

# FAQ's

Frequently  
Asked  
Questions

## Reduction-in-Force

**Q: Who does the reduction-in-force affect? Is it me?**

**A:** We are all impacted by the reduction-in-force. In every collective bargaining unit, we have people who will be affected.

**Q: When will I know if I am impacted by the Reduction-in-Force?**

**A:** A supervisor or principal will notify all personnel impacted by the last day of school.

**Q: Why are we choosing layoffs over furloughs?**

**A:** We have taken several measures to avoid a reduction in force. Furloughs are still an option being considered. However, furloughs are a short-term fix to a long-term financial problem. The Board realized that the system was facing a structural deficit and that reducing positions that carry over annually was a better way to fix the long-term problem. While other County Governments are implementing furloughs, no other school system in the State of Maryland has furloughed in FY 2009. However the reduction-in-force option is unfortunately happening in other school districts.

**Q: Will support staff be able to transfer to other schools?**

**A:** We are adhering to union negotiated agreement guidelines as it pertains all positions to impacted by the reduction-in-force.

**Q: Will managers be informed in advance of employees who will be included in the reduction-in-force?**

**A:** Managers and supervisors will work together with human resources in regards to the communication of positions impacted. They will be notified in advance of employees impacted along with communicating the actual decisions.

**Q: Is the reduction-in-force applicable to Pupil Personnel Workers (PPWs)?**

**A:** All positions impacted by the reduction-in-force were identified in the Board approved fiscal 2010 budget. This information can be found in the budget book on our Web site.

**Q: How were employees selected for the layoffs?**

**A:** Each Chief was charged with identifying a cost savings within their departments. All positions impacted by the reduction-in-force were identified in the Board approved fiscal 2010 budget.



**Q: Will 11 month Achievement Coaches be reduced or eliminated?**

A: Yes, 11 month achievement coaches are being reduced as part of the zone restructuring.

**Q: Will 11 month employee salaries be reduced to 10 month employee salaries should they move back into a classroom?**

A: We are adhering to union negotiated agreement guidelines as it pertains to impacted positions by the reduction-in-force .

**Q: Are you working with the unions?**

A: The negotiated collective bargaining unit agreements will be strictly adhered to in execution of a reduction in force.

**Q: The PGCEA contract says that all teachers in the collective bargaining unit need to be notified by June 1. Will this be honored regardless if you work in a classroom or not but are still a member of that unit?**

A: The contract states that involuntary staff reductions need to be notified by June 1. However, there is not a deadline for the reduction-in-force. We are working to have all notifications out by June 19.

**Q: Will this reduction-in-force affect class sizes?**

A: Class size will remain according to the staffing formula.

**Q: Is the Peer Mediation program being cut?**

A: As of today, the program is not being eliminated.

**Q: Please explain the no automatic return of retire/rehire employees**

A: No automatic return of retire/rehire employees simply means that each retire/rehire employee will be reviewed individually to determine their hire eligibility for the upcoming school year. Each employee with the retire/rehire status should have received a letter by now explaining the situation. We will communicate as needed by July 17.

**Q: What will happen with the Parent Liaisons? How are those cuts being decided?**

A: The school system was forced to make drastic cuts to specific programs to eliminate the structural deficit including the Parent Liaison program. The reorganization of that program is still being determined.

**Q: Are employees on visas automatically on the reduction-in-force list?**

A: No, employees are not automatically impacted by the reduction-in-force simply because they are here on a work visa.

**Q: Are all conditional teachers included in the RIF?**

A: Conditional teachers are technically not included in the reduction-in-force. As communicated in the Superintendent's letter, we have elected not to renew assignments for conditional teachers. All will receive letters by June 1.

**Q: Are you providing any financial incentives for early retirees or for people “choosing” to leave the system?**

A: There are no financial incentives for early retirement.

**Q: Does the reduction-in-force include cafeteria staff?**

A: It is highly unlikely that the reduction-in-force will include cafeteria staff.

**Q: Will staff affected by the reduction-in-force be allowed to receive unemployment benefits?**

A: Staff impacted the reduction-in-force will be eligible to receive unemployment benefits.

