

DSEA encouraged and relieved with Governor's budget proposal

DOVER, DE, January 28, 2010....The Delaware State Education Association (DSEA) is encouraged by the Governor's budget proposal and relieved that state employees will not be laid off; that their salaries will not be cut further; and that students will not face increased class sizes or reductions in programs.

DSEA commends the Governor who, faced with a projected \$253.7 million budget shortfall, has held the line on not hurting educators and their families any further. "He understands that long-term economic recovery depends on a well-educated work force," praised DSEA President Diane Donohue. **The five furlough days remain** a part of this year's proposed budget; however the Governor has committed **to restoring last year's 2.5% cuts in base pay, plus the professional development and national board stipends, as soon as possible.**

His budget provides full funding for the current number of student "units," which impacts class size; and **he is not recommending any increase in employee costs for health care.**

Consolidating school district purchases and perhaps some administrative functions so that they are more efficient also has the potential to benefit service delivery: school district personnel are overwhelmed with burgeoning amounts of paperwork and reporting requirements since "No Child Left Behind," so the prospect of realigning their work is encouraging.

DSEA leaders are disappointed, however, that because of the continuing depressed economy and revenue situation, state employee compensation was not made whole, as he, the General Assembly and the coalition of State Workers United had all hoped last year.

DSEA leaders have also let the Governor know of their concern about **creating a two-tier health care and pension system:** one set of benefits for current employees, and another set of lesser benefits for future state employees. Such a system contradicts the Governor's desire to attract "Great Teachers and

School Leaders” as described in the state’s new strategic plan for education. “The Governor has asked us and other members of the coalition of state workers to meet in March, to look at how we compare with other state plans, and see if we can all endorse some significant cost savings in health care and pensions. We’ll certainly be there with an open mind, along with the other members of our coalition of state workers.”

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