

# Los Angeles Unified School District

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# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 12, 2010

#09/10-154

## **Superintendent Cortines Proposes To Cut School Year**

*PROJECTED \$640 MILLION DEFICIT IS DRIVING DECISION*

(LOS ANGELES) — In the face of a looming budget deficit, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Superintendent Ramon Cortines has proposed a reduction of the school year by a total of six days in order to minimize the number of layoffs currently anticipated. Last year the District was facing a projected \$470 million shortfall for the 2010-11 school year. However, the latest round of unsettling news from the Governor's office imposes an additional \$170 million in cuts, raising the total deficit to a projected \$640 million.

"I am reluctantly proposing that we pursue a reduction of the school instructional year by five days for 2009-10, plus one pupil-free workday, creating the opportunity for furlough days for all personnel in the District," said Cortines. This would result in a projected savings of \$90 million (inclusive of the furlough days already being implemented for various bargaining units) and allow us to begin the task of balancing the 2010-11 budget and reducing the number of employee layoffs in 2010-2011."

By way of background, the 2009-10 Budget enacted by the Legislature and signed by the Governor provides school districts the option of reducing the school year by as many as five days. School districts have the ability to use this budget flexibility until 2012-13. Any proposal of a shorted school year would have to be negotiated with the District's main bargaining units.

Superintendent Cortines recently sent a letter to the union leaders asking them to begin to engage in negotiations with the District to minimize the impact of the budget crisis on the District's employees and students. In his letter he urged that all parties meet as soon as possible with a goal of concluding negotiations soon in order to minimize the number of layoff notices to employees. Teachers and other certificated employees must receive layoff notices by March 15 for the next school year.

The concept of furlough days has already been broached and negotiated with some of the District's bargaining units. To date, four district employee unions, representing five bargaining units of classified employees, have approved four furlough days for 2009-10: SEIU Local 99; Los Angeles School Police; the California School Employees Association representing office workers, and the Skilled Trades Union. However, it is proposed that all parties would have to revisit this issue again in light of the rapidly deteriorating budget picture.

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