

Applicability

This policy shall apply to all professional personnel employed by the Columbia County Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Board"). However, nothing in this policy shall be construed to extend to certified personnel any expectation of reemployment or due process rights greater than are available to the specific employees under the Fair Dismissal Law of Georgia. Neither is this policy to be construed to mandate the promotion of an employee to a position of higher rank, authority or compensation, even though the employee who is to be terminated or demoted is qualified or certified for a higher position.

Furthermore, this policy should apply to all certified personnel; however, all school based personnel shall be considered separately from non-school based personnel.

Reasons for Reduction in Force

The Board shall consider a reduction in the professional work force to include the abolishment of job positions, downgrading of employee positions, reduction in the number of employees, or demotion of certain employees under the following circumstances:

1. A decrease in the student enrollment in the Columbia County School System which would necessitate a decrease of personnel and/or a discontinuation of programs;
2. Change in state or local curriculum, personnel or financial practices which would necessitate a change in or elimination of programs or services provided by the Columbia County School System;
3. Any lack of funding, including but not limited to local, state or federal, for programs, personnel or services provided by the Columbia County School System; and
4. Any reasonable reorganization plan to achieve a more efficient school system.

Reduction in Force Procedure

In the event that it becomes necessary for the Board to reduce the work force for administrative staff, such reduction, where possible, will be handled by attrition. However, if a reduction in force of administrators cannot be handled through attrition, the following policy will apply:

(See next page)

Page 2 - CGM - REDUCTION IN PROFESSIONAL STAFF, WORK FORCE AND ADMINISTRATORS

1. Definitions:

a. Administrators shall be defined as follows:

- 1) **Deputy Superintendent;**
- 2) Associate Superintendent;
- 2) Assistant Superintendent;
- 3) Directors;
- 4) Coordinators;
- 5) Special Services Diagnostic Teachers; and
- 6) Their equivalent.

b. School based administrators shall be defined as follows:

- 1) Principals;
- 2) Assistant Principals;
- 3) Vocational Supervisors.

2. When the Board and/or Superintendent of the Columbia County School System determines that a reduction in force policy is necessary, it shall be the primary responsibility of the Superintendent to prepare for presentation to the Board a plan for reduction in force (RIF) in the affected program areas. The Superintendent, subject to the Board's approval, will determine based on the categories listed above, the positions for which reduction and/or reorganization shall take place. Once the categories and number of affected personnel have been determined by the Superintendent, subject to the Board's approval, the order of termination and/or demotion of professional administrators shall be completed in the following manner:

- a. The administrator by category (listed above) with the least amount of uninterrupted experience as an administrator of the Columbia County Board of Education, except for authorized leave of absence, shall be terminated or demoted;
- b. If reductions cannot be adequately met through use of the above described criteria contained in paragraph a above, then those categorized administrators remaining shall be ranked according to educational levels; and the affected administrators with the least amount of educational qualifications shall be determined or demoted.

(See next page)

Page 3 - CGM - REDUCTION IN PROFESSIONAL STAFF, WORK FORCE AND ADMINISTRATORS

- c. If reductions cannot be met by applying the criteria described in paragraphs a. and b. above, then the administrator by category (listed above) with the least amount of continuous service as an employee of the Columbia County Board of Education except for authorized leave of absence, shall be terminated or demoted.
 - d. If all of the above three criteria are equal, the selection shall be by lot.
3. Any administrator whose services are terminated due to reduction of personnel will be appointed to the first vacancy in the category for which he/she is qualified, according to the rules of seniority listed above.

Seniority in a field of leadership shall begin from the date of beginning such leadership role within the school system. Seniority within the system shall begin from the date of hire by formal action of the Board and shall be uninterrupted service within the system, except as interrupted by approved leave of absence.

- 4. There shall be no deviation from this policy except by the Board following a special conference in which the valid interest of the Board to deviate herein is fairly demonstrated.
- 5. Whenever possible, administrators will be able to return to other duties within the school system and will not, perhaps be terminated but rather demoted. Such administrators shall be informed that such transfers and demotions are part of the reduction in force action and are not punitive in nature.
- 6. Any administrator demoted or terminated due to a reduction in force shall be placed in a pool according to seniority for a period of time not to exceed two (2) full calendar years. If and when an administrative vacancy occurs within this time frame, the displaced administrator with the most seniority will be considered for the position for which they are qualified.

The right of the administrator to remain in the pool shall end if:

- a. The employee fails to provide written acceptance of a position on the same level of employment in the school system within seven (7) days of such offer being made.

(See next page)

Page 4 - CGM - REDUCTION IN PROFESSIONAL STAFF, WORK FORCE AND ADMINISTRATORS

Current and correct mailing address is the responsibility of the employee.

- b. Employee resigns prior to actual termination or demotion and after notification of reduction in force.
- 7. Any reduction in force shall be carried out in accordance with the relevant statutes of the State of Georgia and shall be governed by the Georgia Fair Dismissal Act

(O.C.G.A. 20-2-940).

PROCEDURE: NO

ADOPTED: 2/14/89

REVISED: 3/28/95, 10/01/97, 8/10/99

Columbia County Board of Education