Milwaukee Public Schools announces job cuts for 201 employees

Milwaukee Public Schools says the moves will save them $30 million to help close a $46 million budget gap

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District officials with Milwaukee Public Schools say they notified 201 current employees that their jobs will not exist next year.

According to MPS, the moves will save them around $30 million to close a $46 million budget gap.

Superintendent Brenda Cassellius made the announcement on March 25. The district says they will undertake a comprehensive approach to support employees based in Central Services and in non-classroom school positions who are receiving letters about the approved reduction of around 260 non-classroom roles. About 201 current MPS employees will be impacted after accounting for retirements and already vacant positions.

"These decisions are incredibly difficult, and we deeply value every member of our MPS team," said Cassellius. "At the same time, these reductions allow us to prioritize classrooms, safeguard instruction, and address our structural deficit. We are taking necessary steps to strengthen the educational experience for all MPS students."

The district said they're working to retain its affected staff by connecting them with available classroom roles, other district positions and external employment opportunities when needed.

The affected positions include 70 positions based in the central office (including a deputy superintendent position and chief of schools position on the senior team), 62 implementer positions (educators who hold a teaching license but are not assigned to one classroom) and 59 assistant principal positions.

The district said they are overstaffed in Central Services based on an analysis from the Council of the Great City Schools. MPS says they have more assistant principals than other large urban districts, at 350 students to one assistant principal.

MPS says they're also reducing contract spending in the 2025-26 year by about $5 million to address the $46 million budget gap.

There may be fewer staff assigned to a school where there is lower enrollment, MPS said. They are also maintaining support for students with special needs and completing an audit to ensure that all required services are provided.

MPS said they have already posted internal-only principal positions and will post additional vacancies, including classroom-based roles on April 1, as part of the first hiring cycle. Affected employees will be supported as they pursue these roles. For those not placed within MPS, the district will provide assistance in connecting to other employers.

The district said they're continuing to bargain with their union partners as far as next steps. They're also working with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction on potential school improvement funds. If the additional savings are achieved, the district will revisit pending critical needs.

MPS says it is on target to present its proposed 2026-27 budget in May to the Milwaukee Board of School Directors.