

REDUCTION IN STAFF WORK FORCE

A decrease in pupil enrollment, budget reduction or adjustment, insufficient funding, expiration of special grants, consolidation of schools, phasing out of programs, departments or grade levels, and other conditions may cause a reduction in the number of staff needed in a building, program or department, or in the entire school division. Notwithstanding any rights herein granted by the Board, the Board reserves the right at all times to destaff, transfer, reassign, or recall employees of the division in any manner as may be, in the Board's sole discretion, necessary in the best interest of and for the more efficient operation of the schools of the division.

General reduction in total personnel and redistribution of personnel within designated programs shall be done in accordance with regulations adopted by the Board.

A School Board may reduce the number of teachers whether or not such teachers have reached continuing contract status. If a reduction in staff is necessary, the School Board, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, shall determine the adjustments to be made and the reduction in force required. The application of the reduction in force policy shall be for the division as a whole rather than by individual facilities or sources of funding. All reductions shall be based on the best interest of the school system and the maintenance of a sound and balanced educational program consistent with the functions and responsibilities of the School Board.

Under the direction of the Covington City School Board, the Superintendent shall determine areas which must be reduced. In accordance with state statutory notice requirements, the Superintendent shall inform those professional employees who may be affected by the recommended reduction and of the reasons for such reduction.

Reduction in Force – Professional Employees

A. Definitions

Professional Employees: Those persons who:

- 1) Hold up-to-date, valid licenses as teachers, administrators, supervisors, school counselors, librarians, visiting teacher, and other related instructional positions (such as Reading Coach, Math Coach, Instructional Technology Specialist, or any other position which requires the individual to hold a valid teaching license) as defined by the State Board of Education under its rules and regulations, and
- 2) Hold a current teaching contract with Covington City Public Schools, and
- 3) Are currently employed in a full-time position with Covington City Public Schools.

Seniority: Will be based on, in order of priority:

Total length of **most recent continuous**, full time, contracted employment as a professional employee with Covington City Schools, including authorized leaves, but excluding employment under temporary, interim, or part time contracts. For purposes of this policy only, employees who work 180 days of a school year shall be considered to have worked a full year. In the event of a tie, the earliest date of School Board approval will define the relevant seniority date. In the event of School Board approval being the same date, the date of the employee's signature of the initial contract should be the determining factor. In the absence of a date of the employee's signature or in the event of all other considerations in which a tie may result, the Superintendent shall make the final decision (factors which may be included, but not limited to, are range of endorsement areas as listed on a valid, up-to-date teaching license, evaluations, attendance, or other factors which have a bearing on the division wide program).

Endorsement: the subjects or levels of completed programs which are identified on the Virginia teaching license which authorizes an individual to be employed as a professional employee in Virginia public school systems.

B. Reduction in Teachers

- 1) Reduction of teachers will be based on the following factors:
 - a) Seniority (as defined above in this policy)
 - b) Teaching experience
 - c) Satisfactory performance (as reflected in the employee's last two evaluations)
 - d) Whether the employee is on a teacher plan of improvement

Any professional employee on a plan of improvement shall not have any seniority or recall rights provided; however, the superintendent shall review the circumstances surrounding such plan of improvement. The circumstances should include, but not be limited to, whether the professional employee has:

 - had sufficient time to pursue the recommended corrective actions,
 - diligently pursued the recommended corrective actions, and
 - been previously placed on a plan of improvement.

Based on such review, the superintendent may, in his/her sole discretion, exempt the professional employee from this provision.
 - e) Whether the employee is on probation or otherwise under discipline
 - f) Other areas of endorsement held by the teacher
 - g) Overall needs of the school system and its students
- 2) Continuing contract teachers in an affected endorsement area or instructional program who are recommended for layoff from that area or program shall have the right to be considered in any other program or instructional area for which the teacher holds a current endorsement. The employee must have worked in the Covington City Public School system within the endorsement area for at least one year at some time during his or her continuous experience if he or she is to be assigned to a position held by an employee with less seniority.

- 3) All employees affected by a reduction in force shall be placed on a list in order of seniority and endorsement areas (if at least one year of employment by Covington City Public Schools in that endorsement area has been held). Employees on this list shall be the first to be recalled as openings occur within their endorsement areas.
- 4) Teachers or administrators under probationary contracts will be released before teachers or administrators who are under continuing contracts.
- 5) A recall period shall exist for a period of two years. The two year period shall begin with the effective date (as determined by the superintendent's recommendation) of the reduction in force. Any teacher not recalled within two years shall be removed from the recall list. No teacher shall be eligible for recall who has signed a contract to teach with another school division from which release cannot be obtained prior to July 15, who has not maintained an active teaching license, or who lacks the appropriate certification or endorsement.

