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News Release

From Seattle Public Schools

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Seattle Public Schools Announces Reductions in Force Due to Funding Shortfalls

Seattle Public Schools Superintendent Maria L. Goodloe-Johnson, Ph.D. today confirmed that the School District is implementing a Reduction in Force (RIF) in response to an estimated \$34 million budget shortfall for 2009-10. The certificated RIF will affect approximately 172 teachers and other certificated staff (approximately 5% of the total certificated workforce), although Dr. Goodloe-Johnson said she was optimistic that retirements and resignations would allow the District to recall a number of the individuals who are being laid off.

“Closing a \$34 million budget gap requires a combination of strategies,” said Dr. Goodloe-Johnson. She noted that the District has already implemented a number of budget-cutting strategies, including a reduction in central office staff, hiring freezes, increased efficiencies in operations such as transportation and nutrition services, closing schools, a responsible use of reserves, and freezing Cost-of-Living-Adjustments.

“This is a very painful decision to have to make,” Dr. Goodloe-Johnson said, “We worked for many months to keep budget cuts away from the classroom. It is extremely difficult to lay off teachers and school-based staff, people who make a difference in students’ lives every day.”

Goodloe-Johnson stressed that District leaders acknowledge the dedicated work of teachers and other school staff, whose efforts are crucial to support every student's success.

The certificated RIF is implemented based on seniority within teaching or job category based on contractual agreements with the Seattle Education Association. Staff members subject to a RIF have been informed directly. Seattle Public Schools plans a series of counseling and resource supports for staff who receive layoff notices.

“We deeply regret that we must implement a Reduction in Force,” said Dr. Goodloe-Johnson said. “My staff and I have worked hard to keep cuts as far away from the classroom as possible, and we will continue to develop strategies to support our students, classrooms and schools.”

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