District Lays off Employees as State Budget Crisis Continues

May 11, 2011 (San Francisco, CA) – Last night the San Francisco Board of Education voted six to one to eliminate 152 certificated teaching and administrator positions due to anticipated state budget cuts.

The district has already issued final layoff notices to approximately 185 employees, including teacher’s aides, early childhood educators, program administrators and support services personnel. The state requires school districts to notify certificated staff of layoffs by May 15 and to submit a balanced budget by June 30 of each year.

Since 2009-2010, the state has cut funding to SFUSD students from $6,000 per student to $4,900, a decrease of $1,100 per student. In addition, many specialized program funds have been eliminated. SFUSD has already cut $113 million, and now is facing the possibility of another $84 million in cuts over the next two years. These reductions must be made from a total operating budget of approximately $500 million.

For the current school year and next, the district already has four fewer instructional days and all staff have taken at least four unpaid furlough days, some administrators have taken five.

“These cuts are deep and this is not even the worst-case scenario. The state is talking about an all cuts budget where school districts could be forced to further reduce the number of instructional days and increase class size,” said Superintendent Garcia.

Federal Jobs Bill money and local rainy day fund help

The number of layoffs this year would have been higher if the district had not been able to use $10 million in Federal Jobs Bill money to retain 100 teaching positions.

For the 2011-2012 school year the district may be eligible to receive $8 million from the city’s rainy day fund. If approved by the Mayor and Board of Supervisors, the district will be able to rescind some of the teacher layoffs approved last night as long as the state budget projections remain the same or improve.

Superintendent Carlos Garcia encouraged community members to demand more from state lawmakers.

“In California, our public schools are in a state of emergency and have been for too long now. Our children deserve to have the best education and our state is failing on this fundamental obligation.”