C. Reduction of Administrative Personnel

Note: Exception of Above Policy Related to Reduction in Force – Professional Employees: Item B Reduction in Teachers (#2 and #3):

An administrator or supervisor who achieved continuing contract status in Virginia as a teacher prior to being assigned as an administrator or supervisor, and who is recommended for reduction, shall be considered for any teaching position which he or she actually held as a continuing contract teacher (in Virginia), providing his or her certification and endorsement for that position is still valid.

- 1) This policy does not apply to the Superintendent, whose term of employment is established by the School Board.
- 2) Where there is only one person in a position which is being eliminated or reduced, the person holding that position shall be laid off but will be considered for other positions for which he or she is qualified.
- 3) Where there is more than one person in a position classification, the School Board, on the recommendation of the Superintendent, shall decide which individual(s) shall be laid off. The primary factors to be considered in making the recommendation shall be:
 - the job performance and evaluation of the individual(s),
 - whether the individual(s) is on a plan of improvement,
 - the current needs of the school system, or
 - any special qualifications the individual(s) possess.
- 4) In the event no significant difference among individuals exists after a review of Item C3 above, the recommendation and determination shall be made based on upon seniority as an administrator in the Covington City Public Schools, the least senior being laid off first.

- 5) An administrator recommended for layoff from his or her position may be considered for other possibilities which the Superintendent determines to have similar duties and responsibilities, and for which the person is otherwise qualified.
- 6) Released employees shall, for a period of two years, be offered re-employment as vacancies occur in the positions from which they were reduced or laid off unless there are issues related to performance, being on probation, or being disciplined.

D. Notification

All employees scheduled for reduction in force under this policy shall be notified in writing at the earliest possible date but not later than April 15 preceding the school year for which reduction in force shall become effective unless insufficient funding or decrease in enrollment after that date requires further or additional adjustments.

E. Recall Procedures

- 1) Released continuing contract teachers shall be offered re-employment as vacancies occur.
- 2) Notice of recall will be sent by certified mail to the last address on record with the personnel office. It is the responsibility of the employee to notify the personnel office of any change in address.
- 3) The offer of re-employment will be valid for a period of ten working days (using the postmarked date). Offers of re-employment not accepted within ten working days will cause said employee to be removed from the recall list.
- 4) Any teacher not recalled within two years (from the effective date of the first notice of reduction in force) shall be removed from the recall list.

F. Exceptions

The provisions of this reduction in force policy shall not apply to the employment of personnel whose special skills and/or active assignment is essential to the effective operation of the school program. The determination of essential personnel shall be solely at the discretion of the Board upon recommendation of the Superintendent.

G. Board Prerogatives

Notwithstanding any rights herein granted by the Board, the Board reserves the right at all times to destaff, transfer, reassign, or recall employees of the division in any manner as may be, in the Board's sole discretion, necessary in the best interest of and for the more efficient operation of the schools of the division.

H. Board Minutes

To avoid negative implications with regard to the professional record of an employee destaffed under this Reduction in Force policy, the minutes of the Board will clearly show that such termination of employment was due to a reduction in force.

Reduction in Force – Classified Employees

A. Definitions:

Classified employees are support personnel who are assigned to non-licensed (non-teaching) positions. Such categories include but are not limited to: bus drivers, food service, clerical, maintenance, custodians, bus aides, instructional aides, nurses, or any position not requiring a Virginia teaching license.

B. Reduction of Classified Employees

Reduction of classified employees will be based on the following factors:

- 1) Seniority in the respective job classification using the most recent continuous length of service with Covington City Schools
- 2) Specific skills or training
- 3) Satisfactory job performance (as reflected in the employee's last two evaluations)
- 4) Whether the employee is on a plan of improvement

Any classified employee on a plan of improvement shall not have any seniority of recall rights provided; however, the superintendent shall review the circumstances surrounding such plan of improvement. The circumstances should include, but not be limited to, whether the classified employee has:

- had sufficient time to pursue the recommended corrective actions,
- diligently pursued the recommended corrective actions, and
- been previously placed on a plan of improvement.

Based on such review, the superintendent may, in his/her sole discretion, exempt the classified employee from this provision.

- 5) Whether the employee is on probation or otherwise under discipline
- 6) Overall needs of the school system and its students

C. Recall Procedure

- 1) Released classified employees shall be offered re-employment as vacancies occur in their last classification.
- 2) Notice of recall will be sent by certified mail to the last address on record with the personnel office. It is the responsibility of the employee to notify the personnel office of any change in address.
- 3) The offer of re-employment will be valid for a period of ten working days (using the postmarked date). Offers of re-employment not accepted within ten working days will cause said employee to be removed from the recall list.
- 4) Any classified employee not recalled within two years (from the effective date of the first notice of reduction in force) shall be removed from the recall list.

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Cross Ref.: GCG Professional Staff Probation and Continuing Contract