



Book	Policy Manual
Section	300 Employees
Title	Reduction of Staff
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Authority

The Board is responsible for maintaining appropriate numbers of administrative, professional and support employees to effectively manage and operate the district and its schools. This policy establishes the manner in which necessary reductions of staff shall be accomplished.[1][2][3]

In the exercise of its authority to reduce staff through suspensions (furloughs) and elimination of positions, the Board shall give primary consideration to the staffing needs of the district, the effect upon the educational program and the financial stability of the district, and shall ensure compliance with law, regulations, collective bargaining agreements, individual contracts and Board resolutions.[4][5][6]

The Board shall not prevent any professional employee from engaging in another occupation during the period of suspension.[5]

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit the cause for which a temporary professional employee, or any employee other than a professional employee, may be suspended.[5]

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent shall be responsible for the continuous review of the efficiency and effectiveness of district organization and staffing, and shall present recommendations for reduction in staff for Board consideration when such actions are deemed to be in the best interests of the district.

The Superintendent shall consult with the district solicitor as necessary to ensure that reduction of staff is implemented in accordance with applicable laws.[4][5]

Guidelines

Employees Other Than Professional Employees and Temporary Professional Employees

The employment status of employees other than professional employees and temporary professional employees may be terminated or temporarily suspended whenever deemed necessary in the best interests of the school district, subject to limitations and procedures provided for in collective bargaining agreements, if any.

Temporary Professional Employees

The employment status of a temporary professional employee may be non-renewed when the employee's position has been eliminated or when the conditions for which professional employees may be suspended otherwise exist, subject to limitations and procedures provided for in collective bargaining agreements, if any.

Professional Employees

The necessary number of professional employees may be suspended for the following reasons:
[4]

1. Substantial decrease in student enrollment in the district.
2. Curtailment or alteration of the educational program as a result of substantial decline in class or course enrollments or to conform with standards of organization or educational activities required by law or recommended by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Such curtailment or alteration must be recommended by the Superintendent, agreed to by the Board, and approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. If not prevented by an existing or future provision of a collective bargaining agreement or employment contract, such a suspension may be effectuated without approval of the Pennsylvania Department of Education provided that, where an educational program is altered or curtailed, the district shall notify the Pennsylvania Department of Education of such action.
3. Consolidation of schools, whether within the district, through a merger of districts, or as a result of Joint Board agreements, when such consolidation makes it unnecessary to retain the full staff of professional employees.
4. When new school districts are established as the result of reorganization of school districts and such reorganization makes it unnecessary to retain the full staff of professional employees.
5. Economic reasons that require a reduction in professional employees; however, the district is prohibited from using an employee's compensation in the suspension determination. A Superintendent knowingly in violation of this prohibition shall have a letter from the Secretary of Education placed in his/her permanent employee record.

Economic Suspension Requirements -

The Board may suspend professional employees for economic reasons if all of the following apply:
[4]

1. The Board approves the proposed suspensions by a majority vote of all school directors at a public meeting.
2. No later than sixty (60) days prior to the adoption of the final budget, the Board adopts a resolution of intent to suspend professional employees in the following fiscal year, setting forth:

- a. The economic conditions necessitating the proposed suspensions and how the economic conditions will be alleviated by the proposed suspensions, including:
 - i. The total cost savings expected from the proposed suspensions.
 - ii. A description of other cost-saving actions taken by the Board, if any.
 - iii. The projected district expenditures for the following fiscal year with and without the proposed suspensions.
 - iv. The projected total district revenues for the following fiscal year.
- b. The number and percentage of employees to be suspended who are:
 - i. Professional employees assigned to provide instruction directly to students.
 - ii. Administrative staff.
 - iii. Professional employees who are not assigned to provide instruction directly to students and who are not administrative staff.
- c. The impact of the proposed suspensions on academic programs to be offered to students following the proposed suspensions, as well as the impact on academic programs to be offered to students if the proposed suspensions are not undertaken, compared to the current school year, and the actions if any, that will be taken to minimize the impact on student achievement.