**Q: Can you be bumped from your position?**

A: The negotiated collective bargaining unit agreements will be strictly adhered to in execution of a reduction-in-force relative to “bumping rights”.

**Q: I was told that employees with less than five years and more than 32 years will be automatically terminated. Is that true?**

A: This is not true.

**Q: Will para-professionals be cut?**

A: All positions impacted by the reduction-in-force were identified in the Board approved fiscal 2010 budget. This information can be found in the budget book on our Web site.

**Q: Will the Read 180 program be eliminated?**

A: We are looking for ways to continue the program.

**Q: Will the Before and After School Care Extended Learning Program continue?**

A: All grant-funded extended learning programs will be continued. Other extended learning programs are at the discretion of school leadership based on their budgets.

**Q: Will impacted employees be able to carry their benefits during unemployment? Can they “draw” on their retirement?**

A: We are working on provisions for extension of benefits, but it changes based on the different agreements. Each case will be decided on an individual basis.

**Q: Will the employees impacted by the reduction-in-force have any assistance with finding another job?**

A: We are creating a Transition Center here at Sasscer that will assist all impacted employees in all areas associated with transitioning from a job including job searches, resume assistance, employee assistance program, benefits overview, etc.

**Q: Are conditional teachers the same as provisional teachers?**

A: Conditional teachers are instructors on a provisional contract.

**Q: Why are employees being notified so late?**

**A:** We want to notify employees as soon as possible. We are working very hard to get fidelity on all information that impacts personnel affected and all collective bargaining units. We want to ensure that we are in compliance with all negotiations and agreements.

**Q: When will we be notified what parent liaisons will be affected by the reduction-in-force?**

**A:** We have obtained fidelity on the number of parent liaisons who will remain, which will be about eighty. We are now working on identifying which will stay based on seniority and bumping rights for those who've been with the school system in other capacities before they became a parent liaison.

**Q: Will there be any other school consolidations that might impact the population of small schools?**

**A:** Yes, but this initiative will be rolled out in phases. Phase 1 affected twelve schools, which provides significant cost savings. Phases two and three don't begin until the fall and won't impact the budget until the following year. Once we're finished with these phases, we're going to begin to look at all high schools, which will then happen the following year.

**Q: In regard to the parent liaisons, is the reduction in force policy going to be based on tenures in our specific job right now or tenure within the system?**

**A:** The time you've spent as a parent liaison will be considered first as we develop seniority lists, and the time you've spent in the system will be taken into consideration second. Results may vary depending on collective bargaining agreements.

**Q: Can you describe the new structure for parent liaisons? How are services going to be provided to parents?**

**A:** We will have a structure that provides services for a group of schools instead of on an individual basis in addition to feeder patterns and how many individuals are needed to ensure parents have access to the same resources. It will also be based on high priority schools, which will come first, as well as identified needs from principals.

**Q: For employees affected who have not put in a transfer card, will we be given the same opportunity as our counterparts who have already put in a transfer card? How will we know which schools have openings?**

**A:** Those who have already put in transfer cards might be affected by the reduction-in-force, as all decisions will be based on seniority. Schools with vacancies will be identified.

**Q: In regards to parent liaisons, will you keep in mind the necessity of bilingual parent liaisons?**

**A:** As mentioned before, our decisions will be based upon priority schools, and one of those priorities happens to be non-English speaking parents of students who attend certain schools. Seniority considerations will still be taken into account.

**Q: Can one union bump another union?**

**A:** These decisions will be based on the certifications of the individuals, meaning that we'll take into account how long the person has been in the system as well as other qualifications.

**Q: How would you characterize seniority rights if our position title has been changed?**

**A:** In Oracle, we have a job number. Even though job titles change, the job number stays the same.

**Q: In the cases where people are waiting for year's tenure or accreditations to come through, how is that going to be dealt with?**

**A:** A decision is not based on tenure, but on those individuals who are conditionally or provisionally certified and those who are fully certified. The process is then determined by seniority.

**Q: Are unsatisfactory teachers going to be reduced?**

**A:** We're looking at projected vacancies as the year progresses toward the beginning of the next school year. If there's unsatisfactory performance two years in a row, then those numbers will be counted in the projected numbers.