

Dade asks to arrange departure from RCSD

Superintendent wants out at end of school year

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Superintendent Terry Dade on Wednesday notified the school board that he wants to negotiate his departure by the end of the school year in June.

The goal is a mutually agreed upon separation, he said.

Dade was hired less than a year ago, inheriting a financial crisis that has consumed his brief tenure. The result has been layoffs, cuts enacted or proposed totaling \$152 million, meeting with pushback from board and community members.

“It has been the most taxing year of my career,”

Rather than a shared effort, he said, the cuts are often referred to as his, and the opposition voiced to his proposal. He described his relationship with the board as “strained,” and sees little progress in the current budget talks as each of the seven members argue for areas they want to protect.

He continued: “I don’t have confidence that we will get there, to have a balanced budget by May 7, that the board will approve I don’t know what happens then.”

“The challenges of this year have impacted me greatly with my physical, emotional and mental health.” Terry Dade Superintendent

Dade’s contract allows him to resign, but requires at least 90 days notice. But it also provides for termination on mutually acceptable terms. That likely would involve a severance or buyout of his contract, which otherwise runs through June 30, 2022.

Dade said in an interview. “I felt whether it is right or wrong, the weight of these decisions placed solely on my shoulders.”

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Dade

leaders like Assemblyman (Harry) Bronson must be removed, so that real leadership who will meet the needs of our children can be restored.”

Warren and Bronson have squared off over the extent of state intervention, with Bronson seeking to retain the autonomy of the elected school board.

For Dade to stay on, he said, there would need to be “significant changes.”

A monitor, proposed to oversee or referee budget and educational decisions, is not enough, as written, he said. That person would have more authority to intervene and “the political swagger and influence to move forward,” and to move swiftly.

“The challenges of this year have impacted me greatly with my physical, emotional and mental health,” he said.

Messages left with board President Van White and others were not immediately returned. Mayor Lovely Warren, in a statement, focused the blame squarely on them.

“Today, yet again our school board and its enablers are putting their wants, and their salaries, before needs of the children they purport to serve,” Warren said. “It is a travesty that we would lose another superintendent, especially during the most severe fiscal crisis RCSD has faced. Again, rather than deal with a catastrophe of their own creation, the school board has chosen to attempt to disgrace and destroy another leader that dare speak the truth.”

She went on to reiterate a call for the state to intervene, adding that “the influence of so-called

“When the conversations turned to be about me, that is something I am not comfortable with,” he continued. “Right now it seems I am responsible for the reductions and cuts, but what I am not hearing is how we got here It is a lot about Superintendent Dade, and his plan, and his cuts.”

A state comptroller’s report released Tuesday answered that question in detail, pointing to the past administration and the school board for multiple and repeated failures on basic budgeting decisions.

“I wanted to be here for the long term. That said, I felt I would be supported by the board and the community,” Dade said, referring to corrective fiscal actions. “Unfortunately that hasn’t happened.”