

Dear Employees:

These are trying times. Uncertainty seems to be the only certainty there is. The following is offered to keep you apprised of the District's status regarding the budget cuts imposed by the state. At this point, we have already cut approximately \$133 million from our budget. While we are hopeful that no additional reductions will be requested for the current school year, we cannot be certain of that if state revenues continue to fall short of projections.

The coming biennium is shaping up to be even more bad news. Each legislative session, legislators must approve a budget for the subsequent two years – the biennium. When the Nevada Legislature convenes in 2009, from February through May, they will be establishing the budget for the two fiscal years: July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2010, and July 1, 2010, through June 30, 2011. While that may sound like the distant future, the state's budget planning cycle requires that we begin preparing our budget now for the next biennium. And while we will not know the outcome of legislative funding until next June, we will not give up the fight for the Legislature to protect public education.

This state timeline means the District must plan its budget for 2009-2010 under unknown conditions. On the basis of economic projections for the next several years, the District has been asked to cut another \$120 million from our budget for each of our next two school years, 2009-2010 and 2010-2011. As schools and departments struggle with this mandate, it is apparent that all the "easy" cuts have already been made and that further budget reductions are going to impact CCSD's workforce in the next biennium.

In anticipation of these future cuts and in order to avoid layoffs to the greatest extent possible, many departments and schools are not filling vacancies that currently exist and may leave positions unfilled if vacancies occur during the present school year (this is one of the measures I have taken in my office). This helps prevent the unfortunate circumstance of bringing new employees into the District only to dismiss them within a year.

Some job categories may also be completely eliminated. Employees in these positions would be eligible to fill other vacancies in the District, according to the process prescribed in the negotiated agreements. For purposes of example only, if the decision were made to reduce the number of non-classroom licensed positions, those employees would have the opportunity to return to classroom teaching positions. Fewer teachers would be hired next year, and these employees would be absorbed in other roles, thus reducing the necessity or extent of employee layoffs.

Please know that at this point, no decisions have been made about which job categories may be eliminated; when/if that becomes necessary, staff will be advised as soon as a decision is made in order to allow maximum time for employees to consider other internal vacancies. As you are perhaps aware, a great deal of school and public input is being solicited on this matter.

Following is the sequence of cuts to reach the \$120 million:

The first cuts are in administrative budgets, 12 percent – \$32 million.

The Board is being asked to use one-half of the District's fund balance – \$22 million.

Districtwide cuts are next – \$9 million.

Ultimately, I regret that schools and departments must also be asked to reduce their budgets. Each school is providing input on how to deal with a 3.5 percent cut that will total \$57 million.

It is my intent, and the Board's, to preserve to the greatest extent possible the classroom function and services that directly impact students. All of the District's support services are important and necessary, but schools and classrooms remain at the heart of our mission.

Rest assured that even as we are required to go through this difficult process of identifying cuts, we are also intent on promoting public education and Nevada students as the highest priority for state funding. I will keep you apprised of any news in this matter.

Thank you.

Walt Rulfes  
Superintendent