



Section 605: EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL (ESP)

Many questions have arisen concerning the placement of support staff in the schools, specifically how the CBA stipulates the placement in Redesigned Schools.

The Collective Bargaining Agreement, Section 605, part 1-5, stipulates that "Speech pathologist, school social workers, and psychologist shall each

form an assignment committee consisting of no more than three administrators for that discipline and three members appointed by the practitioners in that discipline." Section 1a (pg.56) further states that "Each committee shall develop and recommend to the responsible administrator designated by the Superintendent assignment of schools and caseloads with that discipline."

For ESP's in schools scheduled for Redesign, the aforementioned "Assignment Committee" will make the

school assignments as per the CBA, and those individuals continue to have the choice of staying or leaving if caseloads warrant.

It would be beneficial for all ESP, to review Facilities (1b), Speech Pathologist (2), School Psychologist(3a), School Social Workers(4), and Other Staff (ie. Occupational therapist, Physical Therapist, etc.) for the correct stipulations regarding assignments.

Transfer Rounds by Ed Jaspers & Ralph Jackson

The Contract language is clear about Teacher transfer requests. It states Teacher requests for transfer will be honored if positions are available and the teacher is qualified for a particular vacancy.

Vacancies listed in the round one announcement shall be filled, to the extent possible, prior to the Round one deadline. Vacancies listed in the round two announcement must be filled, to the extent possible, and teachers notified. However, if vacancies remain unfilled at the end of either transfer period, requests from qualified teachers for positions posted during that period must be honored before new candidates are considered. All teachers who applied for a transfer in Round 2 shall be notified whether or not they received a transfer by the end of the school year.

If more than one (1) teacher who is properly certified requests a transfer to a specific building or unit, and training, experience, and individual qualifica-

tions are substantially equal, and the transfer is consistent with the racial balancing of staff, seniority shall control the choice. Teachers shall be given, in writing, specific reasons for refusal of transfer requests within thirty (30) days after it is determined that a transfer will not be granted.

Appeals of decisions made by local school interview panels shall be submitted directly to the Alternate Grievance Panel. Appeals may be filed by a current CPS teacher who applied for a vacancy but was not selected, by the Federation or by any teacher who alleges that the provisions of this section were not honored in the interview and selection process. Decisions of the Alternate Grievance Panel are final and binding. If the Panel's vote is tied, the decision of the interview panel shall be upheld.

Vacancies which remain or occur after July 1 shall be filled first by surplus teachers and teachers returning from leave of absence who have not yet been

placed and then by new employees. The exception to this is the district may hire properly trained Montessori teachers to be assigned to Montessori schools to positions for which they are properly certificated/licensed, even when a pool of surplus teachers without Montessori training exists. Selection of these new hires shall be consistent with Section 250.1.e. A team of teachers or the majority of the team with appropriate certification for the posted positions may apply for vacant positions at any school, which has a sufficient number of vacancies.

Round one posting is March 9 and interviews are scheduled March 30 through April 10, 2009.

Round two posting is April 27 and interviews are scheduled for May 11 through May 22, 2009.

The final vacancy list for surplus teachers only (no voluntary transfers) comes out on June 1, 2009.



A member raised a concern about how the Redesign Language that requires surplussing staff in all redesigned schools got in our contract. In 1998 the CFT membership authorized the CFT president and bargaining chair to negotiate a provision in our contract for redesigning low performing schools based on the initiatives of the AFT on this subject. These negotiations resulted in the creation of the **School Assistance and Redesign Plan**, also known as the **School Accountability Plan**. The plan and proposed contract amendment were presented to the membership and the administration at the same time at the end of the 1998 calendar year. **In February of 1999 the CFT membership**

approved both the plan and the contract amendment.

This language was inadvertently omitted, however, when both parties printed the 2000 to 2003 CBA. Regardless, both parties operated by the guidelines laid out in the plan and the amendment from that point forward. That meant that the Redesign Team, later called the Redesign Committee, has followed this process outlined for redesigning schools since 1999. Part of that process required the surplussing of all staff for any redesigned school. This mission continued from one superintendent to the next until Mrs. Blackwell and our current CFT president agreed to reinsert the approved language back into the collective bargaining agreement as intended in 1999.

This is critical language that

Redesign Language in the Contract

preserves a process for redesigning schools that allows for CFT participation in redesign plans. There is nowhere in federal or state educational law that mandates union involvement in school district decisions of this sort. This is extremely important in this time period when school systems are subjected to tremendous pressure to use NCLB rules allowing them to subcontract redesigned schools to outside vendors who would not be obliged to use union labor for teachers or support staff. School districts around the country are using NCLB rules to redesign schools as Charters without the same pay and benefits that their union counterparts earn. Our redesign process, even though it surpluses all staff, does allow everyone to reapply and it does preserve teacher jobs in the district.

State Of The Union....Con't

structures in the nation and we created one of the strongest teacher career ladder structures found anywhere. As a result, Cincinnati Public is one of the most innovative school systems in the country with a large portfolio of school offerings from Montessori and Career Technical to specialty schools for languages and several college preparatory schools that rank at or near the top in the state and the nation.

These accomplishments and their future rest on the ability of the CFT to continue this heritage of innovation and education reform. That is why the CFT in the last year and a half worked closely with the General Electric Foundation on professional development initiatives like the Cincinnati Vermont Math Initiative (CVMI), Learning Team Training, and on exploring avenues for changing our district culture to become more inclusive and collaborative. These initiatives are far from complete and represent works in progress that must be seen in the light of our past work in creating a more democratic workplace that will deliver excellence in educational practice. We cannot rest on past success and we cannot stand still in a world that will quickly leave us in the dust as 21st Century learning demands force us to rethink our practices as educators. To survive, **public educators must be seen as innovators willing to stretch and take the risks** necessary to meet our students' needs or our institutions and jobs will become as extinct as the dinosaurs.

