

TEACHERS STRUGGLE TO KEEP JOBS AS NATIONAL ECONOMY CONTINUES TO WEAKEN



September looked promising for many on the hunt for jobs during the month of September. It was reported that the nation successfully added 103,000 jobs during that month. However, while many rejoiced in the newfound jobs, teachers sit anxiously, wondering if their job will be left at the end of October. Reports show that public schools lost 24,400 positions last month, making it the greatest loss of any other category during September. With the fiscal 2012 year meaning more budget cuts for most states, teachers continue to lose jobs at a rapid pace. School districts simply do not have the funds to hire the same number of employees as it has in years past. For the past two years, the public school sector in many states have survived off of the gains from the 2009 stimulus package. However, now that the stimulus money is drying up, states are having to make drastic employment cuts, leaving many public school teachers without a job. Teachers are not the only ones getting hit by this situation. Government jobs downsized by 35,000 employees nationwide during the month of September. Last quarter state and local governments, which includes the public school system, shed approximately 90,000 jobs. Totals for the past year show that the public has let go 267,000 employees nationwide. Meanwhile, the private sector has added more than 1 million positions during this year. With the continued weakening in the public sector, Congress and the President feel the increased pressure to send greater aid to states suffering from dramatic losses. All the money from the stimulus package of 2009 has estimated to dry up completely by the end of this fiscal year. President Obama has recognized the great need for states around the nation to receive more federal aid. He has added a \$30 million proposal to offset the need and enable teachers to continue serving in the public sector. Unfortunately, it does not appear that the President's job proposal, which was unveiled last month, will make it past Congress and into action. Even if it did, it would be like putting a Band-Aid over a cut to the femoral artery; the bleeding will not stop. The national faces greater economic issues that will not stop as the economy continues to weaken. As the economy weakens, states will continue to make large budget cuts due to the lowering of statewide revenue. Currently, educators make approximately two-thirds of the local government payroll. The public sector sees it as the place with the most wiggle-room. Educators will continue to feel the repercussions of the weakening economy, and no educator is safe from the scissors. Both kindergarten teachers and university professors are likely to get fired during the next round of downsizing from the state or local government.