Professional Employees Assigned to Provide Instruction Directly to Students -

Suspensions, due to economic reasons, of professional employees assigned to provide instruction directly to students may be approved by the Board only if the Board also suspends at least an equal percentage proportion of administrative staff, except when all of the following apply:[4]

1. The Secretary of Education determines that the district's operations are already sufficiently streamlined or that the suspension of administrative staff would cause harm to the school stability and student programs.
2. The Secretary of Education submits the determination to the State Board of Education.
3. The State Board of Education approves the determination by a majority of its members.

The Board may choose to exempt from this requirement any five (5) administrative positions, one of which shall be the Business Manager or another staff member with the primary responsibility of managing the district's business operation.[4]

Order of Suspensions

Although the changes regarding suspensions in Act 55 were effective on November 6, 2017, they do not supersede pertinent provisions of collective bargaining agreements currently in effect. All collective bargaining agreements negotiated or renewed after November 6, 2017, must comply with the provisions governing suspensions as stated in Act 55, including during the period of status quo after the expiration of a contract.

Data necessary for computation of each professional employee's performance rating and seniority status shall be recorded and maintained to ensure compliance with the required order for suspensions.[7][8]

Performance Evaluation Rating -

Professional employees shall be suspended, within the area of certification required by law for the professional employee's current position, in the following order based on the two (2) most recent annual performance evaluations:[5][7][8]

1. Consecutive unsatisfactory ratings.
2. One (1) unsatisfactory rating and one (1) satisfactory rating.
3. Consecutive satisfactory ratings which are either consecutive ratings of proficient, or a combination of one (1) proficient or distinguished rating and one (1) needs improvement rating.
4. Consecutive satisfactory ratings which are consecutive distinguished, or a combination of one (1) rating of proficient and one (1) rating of distinguished.

Seniority -

Seniority shall be considered only when the number of professional employees within each certification area receiving the same performance ratings is greater than the number of suspensions.[5]

Seniority shall continue to accrue during a suspension and all approved leaves of absence.[5]

When there is or has been a consolidation of schools, departments or programs, all professional employees shall retain the seniority rights they had prior to the reorganization or consolidation.[5]

Reinstatement

Suspended professional employees, or professional employees demoted for reasons of this policy, shall be reinstated within the area of certification required by law for the vacancy being filled in the district, in the inverse order by which they were suspended and on the basis of their seniority within the district.[5]

No new appointment shall be made while there is a suspended or demoted professional employee available who is properly certificated to fill such vacancy.[5]

Positions from which professional employees are on approved leaves of absence shall be considered temporary vacancies.[5]

To be considered available, suspended professional employees shall annually report in writing to the Board their current address and intent to accept the same or similar position when offered.[5]

A suspended professional employee enrolled in a college program during a period of suspension and who is recalled shall be given the option of delaying a return to service until the end of the current semester.[5]

Local Agency Law Hearings

The decision to suspend a professional employee shall be considered an adjudication for the purposes of the Local Agency Law, and a professional employee subject to such a decision shall have the right to a Local Agency Law hearing before the Board, if a hearing is requested within ten (10) days after being notified of suspension.[5][9]

A decision to nonrenew the employment of a temporary professional employee whose position has been eliminated or who is being nonrenewed for reasons for which professional employees may be suspended, shall be considered an adjudication for purposes of the Local Agency Law, and the employee shall be entitled to a Local Agency Law hearing, if a hearing is requested within ten (10) days after being notified of the decision to nonrenew.[9]

Legal

1. 22 PA Code 4.4
2. 24 P.S. 1106
3. 24 P.S. 406
4. 24 P.S. 1124
5. 24 P.S. 1125.1
6. 24 P.S. 524
7. 24 P.S. 1123
8. Pol. 313
9. 2 Pa. C.S.A. 551 et seq

Last Modified by Kathy McCool on June 21, 2018