

HARTFORD PARENT ORGANIZATION RALLY

March 17, 2009

The Hartford PTO Council parent leadership and parents are rallying for the following reasons:

- Parents need answers to how eliminating the following positions are going to affect our children before eliminating them.
 - 34 certified special education teacher positions and 11 non-certified special education paraprofessionals will be cut from the schools' budgets. In addition, seven certified special education staff positions will be cut from the central office.
 - This will be detrimental to the children of Hartford and to the Special Education Reform plan. We have been out of compliance with Special Education in the past and if we were really committed to the Special Needs children we should do everything possible to keep these positions to ensure we are providing quality services to all the children.
 - Sixteen schools eliminated custodial positions, some cutting more than one worker.
 - We have already cut custodial positions in the past and parents and students are feeling the cutbacks by seeing their school in not the best conditions.
 - Thirteen schools cut intervention specialists, in most cases leaving the school without anyone in that position. And 13 schools cut security guards.
 - Safety is critical to ensure teaching and a positive school environment. Eliminating these positions will cause chaos within our schools and increase bullying.
 - Seven Family Resource Aide positions will be eliminated from seven schools.
 - This is a position that parents utilize for communication, translation services, and connection with the community for health services, parent education, etc. . This position is essential to establish good relationship between the home/school connection. This is a position that all schools should have to increase parent involvement at their schools and parents benefit from.

- **Undermine and disrespect parents.**
 - Starting with the Administration, some staff, principals, and teachers, they undermine our ability and stereotype us as being parents that can't make decisions for our children.

- **Not following the district Parent & Community Parent Involvement policy and Title 1 Section -1118 guidelines.**
 - Title 1 Annual Meeting was never conducted by the Chief Academic Officer to explain to parents what the district is doing about curriculum, assessment, and information on what their child would need to know grade by grade to be successful. Every time parents question why hasn't this meeting been held, there seems to be no one accountable to give a clear reason.

- **School principals not meeting with parents to discuss budget cuts and how those budget cuts will affect the education of their children prior to submitting budget to the district.**
 - The School Principal is required to meet and get parents' input about the budget. Instead of including them in the process from the beginning, they make the decisions for the parents and become defensive when parents question the budget.

- **The District doesn't provide any communication training to schools to help principals and teachers communicate effectively with parents.**
 - Parents get conflicting and untimely information from the schools and Central Office.
 - They don't provide translation to the people who are bilingual. This causes parents to be out of the entire educational process of their child.

- **Over 400 families did not meet the February 17, 2009 choice application deadline due to the district not communicating properly to the parents in their own understandable language about the choice process.**
 - These families are being told they will be placed in schools where there are seats available without fully explaining to parents about transportation, child care, or the curriculum.
 - We are requesting to extend the February 17, 2009 deadline, reach out to these parents to explain the entire process.

Parents are requesting a closed meeting with the Board of Education and the Superintendent to ensure that these issues will be addressed immediately.

Milly Arciniegas, Hartford PTO Council President
 PTO Council Members and Parents

For more information, please contact Cheryl Perry, PTO Council Corresponding Secretary at 794-2349.