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News Release

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SUPERINTENDENT CORTINES TO TAKE FIRST FURLOUGH DAY

HE WILL TAKE FOUR UNPAID DAYS THIS SCHOOL YEAR

(LOS ANGELES) — Leading by example, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Superintendent Ramon C. Cortines will take his February furlough day on Monday, February 8. He also expects to take an unpaid day in March, April and May in response to the District's severe budget crisis.

"How can I ask LAUSD employees to take what amounts to a pay cut if I am not willing to share the sacrifice? These are dire times. The savings accrued from furlough days are needed to keep deeper cuts away from students and the classroom," Cortines said.

The District is currently facing a deficit of between \$570 million to \$670 million for the 2010-2011 year. Initially, the budget gap for the next school year was estimated at \$470 million. However, that figure has grown based on the budget proposal released in January by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. Again, the State is shortchanging the District.

All LAUSD employees not represented by a collective bargaining unit must take four unpaid days at the rate of one per month between now and the end of May. Included is the superintendent, senior staff, executive staff and support staff for those departments and offices.

Furlough days must be negotiated for employees covered by labor agreements.

"I have asked every employee to give a little," Cortines said.

Bus drivers, building and grounds workers, business service employees, cafeteria workers, campus aides, construction workers, office technicians, school police and Special Education Assistants are willing to take off these unpaid days.

If every LAUSD employee took a furlough day it would save the District \$15 million. If every employee took four furlough days, as Cortines and other select LAUSD employees are doing, the shared sacrifice would shave \$60 million off a widening budget gap. The savings will go into the District's general fund, which is used to pay most expenses.

"Making this sacrifice is not something to be taken lightly. It is especially difficult for our employees who are already having trouble paying their bills," Cortines said. "But I believe it is the right thing to do for our children."

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