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**LPS administrators pledge to support BOE decisions,  
including pay cuts and furloughs, to keep excellence for all students**

At the January 14, 2010 LPS Board of Education meeting, leaders of the Littleton Association of School Executives (LASE) pledged the group's support for the Board's decisions to maintain excellence for all kids.

LASE represents principals and assistant principals at all district schools and some central office administrators. The statement was made by LASE President Marj McDonald, principal at Sandburg Elementary, and was echoed by former LASE presidents Heritage High School Principal Ken Moritz and Arapahoe High School Principal Ron Booth during the public comment portion of the Board's continuing discussion regarding budget cuts for the 2010-2011 school year.

"We know that you recognize our commitment to the education of every student of this district and the challenges the recommended cuts bring to this effort," said McDonald. "We want you to know that we are willing to support your decisions, even if that means we need to take furlough days and/or salary cuts in partnership with our other employee groups."

The Board also heard from parents, staff, and students who spoke in support of programs that are being recommended for reduction or elimination of district support, such as the International Baccalaureate Programs at Field Elementary and Newton Middle School, and the reduction of literacy specialists and instructional coaches across the district. Staff members expressed their concerns about losing young teachers, raising class size, and losing programs.

In December, the Board received a series of recommendations from administration that would reduce the district budget by \$7.5 million for school year 2010-2011. Such cuts to the LPS budget are necessary because of the drastic cuts in state funding to all K-12 districts in Colorado and the national economic crisis. However, since December, the state has increased the amount it must cut from K-12 funding next year to make up for its shortfall, which means that LPS is now facing not \$7.5 million in cuts but rather \$9 million in cuts or more. These cuts come on the heels of \$6 million in cuts made over the last two years, which included the closure of two elementary schools.

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Budget recommendations include a combination of:

- Salary freeze for all employees
- Central office staffing cuts
- Reductions of contracts for central office employees
- Staffing cuts in the schools
- Furlough days for all employees
- Cuts to staff development for all employees
- Elimination of district support for dental insurance
- No increase in district cost for health benefits
- Reduction or elimination of district support for some programs.

“I’ve been in education for a long time, and I’ve never seen anything this bad,” said LPS Superintendent Scott Murphy. “While I don’t have a lot of hope for solutions at the state level, I continue to have a great deal of faith in this community. People here care about their schools and are willing to roll up their sleeves and find solutions to the problems we face.”

Board President Bob Colwell said that it is very difficult to think about people losing their jobs in this tough economic climate. In response to LASE’s statement of support, Colwell said that the Board appreciates administration’s leadership and support, and that the Board would continue to value and search for solutions that affect all employee groups equally.

The Board will continue its conversation about budget reductions at the following meetings:

- Board Workshop regarding the budget  
January 21, 2010  
5:30 p.m., ESC
- Board of Education meeting  
January 28, 2010  
6:30 p.m., ESC

The budget recommendations report is available at [www.littletonpublicschools.net](http://www.littletonpublicschools.net).