



Dear Parents and Families,

Your commitment to The School District of Philadelphia is strong and valued and we sincerely believe that we must keep you informed of important developments at our School District. That is why we are reaching out to you with this very crucial development regarding the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT).

After nearly two years negotiating with the PFT to develop a comprehensive agreement that includes PFT health care benefits and contributions in line with our other employees and those in other school districts, both statewide and nationally, we remain far from an agreement.

Meanwhile, the conditions in our schools and classrooms are inadequate and in the absence of additional funds, growing worse. The School Reform Commission today exercised its authority to cancel the School District's contract with the PFT in order to require changes in the healthcare plan and contributions from employees.

Today's action will redirect \$43.8 million to our schools over the course of this school year. In addition, the School District will save an added \$10 million in federal funds that can be used to supplement instruction for our neediest populations. Over the next four years those savings are projected to total \$198.5 million in operating funds and \$47 million in federal funds. Please find additional information about the resources we are returning to schools along with this letter.

Requiring teachers and other employees to contribute to their healthcare costs is a change and a sacrifice, but contributing to healthcare benefits is the reality of today's workplace. Other District employees, including our principals, blue-collar workers and central office staff, have agreed to similar contributions.

We support the right of our workforce to be represented by the PFT and we remain committed to reaching a new agreement about salaries, work rules and other issues through continued bargaining with the union.

Our singular focus is to provide the best learning environment for all students. We recognize that all District employees make tremendous sacrifices daily on behalf of our students and schools. However, limited resources require difficult decisions.

I urge you to continue your advocacy and to contact your representatives to fight alongside me and the SRC and others for additional, much needed funding and a fair formula for funding public education at the state level.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,
William R. Hite, Ed.D.