



Pittsburgh
Public Schools



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For Immediate Release

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Workforce Reduction Results in Fewer than Expected Furloughs

Superintendent Remains Committed to Developing Future Furlough Process That Puts Kids First

PITTSBURGH July 25, 2012 – Like school districts across the country and Commonwealth, Pittsburgh Public Schools continues to reshape the way it delivers education. In October 2011, the District released a plan that amends its Educational Delivery Model by gaining efficiencies from course reductions, class size adjustments, and staff reductions in a way that continues academic progress while addressing the District’s fiscal challenges. At this evening’s Legislative Meeting the Board took final action on this plan resulting in the furlough of 280 employees. Among those furloughed tonight were 190 teachers and other professionals represented by the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers (PFT). While the total number of position reductions for the 2012-13 school year is approximately 500, tonight’s furloughs were minimized through attrition.

“While any furloughs are regrettable, they are necessary if the District is to remain committed to our mission of preparing all children to achieve academic excellence and *Promise-Readiness* with far fewer resources,” said Superintendent Linda Lane. “We know in order to reach this goal we must continue our work to ensure an effective teacher is in every classroom, everyday. It is unfortunate that at this time we are obligated by our agreement with the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers to manage our furloughs based on seniority and not performance. We are disappointed that the PFT was unwilling to improve this process at this time. While we know a number of our most senior teachers are truly some of our most effective, we will mourn the loss of any effective teachers. Tonight’s vote does not signal an end to my commitment to find a future solution that put kids first.”

The District has taken several steps to minimize the number of teacher furloughs. In December 2011, the District introduced a new 2011-12 Voluntary Employee Severance Plan. To date, 24 teachers have taken advantage of the strategic buyout plan available to all full time teachers, earning a minimum base salary of \$80,000 and **not** eligible for full or reduced retirement benefits under the Pennsylvania Public Employees’ Retirement System. The District also offered a \$500 stipend to eligible retirees who provided early notice of their retirement. Thirty-one teachers made their plans known early for a total 113 retirements. Additionally, the District has worked more intensively with school leadership to identify and support teachers who need improvement.

As a result of the significant unplanned loss of revenue from the State, the Superintendent and Board took immediate action in June 2011 to reduce operating expenditures by \$11.94 million by year end 2011. These savings were primarily reached through Phase 1 reductions of 217 Central Office and Operational Support staff.

On December 7, 2011, the Board adopted the 2012 Budget of \$529.8 million that marks the eleventh straight year of no tax increases for City residents. Phase 2 changes to the District Educational Delivery Model and Phase 3 reductions decreased the 2012 projected deficit of \$38.2 million to \$14.6 million, adhering to the Board’s minimum five percent Fund Balance policy through 2013.

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For information regarding accommodations, civil rights or grievance procedures, contact the Office of Employee Relations, Pittsburgh Public Schools, 341 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3516; Phone (412) 622-3691 (Voice/TTY/TDD); Fax (412) 622-7968.