To this end the CFT also embarked on a partnership with the University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati State, Strive, and CPS to create a Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics (STEM) High School at the Hughes Center. This open enrollment school will emphasize teacher leadership in Paideia driven integrated cross-curricular instructional practices, deep partnerships with UC and Cincinnati State engineering, arts and sciences, and education faculty, partnerships with the corporate and medical communities for expertise and internship opportunities, and an imbedded mentoring program. We are drawing national attention to this work and have even won praise from the local press for making this effort.

We are breaking new ground in regard to the roles of teacher leadership in educational reform and in building community partnerships to support the needs of our students. **We are proving that teachers unions can be leaders of educational innovation.**

Membership Connection: The past year and a half brought unparalleled challenges and hardship to our teachers and schools. In schools hit the hardest morale is low because the workload is high. The relentless hammering of budget cuts driven by the district's (and now the world's) financial crisis exacted a heavy toll on our members, most particularly those teachers and clerical staff working in elementary schools. We also battled the decisions of heavy-handed administrators who dragged their feet in solving problems and settling grievances. Due to district stalling tactics the new CFT leadership inherited a backlog of grievances in May of 2007 that were waiting for arbitration. It took many dollars and an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) filed with the State Employee Relations Board to clear the log-jam. These actions ultimately brought favorable decisions for the CFT and, in one case, a **\$250,000 settlement for CFT members.**

Even though we recognize that long-term survival for public education requires a democratic workplace with collaborative structures and relationships there is still a need for the traditional adversarial tools to solve some of our problems. The problem with adversarial solutions is that labor law forces unions to be re-active and not pro-active in these matters. That makes the grievance process slow and it frustrates our members as they wait for the decisions to be made. Through out the last year and a half I and our Field Representatives constantly looked for more informal ways to settle issues and we met with some success on a few problems related to staffing and teacher workday. However, it clearly took the grievance process to restore the local school authority of ILTs against a trend of top down decision-making.

In terms of service to members we must get better by finding quicker so-

lutions to aggravating problems and we must work more creatively on facilitating solidarity among teachers and staff. In the year ahead we need to rethink our BR training to provide creative strategies for community building among teachers and staff at each school site. We need constant ILT training and coaching to make local governance work in all of our schools, not just a few. We need faster communication from the CFT office that is driven by greater use of electronic communication through personal email contacts and perhaps greater reliance on social media like Facebook and Twitter. That means we must have an accurate member contact database to facilitate the flow of information. This will not eliminate paper communication, but we will have to embrace the technology of this century if we hope to do our union work well and if we hope to do our jobs well of preparing our students with the skills they need to be successful.

The State of our Union is strong, but we have a long journey ahead of us. We must truly professionalize teaching and we must support each other as we work for what is best for our students and what is fair for our members. We have taken on a sacred task of preparing the next generation to inherit and lead our world. Quite a lot rests on our ability to carry out that mission. It is hard work. It is rewarding work. It is necessary work. We have chosen to organize ourselves into a union to help us carry out this task. We must never forget our responsibilities to our students and to each other.

In Solidarity,

Tim Kraus, President
Cincinnati Federation of Teachers



CFT/ACPSOP Scholarship Applications

CFT/ACPSOP Scholarship Applications have been sent to all building reps and should be in your building by March 6. The CFT Student Scholarship is for children of CFT members who will be attending their freshman year in the fall of 2009. The ACPSOP Scholarship is to assist ASPSOP members who wish to pursue further education leading to a BA/BS degree. Further information is attached to each application and must be filled out completely to be considered.

The William Sheehan Scholarship is awarded to CPS students that are:

- The first in the family to attend college
- Has a financial need (must provide copy of Student Aid Report)
- Civic Involvement

These applications can be picked up in the CFT Office or downloaded from the CFT Website.

All applications must be completed by 4-15-09.

For more information contact CFT at 961-2272 OR email: cft@cft-aft.org

ARE YOU CONSIDERING RETIREMENT IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?

Please join us for a group meeting on April 16 at 4:15pm at Mayerson Academy. An important part of this discussion, led by our retirement plan partner, ING, is how your sick leave conversion will be paid out to you upon retirement. This is a **very important** meeting to make sure you are aware of certain steps you will need to take. Please call ING at

800-451-4702 x4017490 to RSVP. If you are unable to attend and will be retiring, please call the same phone number to schedule a meeting with a representative to discuss this individually. Each year we offer this discussion and attendees find it very helpful, so please try to join us.

Educational Policies Committee

This year the CFT Educational Policies Committees' goal is to create a uniform *School Wide Discipline Plan* format and structure that will include intervention strategies which can be used district wide. Surveys were sent out to all BR's to gather data about school wide discipline plans. We also have information from A2S and A2E regarding their policies and procedures. If you are interested in learning more about the work of this committee please join us at one of our meetings or contact one of the co-chairs: Amy Tisher (Mt. Airy) or Jenifer Ray (Hughes Center).

Cincinnati Federation of Teachers Association of CPS Office Personnel

2721 Central Parkway, Suite B
Cincinnati, Ohio 45225
513-961-2272
Local 1520, AFT-OFT / AFL-CIO

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