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## **CHESTERFIELD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Marcus J. Newsome, Ed.D., Superintendent

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March 4, 2009

Dear Colleagues,

Last night I presented and the School Board adopted a revised FY2010 operating budget of \$571.6 million that fulfilled our commitment to make every reasonable effort to preserve the integrity of the classroom to the greatest extent possible. As you know, this budget process has been among the most difficult in Chesterfield County Public Schools' history. Although many challenges remain ahead, our school division is in a better place today than it was this time last month.

Since I made my original budget presentation on January 27, the school division has received nearly \$20 million in additional funding. Most of this is a result of the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act stimulus package recently approved by Congress. While this new funding will help ease some of the immediate pain of reducing our budget, it is a short-term fix and we must begin to strategically plan for more difficult economic times ahead. This means we must become even more efficient in terms of fiscal and human resources, adjusting our hiring practices as needed. Nonetheless, I am delighted the new federal stimulus funding allowed me to recommend and the Board to approve the restoration of most positions previously proposed for elimination in the FY2010 operating budget. Specifically, restored to the operating budget were:

- Pupil-teacher ratios to their current status (saving 111.4 teaching positions)
- 25 reading teachers
- 1 dean per high school
- 1 administrative assistant per middle school
- 28 instructional aides
- 38 elementary secretaries
- 10 technology integrators
- 8 microcomputer analysts
- 7 facility coordinators

Also included in last night's approved revisions were \$250,000 in tuition reimbursement, funding for K-2 mathematics workbooks, additional safety-net funding and two non-school-based support positions.

In addition, 41 positions will be allocated through almost \$2.1 million in stimulus funding that is earmarked for Title I. There also will be 89 new positions available through \$4.5 million that is earmarked for special education funding.

### **OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

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Principals now will meet with directors and Human Resources staff members as soon as possible to revise school master schedules based on the restoration of the current pupil-teacher ratio. These meetings must be completed before teaching assignments can be finalized.

The Human Resources Department has completed an analysis comparing the potential surplus teaching positions (including staff members returning to the classroom due to budget cuts) to expected vacancies created through resignations, completion of the Supplemental Retirement program, non-renewal of existing staff members and part-time staff who will not be retained by policy and term contracts. We are aware of some endorsement issues, but for the most part this comparison shows we will have positions in which to place the majority of the teacher surplus. In other areas of the organization, surplus will take place. However, we believe these numbers will be minimal compared to original projections.

As School Board Chair Marshall W. Trammell Jr. noted last night, we have one of the strongest school systems in the country. These tough economic times have challenged our system, but our spirit remains strong. We remain true to our Design for Excellence and our commitment to quality education for every child. As we prepare to move forward, I am reminded of the thoughts of Leonardo da Vinci: "Obstacles can not crush me. Every obstacle leads to stern resolve. He who is fixed to a star does not change his mind." Thank you for your continued dedication to Chesterfield County Public Schools and the success of our students.

Warmest Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marcus J. Newsome". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Marcus Newsome, Ed.D.