

**FAYETTEVILLE (AR) PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
REDUCTION IN FORCE**

The Board of Education recognizes that a decrease in student enrollment, district-wide or within a particular program, school district reorganization, the financial condition of the school district, or other factors may make it necessary to place some staff members on involuntary leaves of absence, without pay or other benefits. Recognizing that such action is potentially disruptive to school programs and individual staff members, the Board agrees that such a reduction will be made only after school employees and the Board of Education have given due consideration to alternatives to such a reduction. When such an occasion arises, procedures will be followed to accomplish two purposes:

1. Maintenance of education of the highest possible quality for the students of the Fayetteville Public Schools
2. Fair and equitable treatment for all employees of the school district.

It is understood that this policy will not be used to dismiss any individual employee. Such dismissal will take place only through the provisions of Policy No. 4119.

**PROCEDURES**

**I. General Guidelines**

When a reduction in the number of certificated staff members becomes necessary, the following general guidelines will be followed:

- A. A balance will be sought in the reduction of teaching, supervisory, and administrative positions within the accreditation standards of the state.
- B. Efforts will be made to accomplish the reduction through attrition and reassignment before using any other method of staff reduction.
- C. Written notification to affected staff members will be provided as early as possible but no later than April 15 of the current contract year.
- D. A staff member whose position is eliminated the provisions of this policy will be considered to be on extended leave(involuntary). Such status will be maintained for a period of two years (unless re-employed by the Fayetteville Schools) and will

not be affected by employment in another school district or in another occupation.

- E. The administration will inform all affected staff members regarding how insurance and retirement benefits are affected by such a reduction.
- F. The administration will provide reasonable assistance to affected employees who wish to seek employment in surrounding school districts. Affected employees who are not employed elsewhere will be encouraged to make themselves available for substitute teaching in the Fayetteville Schools; such teachers will be given priority when substitute assignments are made.
- G. Staff reductions will be made on a district-wide basis (elementary K-5 secondary 6-12) rather than by building. Staff members will be considered for reduction on the basis of their current assignment; those on leave of absence will be considered as though they were employed in their most recent assignment.
- H. In the event of state action, such as annexation, years of employment in Fayetteville Public Schools will supersede total years of experience of newly acquired employees from other district(s).

**II. Specific Procedures**

When a staff reduction becomes necessary, the following specific procedures will be followed:

- A. The administration - based on current and projected enrollments, district financial projections, etc. - will determine the total number of staff reductions to be made for the district and for each building for the succeeding year.
- B. The administration will determine the number of personnel to be reduced in each of the following categories:
  - 1. Classroom teachers and reading teachers in grades K-5.
  - 2. Teachers in grades K-5, by areas of specialization (music teachers, librarians, special education teachers, etc.).
  - 3. Teachers in grades 6-12, by areas of specialization (includes all non-administrative personnel).

4. Administrators and supervisors.
- C. Staff reductions in categories B. 1-4 (above) will be completed in the following order:
- Step 1: Natural attrition
  - Step 2: Employees with provisional licenses, waivers, and additional licensure plans.
  - Step 3: Part-time employees, if their area of specialization is identified for reduction in B, above.
  - Step 4: Employees who are assigned to an area of specialization being eliminated from the curriculum (as identified in B. 2-4, above).
  - Step 5: If sufficient staff members are not reduced through these four means, consideration will be given to the following items, taken as a whole:
    - a. Commitment to professional development, as indicated by a review of the staff member's total staff development record. Specific consideration will be given to the appropriateness and magnitude of job targets/improvement goals undertaken and completed by the employee through the staff evaluation program and to the appropriateness and magnitude of advanced training completed through college/university courses and/or the local staff development program.
    - b. Areas of specialization and multiple certification areas.
    - c. Recommendation of the employees' immediate supervisor, as reflected in the employee's annual evaluation and through the supervisor's review of that appraisal.
    - d. Experience in the Fayetteville Public Schools.
    - e. Experience in the field of education.

Where necessary and appropriate, the superintendent's office will be responsible for evaluating employees on a district-wide basis on criteria a-e.

- D. After reductions are made, necessary transfers within the district will be governed by the district's transfer policy (No. 4115).

### III. Recall

If, after a reduction has been made, the need for the total reduction in force is diminished, personnel reduced under the provisions of this policy will be offered employment before employment is offered to any other applicant, provided such employees are fully certified for the available position (even if the vacancy is in a teaching specialty different from that previously held by the affected employee) and that they have notified the Superintendent of Schools of these teaching areas for which they wish to be considered for employment.

When positions are to be filled through the recall process, eligible personnel (those on involuntary leave) will be recalled on the basis of their possession of criteria a-e in Step 5, above, at the time of the original reduction. When a selection is made, the person being recalled will be offered employment by certified mail (deliverable to the employee only) from the superintendent's office. (If a person affected by staff reduction fails to keep the superintendent's office notified of current address, or other proper means of contacting when a vacancy occurs, that person waives the opportunity for recall.) Within seven calendar days of receipt of the offer of employment, the recalled person must accept the offer by replying by certified mail or in person to the superintendent's office. Rejection of such an offer, or failure to respond within seven days, removes the recalled person's right to any further employment consideration under the provisions of this policy.

Upon accepting a position through the recall procedure, the affected staff member will have previously existing benefits (seniority, accumulated leave, etc.) reinstated. No benefits will be accrued during the time the staff member is not employed by the school district, except for the following provisions:

1. A year's experience credit will be awarded for each year (or major portion thereof) of teaching service rendered by an employee on involuntary leave of absence in a school system accredited by a state department of education or similar accrediting agency.
2. A year's experience credit will be awarded for any academic

year in which an employee on involuntary leave of absence serves as a substitute teacher for at least 120 days in the Fayetteville Public Schools.

A person will be eligible for recall for a period of two calendar years, beginning with the last day of the contract year during which notice of reduction is received by the person. Any person not recalled within two years will no longer be considered on leave of absence status and must re-apply to the school district to be considered for employment.

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