



NEWS from

Detroit Public Schools

Office of Public Relations

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STATEMENT FROM DETROIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS EMERGENCY FINANCIAL MANAGER ROBERT C. BOBB REGARDING PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP SELECTION PROCESS

As the Emergency Financial under the Local Government Fiscal Responsibility Act, I have assumed control over the fiscal matters of the School District and accepted my responsibility to make all fiscal decisions for the School District. In addition, I have determined that the performance of my functions under the Act required that I make appropriate elections to exercise a series of authorities available to me under the Act.

Specifically, I am authorized to negotiate, renegotiate, approve, and enter into contracts on behalf of the school district; consolidate divisions or transfer functions from one division to another within the school district and appoint, supervise, and remove, heads of divisions of the school district; create new positions or approve or disapprove the creation of new positions or the filling of vacancies; and reduce expenditures in the budget of the School District.

Having elected to exercise these authorities under the Act, I have initiated reorganization and restructuring effort designed to eliminate accumulated and operating deficits, operate the School District within the resources available according to enrollment projections, and restore the School District's fiscal soundness. In addition, I have given special attention those critical prerequisites to continued and increased funding and revenues for the School District; they include but are not limited to student enrollment, academic performance of our students, AYP status of our schools, and increased fiscal responsibilities at the individual school level.

School Leadership

Our goal is to create centers of excellence at every school, in every neighborhood across the city, where teaching and learning takes place at the highest levels and where parents choose to send their children. As a result, it is critical to determine who our school leaders will be and who we will place in front of our children moving forward. Completing this process and making it public on May 15 is in advance of the timetable used in previous years for our schools.

With that, I am announcing that there will be new leadership at nearly one in four Detroit Public Schools when school opens this fall. I am announcing today new assignments for 37 of the district's principals and the nonrenewal of contracts of 33 others and 11 retirements. Forty Detroit Public Schools will be restructured, and earlier this week we announced a total of 29 DPS schools to be either closing or relocating.

In some cases, one year contracts will be awarded and in other cases contracts will be awarded for two years. 54 principals will be offered one-year contracts, and 108 will be offered two year contracts. In some schools, more time is needed for a turnaround. Each will have an Individualized Performance Plan, and professional development will be significantly strengthened for all staff in the school.

Restructuring

Of the new leadership positions, 19 of our 42 high schools will open this fall with new principals. 22 of the high schools will be restructured. Two middle schools, and 14 elementary schools will be restructured. As we restructure our schools, we will look at all of the options available to us under the law to achieve dramatically different achievement outcomes for our children. We will consider turning over our schools to private management companies. We will consider converting our schools to DPS charter schools. And we will consider replacing the staff at our schools in order to achieve different performance results.

National Search for Executive Recruitment

I am also announcing that a national search firm will work with the district to conduct a national leadership search for the principalship positions at 10 schools. Six of those searches will be for our high schools, one for a middle school, and three for elementary schools. These schools include: Cooley High School, Denby High School, Durfee Elementary School, Earhart Middle School, Emerson Elementary School, Finney High School, Kettering High School, McKinney Day Treatment Center, Mumford High School, and Turning Point Academy. It is important to note that those principals that have been non-renewed are eligible for consideration of these key vacancies.

In all cases with our principals, we will ensure that they have the maximum amount of support and authority to perform their duties. We also believe that it is imperative that these principals, as our key school leaders, be given the authority to determine the individuals who will serve in their buildings, and the authority and accountability over all facets of the schools operation, including buildings and grounds, as well as safety and security.

Tools to Drive Performance

Additionally, I am announcing several new initiatives that will be essential in instituting a culture of accountability across the Detroit Public Schools and that will be important tools to drive performance and reduce costs at the school house level:

--We will remake the Principal and Assistant Principal Academies. I have directed Dr. Byrd-Bennett to conduct a complete redesign of our professional development academies. This redesign will launch our professional development systems into the 21st century and ensure that we are placing the best leaders in our schools to educate our children. This will allow us to implement professional development programs directly impacting the classroom that make the best use of financial resources as well as human resources as we move forward with this reorganization. It is highly important that we build and invest in a system for leadership succession.

--Using one of the nation's leading education research and consulting firms, MPR Associates, Inc., who manages the rigorous and comprehensive quantitative data collection and analysis process for the Broad Prize we will create student achievement reports for all DPS schools based on students' performance on state tests, peer comparisons, achievement gaps, graduation rates, Advanced Placement exams, SAT and ACT test scores, Adequate Yearly Progress and demographics. As we utilize this tool, we will be able to make informed decisions about our reorganization efforts moving forward.

--Finally, we will be implementing the new DPS-Stat system that will be used as a tool to drive data-driven decision making. Through the "stat" process an executive panel will collect a key set of performance indicators that represent the results that the public expects DPS achieve. These performance indicators will then be used to hold managers accountable for performance. In full transparency, regularly scheduled stat sessions will be open to the public so that parents and citizens can see how we are conducting business in the Detroit Public Schools. These sessions will also be televised.

We will also be completing the Order regarding the language in the new principals contract, working with a focus group of current DPS principals and assistant principals. And, we are currently conducting a national salary survey that will be completed by June 7th so that we can put in place a competitive salary and benefits package when compared to other urban jurisdictions around the country. It is our goal to attract the best talent around the country to the Detroit Public Schools.

To reach these decisions, I, along with the DPS Chief Academic and Accountability Auditor Barbara Byrd-Bennett and the Assistant Superintendents whose insights were invaluable beyond the data, conducted an intensive review based on all of the achievement and experience data available to us on our 194 principals, whose contracts along with all assistant principals and central office administrators were non-renewed. In total, 786 contracts were non-renewed for financial and reorganization reasons, and I personally conducted 635 meetings with affected staff. The next round of decisions will determine which assistant principals and central office staff contracts will be renewed. These decisions will be made no later than June 15.

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