

LONG BEACH TO CUT TEACHERS



It looks like bad news is coming to another group of civil servants in the state of California. The Long Beach Unified Board of Education is getting ready to approve a new budget and that budget is expected to include the layoffs of several hundred workers. Those cuts, which are expected to include at least 300 jobs, are likely to include the entire staff of the Head Start preschool program in the school district. If things go worse than expected the deficit may lead to even more cuts if it gets as bad as it can. The biggest possible deficit of the school district is expected to be about \$189 million by the 2014 school year. Currently the approved layoffs approved include a total of 308 employees, with 126 from the Head Start program and 44 workers are being cut from the Child Development Center. For those of you not familiar with the Head Start program in California here is the [official description](#): "Head Start is a national program administered by the Office of Head Start within the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Head Start programs provide comprehensive developmental services for low-income children from birth to entry into elementary school. Head Start is currently funded at over \$6.8 billion and serves more than 909,000 low-income children and families nationwide. The program is child-centered, family-focused, comprehensive, and community-based. Head Start services are designed to address developmental goals for children, employment and self-sufficiency goals for adults, and support for parents in their work and child-caring roles. Head Start is a direct federal-to-local program administered by over 1,600 locally based public or private organizations, called "grantees," across the country." Cuts to the program will undoubtedly have an impact on primary grade education in the state. Though there seem to be few other options when you consider that the school district has to trim between \$15 million and \$20 million from the annual budget. This is not the first time that the school has had to cut from the budget in order to make ends meet. Since 2008 the school has cut about \$200 million from their budget, and cut back on about 800 jobs. While the current round of cuts need to go into affect by June 1st, the district is required to give the staffers notice of the layoffs by the middle of March. Long Beach is not the only California school to have serious budget issues. Our [earlier coverage](#) of the San Bernardino City Unified School District showed the following: "The plan will be presented by Mohammad Z. Islam, the current chief business and financial officer for the district, will be presented on this Tuesday at 4 p.m. The current plan for the budget is not an optimistic one; it is in fact rather painful. The budget, as it sits right now calls for hundreds of layoffs in the next school year. Under the current years staffing the schools have a teacher-to-student ratio of about 30-to-1. Once the staffing is changed, if the current plan goes into affect and the job cuts go into place the teacher-to-student ratio will be about 33-to-1. While this is not a stunning increase in classroom size it is still significant when you consider that this divides the attention of the teacher by another ten percent. The current cuts are going to hit the students and staff of the special education department especially hard. About 30 percent of the cuts are expected to come from special education. It looks like about 24 of their teachers and 36 other aides are expected to be cut from the rosters if the current budget stands. No matter how things play out the budget there will be some job cuts down the pike. If things go as well as they possibly can then only 162 workers of the schools will be given layoff notices by the notification deadline in the middle of this March. After the budget is presented the board will have to vote on it, and once the official budget has been approved there will be more solid information about the number of teachers and other staff members that will be let go from the school district."

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