers in the Pittsburgh Public Schools Plan* to support and empower effective teaching. This work has been funded in part by a \$40 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, local foundation funding and a \$37.5 million federal School Improvement Grant.

At the heart of the Empowering Effective Teachers in the Pittsburgh Public Schools Plan is a bold vision to empower teachers as effective leaders to do whatever it takes to foster a culture of striving, resilience and college-readiness, so that more than 80 percent of all students will be Promise-Ready and complete a college degree or workforce certification.

To learn more visit [www.pps.k12.pa.us/eet](http://www.pps.k12.pa.us/eet).

To obtain a copy of the PFT's press release, please visit their website at [www.pft400.org](http://www.pft400.org).

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