

REDUCTION IN PROFESSIONAL STAFF WORK

A decrease in enrollment, abolition of particular subjects, a decrease in the School Board's budget as approved by the appropriating body, a consolidation of schools, the phasing out of programs, departments or grade levels may cause a reduction in the number of staff needed in a building, program or department or in the entire school division.

Definitions:

1. Seniority

Seniority shall be that period of time commencing with the most recent term of continuous full-time service in the Bedford County Public Schools based on date of contract with Bedford County School Board, including authorized leave(s), but excluding employment under temporary or interim contract. For the purposes of this policy, a minimum of 180 work days in a school year will be required for a teacher to be credited with a year of seniority. Should a tie exist, the tie shall be broken in the following order:

- a. official beginning date of employment as shown on the teacher's contract;
- b. the date the School Board took action on the employment of the teacher as shown in the Board's minutes;
- c. date of teacher's signature on the teacher's contract; and
- d. selection by lot.

2. Teacher

For purposes of this policy, "teacher" shall mean a regularly employed full-time classroom teacher, guidance counselor, or librarian/media specialist or visiting teacher.

3. Instructional Administrative Personnel

For purpose of this policy, "instructional administrative personnel" shall mean principals and assistant principals.

4. Endorsement Area

For purposes of this policy, "endorsement area" shall mean the teaching endorsement shown on the current teaching license as issued by the Board of Education.

5. Active Assignment

For purposes of this policy, “active assignment” shall mean the endorsement area in which the teacher is actively assigned at such time as it may become necessary to implement reduction in force procedures.

6. Performance Evaluation

For purposes of this policy, “performance evaluation” shall mean the evaluation of the employee’s performance as reflected in both formal and informal instruments, including, but not limited to, “BCPS Administrator Summative Performance Report”, “BCPS Teacher Summative Performance Report”, classroom observations, letters of reprimand, etc.

Seniority Lists for Teachers

Seniority lists for teachers will be shown in ascending order of seniority and shall be comprised of lists based on the endorsement or other special areas of the active assignment as follows (or on the comparable endorsement areas under the Licensure Regulations of the Board of Education in effect at the time it may become necessary to implement reduction in force procedures):

Subject Areas – English, Mathematics, History/Social Studies, Etc.

Early/Primary Education – PK-3

Elementary Education – PK-6

Middle Education – 6-8

Special Areas – Special Education, Federal or other specially funded programs, Adult Education, or other special areas.

A teacher holding a comprehensive elementary endorsement of grades PK-3 or PK-6 will be listed in the first category that is appropriate to the teacher’s active assignment, i.e. either PK-3 or PK-6.

Reduction in Force Procedures:

1. Continuing Contract Teachers:

When recommending the de-staffing of teachers under continuing contract the Superintendent will consider, among other things, the performance of the teacher as reflected in that teacher’s performance evaluation and the teacher’s seniority as defined above. If the superintendent determines that two or more

employees under consideration for reduction are equal after application of the above identified criteria, then and only then shall seniority be the determining factor. Other factors which may be considered: Employee licensure, fully licensed compared to provisional licensed; Other qualifications, such as Highly Qualified; The employee's endorsements)

2. Probationary Contract Teachers:

De-staffing of probationary contract teachers on or before June 15 will be in accordance with the procedures set forth in §22.1-305 of the Code of Virginia. Except as provided hereafter, the de-staffing of probationary contract teachers after June 15 will be in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

3. Instructional Administrative Personnel

Should an instructional administrative position be eliminated as part of a reduction in force, the person holding that position will be placed on the teacher seniority list(s) for any teaching endorsement on that person's license issued by the Board of Education and the person shall be granted seniority based on that person's most recent term of continuous full-time service in the Bedford County Public Schools as a teacher and in an instructional administrative position.

Transfers

Transfers may be made within the division to accommodate the retention of employees affected by the reduction in force. The selection of personnel to be transferred will be governed by the need to maintain maximum effectiveness as determined by the superintendent in his/her sole discretion. Should a person refuse an assignment by transfer, he/she will lose all seniority and recall rights.

Exceptions:

- a. The provisions of this 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 school board upon recommendation of the superintendent.
- b. The provisions of this policy shall not apply and shall not provide the basis for any employee action in situations involving adjustments in length of contracts of any personnel of the school division.
- c. Any teacher on a plan of improvement shall not have any seniority or recall rights; provided, however, that the superintendent shall review the circumstances surrounding such plan of improvement, including, but not limited to, whether sufficient time has elapsed to allow the

teacher to pursue the recommended corrective actions; whether the teacher has diligently pursued the recommended corrective actions; and whether the teacher had been previously placed on a plan of improvement. Based on such review, the superintendent may, in his/her sole discretion, exempt the teacher from this provision.

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 June 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.

Recall Procedures:

- a. Teachers under probationary contract shall have no recall rights but will be given consideration for reemployment at the discretion of the school board upon recommendation of the superintendent. The performance of the individual and length of service shall be among the factors considered in making this recommendation.
- b. When openings occur, the eligible de-staffed continuing contract teacher with the greatest seniority will be offered a vacant position in the endorsement area of his/her active assignment at the time of the reduction in force. A teacher may be offered a position that is in his/her endorsement area, but not in his/her active assignment. In any event, a teacher offered a position must accept the assignment or lose all recall rights. Eligible licensed employees who have not been recalled within one (1) year from time of notification of reduction in force will have no further recall rights. During the recall period, eligible licensed employees who are reduced and who have not been offered a position will be placed on the list of eligible substitutes and subject to call at the discretion of the particular principal or his or her designee.
- c. When an eligible de-staffed continuing contract teacher is to be recalled, he/she will be notified first by telephone and/or e-mail. If the employee cannot be reached through either of those means, the teacher will be notified by certified mail at his/her last known address. If the offer of re-employment is not accepted in writing within ten (10) work days of notice of recall, all rights of recall will be forfeited. It shall be the responsibility of the teacher to maintain an accurate telephone number, e-mail address and mailing address with the Department of Human Resources.

Teachers will not be eligible for recall if:

- a. The teacher, subsequent to termination, makes a contractual commitment with another school or school division from which release cannot be obtained prior to July 15.
- b. The teacher fails to maintain a valid teacher's license.
- c. The teacher, subsequent to termination, becomes unable to qualify for a position in the endorsement area of his active assignment at the time of the reduction in force.

Board Minutes

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

Board Prerogatives

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

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