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**For Immediate Release**

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## **District Proposes Adjustments to Educational Delivery Model to Address Budget Shortfall While Maintaining Focus on Student Achievement**

PITTSBURGH, October 20, 2011 - At a time when the District is making progress academically – announcing last month it had made AYP twice in three years – it must find a way to accelerate this progress with fewer resources. Changes to the District’s Educational Delivery Model, the third strategy of the District Realignment Plan, was the topic of a Board Workshop held this evening.

The District Realignment Plan is part of its work to build a sustainable school system in the City of Pittsburgh. To date, Superintendent Linda S. Lane has announced a plan for school closures and feeder pattern changes, two strategies of the Plan to address under-enrolled classrooms. By adjusting its Educational Delivery Model the District can gain efficiencies through course reductions, class size adjustments, and staff reductions in a way that continues academic progress while addressing the District’s fiscal challenges. Faced with a projected \$100 million deficit by 2015, the proposed 2012 budget relies on the implementation of all three strategies in order to decrease the District’s funding gap by a projected \$38.2 million. The District expects to release its preliminary budget for 2012 by November 16, 2011.

“This year we have reduced expenses by approximately \$23 million, and held the line on spending, all while improving educational outcomes, yet we haven’t done enough to align spending with our declining student enrollment. We must improve the financial health of the District in a way that continues our work of increasing the academic performance of all students. We are at a point where we can no longer ignore our underutilized classrooms, or an infrastructure that far exceeds what our current enrollment would justify,” said Superintendent Lane.

“In doing our planning to reduce costs and build a sustainable district, we started as far away from the classroom as we could. Reductions in Central Office and debt service made earlier this year were only the beginning, but not enough to close a budget gap that is expected to increase dramatically. Tonight we are proposing changes to our Educational Delivery Model that addresses our fiscal challenges while increasing both equity across schools and access to highly effective programs and schools. While this proposal is far reaching, we still have work ahead of us in order to reach the minimum Fund Balance required by 2013,” added Lane.

With the goal of ‘Promise-Readiness’ for all students at the forefront, proposed adjustments to the District’s Educational Delivery Model were made through a lens of increased equity and achievement. The District is committed to providing every student rigorous academic classes, arts and music education, school library services, certified student services staff, and family and community engagement opportunities.

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For example, currently not all students in the District's K-5, K-8 and 6-8 schools receive art and music weekly. The District has adjusted its Educational Delivery Model so that all students in these schools will receive at least one day a week, Art, Music and Physical Education, in every grade K-8. Additionally to ensure equity across schools, all K-5, K-8 and 6-8 schools will have a librarian on site one full day a week.

Also, not all of the District's secondary schools (6-12 and high school) currently offer more than one world language, AP or IB classes, and both music and art. In this proposed plan, all secondary schools would have at least two world language offerings, advanced placement offerings, art and music. All secondary schools will be assigned one full time librarian.

### ***Increasing Operating Efficiencies At All Levels***

In order to address under-enrolled classes the District is recommending a moderate increase in the average class size in grades K-5 from 22 to 25, in grades 6-8 from 22 to 28. Additionally, at the high school level where inefficiencies are the greatest, the District is proposing increasing class sizes from 21 to 30.

The District is also proposing standards for allocation of staff, discretionary dollars, and special programs to schools. Teacher positions for all necessary certifications (Core Content, Related Arts, and Special Education) will also be allocated to schools under the new plan.

“What we do know is that student achievement is not tied to school size, class size, building condition or the range of course offerings. We have seen higher achievement in our K-5, K-8, and middle schools where we are running more efficiently, than in our high schools where growth in achievement has been slower to improve. It is time we address the looming inefficiencies at the high school level, and focus on providing all students what they need to be Promise- Ready,” said Lane.

The District is also recommending a focus on providing high school course offerings that prepare students best for college and workforce certification such as, Advance Algebra or Probability and Statistics, versus test-prep courses, such as SAT Online and standards-based math. The Model recommends offering semester-long electives based on student interest in a course, as well as the consolidation of various levels of similar class electives. District electives will be available to schools based on significant course requests from students.

The Model proposes increased opportunities for teacher leadership, as well as adjustments to other programs.

### ***Community Input Process***

The earliest the Board could vote on the proposed school closures related to the District Realignment Plan is at its November 22, Legislative Meeting. The community may continue to provide feedback on the plan via email [citieschoolsfiscalchallenges@pghboe.net](mailto:citieschoolsfiscalchallenges@pghboe.net) or by attending one of the Board's regularly scheduled public hearings on October 24 and November 21, 2011.

The following is the process timeline for budget review, budget hearings and budget adoption.

### **Pittsburgh Public School Budget Timeline**

- 11/16/11 Release of Preliminary 2012 Budget
- 11/29/11 Special Budget Public Hearing - Administration Building, Conference Room A
- 12/7/11 Special Legislative Meeting – 2012 Budget Vote

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