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Thomas to Request Audit of DCPS Hiring Practices

Washington, DC—Ward 5 Councilmember Harry “Tommy” Thomas, Jr. announced today that he will request that the DC Auditor conduct a review of DC Public Schools (DCPS) with regard to its hiring practices to determine whether the school system is exceeding its personnel budget by backfilling positions and assess the impact of any backfilling on the current budget deficit.

As the District faces an additional FY2009 budget shortfall of \$127 million, Councilmember Thomas is concerned that DCPS, which used the “Public Education Personnel Reform Amendment Act of 2007” to fire 99 central office employees, has hired more than 125 highly compensated employees.

Councilmember Thomas and Councilmember Barry had proposed an amendment to the Public Education Personnel Reform Amendment Act of 2007” that would have either abolished the jobs of those terminated without cause, or converted them to new school-based positions to directly address hands-on needs and outcomes for District students. Furthermore, the amendment would have prohibited back-filling of positions. The amendment was voted down.

“Now that we have a budget gap that must be closed, I am concerned that the Chancellor’s office used this legislation to back-fill positions with highly compensated individuals,” said Thomas. “I plan to re-introduce the amendment at the next legislative session to ensure that there is minimum effect on rank and file employees as we address the budget deficit.”

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