

Reduction In Force

The Hitchcock County School District Board of Education may determine that a reduction in force of certificated staff members is appropriate due to declining enrollment in a grade or grades, changes in financial support, changes in curricular programs, a decline in the taxable value of property located within the school district, increased costs of operating the school district, or another change or changes in circumstances. If the board, in its sole discretion, determines that a reduction of certificated staff is necessary, the superintendent shall notify those employees whose contracts may be reduced. However, the employment of a permanent employee may not be terminated through a reduction in force while a probationary employee is retained to render a service that the permanent employee is qualified to perform by reason of certification and endorsement, or when certification is not applicable, by reason of college credits in the teaching area.

1. **Definition of Reduction in Force.** A reduction in force shall consist of a reduction of one or more positions or a reduction in the percentage of employment of one or more certificated staff members, even if the number of percentage of employment of the certificated staff overall may be increased by other hirings or increases in the percentage of employment of other employees. Reduction in force may result in the termination of employment or an amendment to an employee's contract reducing the extent of the employee's employment.
2. **Restriction of Right to Administrative Position.** Due to the confidential and unique personal working relationship necessary between the administration and the board of education, a certificated employee who is not currently serving in a predominantly administrative capacity shall have no rights under this policy to any administrative position within the school system.
3. **Criteria for Reduction in Force.** The criteria set forth below shall be considered in selecting the personnel to be reduced. The criteria are not listed in any order of priority, and shall be given the weight that the board considers appropriate.
 - a. Programs to be offered;

- b. Areas of endorsement that are of present or future value to the district. This criterion shall be based upon the endorsement(s) shown on each teacher's Nebraska Teaching Certificate;
 - c. State and federal laws or regulations that may mandate certain employment practices;
 - d. Involvement in the programs and activities sponsored by the school district;
 - e. Special or advanced training consisting of college credit or other training that would be of present or future value to the district;
 - f. The organizational and educational effect caused by multiple part-time certificated employees; and
 - g. Any other reasons that are rationally related to the instruction in or administration of the school district.
4. **Consideration of Uninterrupted Service.** If, after consideration of the criteria listed above, it is the opinion of the superintendent that there is no significant difference between or among certificated employees being considered for reduction, the employee(s) with the longest uninterrupted service to the district shall be retained.
- a. Uninterrupted length of service is defined as the number of continuous full-time equivalent years of employment in the district as a teacher.
 - b. A full-time equivalent year is defined as employment on a full-time basis for an entire school year.
 - c. Less than full-time employment reduces the teacher's full-time equivalent employment for a school year. For example, a teacher employed on a half-time basis would be credited with half a year full-time equivalent employment.
 - d. A break in service will terminate a teacher's seniority and length of service under this provision. That period of time when a teacher is on a leave of absence shall not constitute a break in service; however, any years of absences or fractions of years of leave of absence will not count as years of employment for the purposes of determining the length of a teacher's uninterrupted service.
5. **Rights of Recall.**
- a. Any certificated employee whose contract has been terminated shall be considered to have been dismissed with

honor and shall, upon request, be provided a letter to that effect.

- b. Such employee shall have preferred rights to re-employment for a period of 24 months commencing at the end of the contract year, and the employee shall be recalled on the basis of length of service to the district to any position that he or she is qualified to teach by endorsement or college preparation.
- c. Upon re-employment, a recalled employee shall be placed on the salary schedule and provided fringe benefits based on existing district policies and the current negotiated agreement. Any year of years of absence from employment shall not be considered as a year or years of employment by the district.
- d. An employee under contract to another education institution may waive recall, but such waiver shall not deprive the employee of his or her right to subsequent recall.

6. Current Teaching Certificate.

- a. Upon initial employment with the district, each certificated employee shall file a copy of his or her teaching certificate, including endorsements with the superintendent of schools.
- b. The employee shall be responsible for filing any changes in certification or endorsements with the superintendent.

7. Address Records.

- a. A certificated employee whose employment contract has been terminated because of a reduction in force shall, during the period which he or she is eligible for recall, be responsible for reporting any change of address to the superintendent of schools.
- b. If there is a vacancy to which a former employee has a right of recall, the district may communicate an offer of re-employment by telephone, by e-mail, or by United States mail sent to the former employee's last known address. If the school district does not receive written acceptance of the offer within seven days, the former employee shall be deemed to have waived his or her rights to be recalled to the employment position.

Hitchcock County Schools #44-0070
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