

To: DeKalb County School System Board of Education

From: Organization of DeKalb Educators

Date: January 4, 2010

Re: ODE Statement Concerning Possible Changes to Superintendent Dr. Crawford Lewis' Contract

The members of the Organization of DeKalb Educators are extremely disappointed and insulted that the Board of Education would even consider granting Dr. Lewis a raise or other increase in compensation in the midst of the present economic turmoil, as well as the District Attorney's ongoing investigation into possible financial improprieties within the school system. Our members and other employees have made numerous sacrifices including:

1. Loss of support personnel in areas such as art, music, reading, media centers, and Plant Services which lead to larger class sizes and decreased student options.
2. A decrease in student and bus driver safety due to over-crowdedness in addition to a loss in bus driver salary of up to 29%.
3. 2009 losses of the COLA, step increase, and local retirement plan deposits; multi-year losses of earned experience raises; increased insurance premiums; furlough days; and loss of the local supplement in DCSS' portion of the teacher salary.

Both the members of our Organization and other County employees feel betrayed. Dr. Lewis agreed to make the same sacrifices as he required of the DCSS employees. It is disheartening to know that the superintendent now appears to have been insincere regarding his initial position. Employees have more work, greater responsibilities and less take home pay due to extensive budget cuts. It now also appears that questionable budget decisions and ongoing litigation may also be factors. Due to the above listed reasons, we urge you to delay any decisions regarding the Superintendent's contract until all the ongoing legal investigations are completed. We also hope that you think about the message you are sending to the employees on the front line if you grant the Superintendent increased compensation in the midst of an ongoing budget crisis. It is our hope that you, the Board, will do what is right for our members, other employees, other stakeholders, and ultimately, the students of the DeKalb County School System.

Sincerely,

Organization of DeKalb Educators Executive Committee