

Responsibilities and Prerogatives of the Board of Education

Two important functions of the Board of Education are to employ personnel and manage resources within the limitations defined by the funding sources of the school system. Consequently, it shall be the prerogative of the Board to abolish job positions, to reduce the length of the work year and salary of certificated or non-certificated personnel (hereinafter "to downgrade"), and/or to reduce the number of employees when seeking to cope effectively with program changes or financial exigency.

Reasons for Reduction in Force (RIF)

The Board shall consider a reduction in the work force to include the abolition of job positions, the downgrading of employees' positions, and/or the reduction of the number of employees, as a response to the following:

1. A decrease in student enrollment in the School System which would necessitate a decrease in personnel or a discontinuation of programs;
2. A change in state or local curriculum, personnel, or financial practices which would necessitate a change in or elimination of program or services provided by the School System;
3. A loss of funds due to a reduction in state funds, reduction in local funds or other funds that make necessary a reduction in spending;
4. A lack of funding for programs, personnel, or services provided by the School System;
5. Any reasonable reorganization plan to achieve a more efficient school system; or
6. Any other good and sufficient reason deemed necessary by the Board of Education.

RIF PROCEDURE

When the Superintendent determines that the application of this reduction in force policy is necessary, it shall be his or her primary responsibility to prepare for presentation to the Board of Education a plan for reduction in force (RIF).

In proposing the plan, the Superintendent may: (1) determine the group(s) of employees to which the RIF will be applied, (2) select individuals or positions to be subject to the RIF, or (3) any combination of (1) and (2). Factors to be considered by the Superintendent in devising a RIF plan may include, but shall not be limited to, level of certification and length of continuous service of individual employees with the Board.

Reduction in Force (RIF) of Auxiliary Personnel

Neither State law nor local Board policy provides auxiliary school board employees with a right for continued employment. Auxiliary employees work at the pleasure of the Board from year to year. Therefore, if it becomes necessary to reduce the number of auxiliary workers, it shall be handled by attrition to the extent possible. When the required number of positions cannot be handled by attrition, the following policy shall be in force to determine employees to be laid off:

1. For the purposes of this policy, auxiliary personnel shall consist of the following:
 - Secretaries
 - Media Clerks
 - Ten-Month Part-Time Employees Other than Aides
 - Custodians
 - Facilities, Maintenance & Operations Personnel
 - Transportation Personnel
 - School Nutrition Personnel
 - Warehouse Personnel
 - Paraprofessionals (full and part-time)/Clerical Aides
 - Clerical Office Assistants
 - Technology Support Specialists
 - School Nurses
 - Campus Security Personnel
 - Other Auxiliary Personnel

2. As to the retention of auxiliary personnel, **unless the Superintendent recommends different priorities for a plan of reduction in his or her presentation to the Board of Education**, the administration shall base its recommendation to the Board by department or category on the basis of seniority which is defined as uninterrupted service from the first date of employment for the respective employee. In the event of a tie between two or more employees, the seniority will be determined as follows:
 - a. Date of Board of Education approval
 - b. Date of recommendation for employment

If the Superintendent recommends and the Board approves an alternative RIF procedure, employees shall be provided a copy of the revised procedure before it takes place.

When all dates are the same, selection for seniority will be drawn by lot. If the Board deems it necessary to implement said policy, the order of reduction shall be considered by unit or department as described.

In case of a RIF with respect to paraprofessionals or clerical aides (part-time and full-time), seniority shall be applied system wide and reduction in force will be applied to the categories in existence at that time.

Any staff member released under the provisions of this policy will be so notified in writing along with a statement of honorable dismissal as soon as the Board and/or administrator has determined that a RIF is necessary.

Re-employment rights will be granted within a space of two calendar years. Openings will be filled in reverse order of termination under this policy using the same criteria. An employee's eligibility for re-employment under this policy shall terminate if:

1. The employee fails to provide written acceptance of an offer of a position on the same level of employment in the school system within seven days of such offer being made. Current, correct mailing address is the responsibility of the employee.
2. The employee resigns prior to actual termination or demotion and/or after notification of a RIF.

PROCEDURE: NO

ADOPTED: 12/14/82

REVISED: 8/10/99, 3/24/09

Columbia County Board of Education