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## Supt. Wants 8,400 LAUSD Layoffs

Updated 5:00 PM PDT, Tue, Mar 24, 2009

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Thousands of teachers could be out of work, as LAUSD Superintendent Ramon Cortines recommends 8,400 layoffs.

Despite a loud protest by teachers and parents outside the meeting and impassioned pleas from employees and union representatives inside, [Los Angeles](#) Unified Superintendent Ramon Cortines stood firm Tuesday on the need to cut thousands of positions to eliminate a \$718 million budget deficit.

Cortines is recommending about 8,400 layoffs -- down from an initial estimate of 8,800. The reduction is thanks to an expected \$1 billion the district is expected to receive under the latest federal economic stimulus package.

"As a reminder, we've been cutting our budget over the last 14 months and we've kept the reductions generally away from the employees," Cortines told the board. "That fact, it tends to be lost on people, but it's true."

On the sidewalk outside the LAUSD headquarters near downtown Los Angeles, dozens of teachers and parents marched and chanted in support of teachers, calling on the board to reject any teacher layoffs. Cortines told reporters he respected their position, but, "I do not believe the board has any choice."

"I have looked at everything," he said. "There is not a thing, there is nothing left untouched except the essentials that we have to have to make the system run."

The board will be voting next week on Cortines' budget proposal.

The proposal would lay off about 4,700 teachers, based on seniority and other considerations, and the student-to-teacher ratio would go from 20:1 to 24:1 in kindergarten through third grade; from 36:1 to 38:1 in middle school; and from 40:1 to 42:1 in some high schools.

About 500 administrators and 200 counselors would lose their jobs, as would about 2,500 district employees, including about 1,000 school-based janitors and cafeteria workers.

"According to every bit of research that we've seen, class size -- small class size -- equates directly to high achievement," [Victoria Hurley](#) of the parent activist group MOMS Unite told the board. "We are begging you to figure out a way to make the cuts ... without impacting the classroom experience."

[Bill Lloyd](#) of the [Service Employees International Union](#), which represents the district's classified workers, asked the board to hold off on eliminating jobs before it has time to consider the impact of federal stimulus funds. He also said the district should consider the use of early retirement or furlough programs.

"We are committed to working with the district, trying to figure out a way to rectify a problem that you did not create," Lloyd said.

Cortines said he would be recommending one furlough day for each employee, but deeper cuts will still have to be made.

"You asked me to delay the midyear cuts, and I did," Cortines told the audience. "And I said in delaying them that they would not go away, and they have not gone away. I'm more than willing to look at suggestions, but we need to move the issue on behalf of our boys and girls."

He conceded that the cuts will be difficult for the district to handle.

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"Adults in this building will suffer -- over a thousand of them," he said, referring to the district's headquarters. "People in the local districts will suffer. Indeed, schools will suffer.

"... I'm not saying it has to be all my way, but you do have to look at every area," he said. "There are services I am looking at eliminating in this district

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that are not in the best interests of our students and our employees, but I know of no other way to balance the budget."

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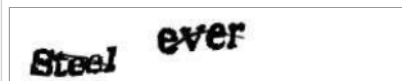
I actually think the board can do something... cut up to 5% of salary across the board, more so with the higher level employees. That'll be a little painful to take, but it's better to convince employees to take one for the team than cutting them altogether!

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