BEA Reduction in Force (RIF) Update
May 5, 2009

Last week, 220 members of the Bethel Education Association, the union that serves our teachers, nurses, counselors and other certificated personnel, received Reduction in Force (RIF) notices. These notices were given in accordance with the BEA contract and state law.

If I have received a RIF notice, does that mean that I have been fired?
RIF notices are just that – a notice. Districts use them to notify staff that a layoff may be imminent. Individuals who received RIF notices have not been fired and will continue to work in their current capacity through the remainder of the school year.

What is a recall list?
A recall list is a list of RIF’d employees, who have been rank ordered by years of Washington state experience, degree and credits. The list is used to match employees with vacancies in the district.

How does the recall process work?
We are identifying positions that need to be filled for the 2009/10 school year. These vacancies have been created by the RIF process, retirements, leave of absences and resignations. As part of the recall process, staff will be hired to fill positions by seniority and certification, in accordance with the BEA contract, beginning with the most senior staff member. Our priority is to keep as many people as possible in their current or similar positions.

This week we started the process for rehiring staff that received RIF notices. Job offers will be made to RIF’d employees based on their seniority and certification, in accordance with the BEA contract. Staff members who are placed into jobs will be notified in writing.

What is the timeline for rehiring staff?
Our goal is to complete this process as rapidly as possible. We hope to have the majority of reassignments done by the end of the school year. More staff members may be rehired this summer as we receive additional retirements, resignations and leave requests.

Do I need to re-apply to be considered for a position?
No. Staff who received RIF notices are now part of the recall list. There is no need for these staff members to re-apply. We will consider them for positions, based on their seniority and their certifications.

**Why did the district RIF so deeply?**
The RIF is based solely on seniority and certification. In order to ensure that we had the right mix of certifications for next year we needed to RIF 220 certificated staff. The number 220 is the number of people who were notified; it is not equivalent to full-time positions (FTE). For these reasons, we did notify more staff than the actual number of positions that we need to reduce in the budget.

**How many certificated positions are being eliminated?**
We are still trying to firm up the actual number of full-time positions (FTEs) that need to be eliminated from the budget. The number of RIF notices that were sent out was based on the best information we had received from the state. We are also in the process of making cuts in other areas, too.

**The RIF deadline is May 15. Why did you RIF so early?**
We are not the only district that will be conducting a RIF due to budget cuts this year. The vast majority will be reducing staff. Rather than wait, we thought it would be more responsible to notify our staff early. That way, if they need to look for a job, they would have more time to do so. We also thought this early timeline would allow us to rehire as many staff as possible before the end of the school year.

**You mentioned 220, but some say the cuts are really around 300 positions. Is this true?**
No. As we mentioned before, 220 certificated staff received RIF notices. The confusion seems to stem from another 53 staff members who were notified in February that their jobs would end at the close of the current school year. These individuals were non-continuing retire/rehires and leave replacements. Every year, these people drop off the rolls, so that we can make room for staff that are returning from leave of absences.

**What happens if I do not want the position that is offered to me during the recall process?**
During the recall process, staff that decline positions that are offered to them will be removed from the recall list. They will not be considered for vacancies as long as there are other qualified candidates remaining on the recall list.

**How long can I stay on the recall list?**
Employees, who are not successfully placed, can remain on the recall list for 10 months. The list will expire on April 30, 2010.

*If you have more questions about the RIF and Recall process, please contact the Human Resources Department.*