

## NEW YORK SCHOOLS TO CUT 716 WORKERS



The New York School System is getting ready to release 716 of the city's lowest-paid workers in order to correct its budgetary issues. The pink slips have already been released and if no special arrangements are made by Friday they will lose their jobs. The jobs slated to be lost, which are spread out over 350 schools, will be members of school support staff, teacher's aides and parent coordinators. To give you an idea of the actual dollars discussed, a teacher's aide in New York City makes between \$8 and \$14 an hour, and requires little more than a high school diploma. More than 400 people in this job title are expected to be laid off on Friday. A parent coordinator makes roughly \$32,000 a year. These positions will be eliminated from schools in a scattered pattern, but an analysis by the New York Times has shown that schools with larger populations, and schools that receive higher levels of federal funding will be disproportionately affected. Specifics for your child's school, should you live in the NY city area, can be requested at the school. But what about the specifics of who got the pink slip? Well, that was decided on a school-by-school basis by the principals of each facility. The thinking behind this decision is that it may be easier for the school on the whole to lose a teacher's aide than to lose a teacher or a program. Since the decision is being made by the principal, other reasons could affect the layoffs. For those who think that losing their job in order to keep a hockey team or club running is unfair, there will be little recourse. "Schools had to absorb a budget cut, and our principals made the best staffing decisions they could for their students," the school's chancellor, Dennis M. Walcott, said in a statement. "I'm going to adhere to those decisions." The overall budget for New York City schools has been cut an average of 13.7 percent over the last five years. As you can imagine these are not the city's first round of layoffs. Just two years ago 500 classroom aides were let go from their schools. A similar round of layoffs almost happened last year, but a last second influx of federal money kept people in their jobs. That is extremely unlikely to happen again this year, as the federal funding has already been used. Since the New York school systems have seniority protections, this means that the workers who got the pink slips may not be the ones who leave the school. The system rewards seniority, so a person with a pink slip can take the job of a junior member in the same position to keep their job. This practice, known as bumping, happens quite frequently. The New York City school district's website currently has job openings for the same positions that are being laid off. So, these layoffs may be mitigated by the fact that some workers may be able to make a lateral transfer.

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