



# Reduction in Force FY 2011 For Principals

*In a response to the growing economic crises, the Cobb County School District is making difficult decisions to reduce expenditures. One of these decisions is a Reduction in Force (RIF) for certain central office and school-based employees, effective with the 2010-11 school year. The information below provides general information regarding a RIF.*

## **What is a Reduction in Force (RIF)?**

A reduction in force is an involuntary separation of an employee from his or her assigned job. A RIF usually occurs as a result of a shortage of funds, lack of work, organizational changes or other business reasons. In Cobb, a RIF is conducted system-wide and not by an individual school or department.

## **How are employees selected for the RIF process?**

Criteria used in Cobb for selecting personnel for the RIF process depends on whether an entire job category is being eliminated or whether personnel are being reduced within a particular job function. The criteria may include any of the following elements:

- **All Certified Limited Contract Employees and all Limited Employment Paraprofessionals**
- **All Certified Part-time Employees (0 to 99% employees) and all Part-time Paraprofessionals**
- **Employee Performance (Based on RIF Plan)**
- **Seniority** - Staff with the longest, continuous full-time service are considered the most senior. The employment date is used to establish district seniority. If there has been a **break in service**, the length of continuous service since the employee's last date of hire or rehire is used as the employment date. Classified staff hired into a certified teaching position will experience a date change. Certified Teachers that were previously paraprofessionals and were promoted into a certified position will use the date of hire for their teaching position - not their date of hire as a paraprofessional. **This criterion applies to paraprofessionals also.**

## **When will employees be told?**

The RIF is being conducted before May 15, 2010. Employees included in the RIF will receive notification from Human Resources or designee.

## **If I have a part-time employee that I want to make full-time for the 2010-11 school year, may I go ahead and do so?**

No. Our contractual obligation is to our current full-time employees.

## **May I absorb my graduation coach and/or counselor?**

No, these two groups of employees are being placed on the surplus list.

**What if I have a part-time employee at my school and he/she is a part-time employee at another school as well, will he/she receive a contract?**

Yes, as long as the positions combined equal to 100% and both positions are certified positions.

**Do I absorb my Special Education Lead Teacher and/or CTI Teacher?**

Yes. Special Education Lead Teachers are part of the Special Education Allotment and are to be absorbed at each Middle and High School. CTI Teachers are also a part of the Special Education Allotment therefore, they should be absorbed into each High School. Elementary Special Education Lead Teachers will be placed on the surplus list.

**Are any employees protected from the RIF process?**

No. No employee is protected from the RIF process.

**If an employee loses his/her job due to the RIF, can he/she be rehired by the system?**

Once the RIF and reassignment process are complete, personnel may compete and be rehired for a position for which they are qualified.

**Is the RIF based on district-wide staffing or the staffing in my school?**

A RIF is conducted systemically and not by an individual school or department. For example, with the element of seniority, the system will take all employees within a particular impacted area and list from most senior to least senior. Although an employee may have the most seniority within his or her school, that individual may not have the most seniority system-wide.

**Does having multiple certifications protect an employee from RIF?**

No. The RIF is based on the employee's current position.

**If an employee has a valid five (5) year provisional certificate is he or she part of the RIF?**

No. The current RIF plan does not include provisional certificates.

**Will there be a reassignment process after the RIF?**

Yes. Following the RIF, Human Resources will conduct a reassignment process to redistribute continuing personnel throughout the district as needed. It is expected that this will be conducted during June, with the goal of completing it as quickly as possible.

**Are any employees excluded from the reassignment process?**

Yes. The following employees are excluded:

- Employees who receive a District approved supplement in whole or in part (i.e. yearbook sponsor, coach, department head) for the school year in question are protected from reassignment.
- Employees who are the only members of a department (i.e. music, art) or who are the only qualified employees of a specialty course (i.e. Advanced Placement Calculus) are protected from reassignment

**With the RIF and surplus, will there also be a window for general transfers this year?**

No. Given the level of movement occurring via the RIF and reassignment processes, we do not anticipate opportunities for general transfers will not take place this year.

**When will contracts be issued for employees not impacted by the RIF?**

The first priority of the district is to notify all employees who are in a RIF status (RIF Plan), being non-renewed (part-time employees) or not being re-elected (limited contract employees). This will take place prior to May 15, 2010. Contracted employees who are continuing their employment with the district can expect to receive an actual 2010-11 contract by **May 15**.

**When will those employees who are affected by the RIF receive information regarding their benefits?**

At their notification conference with their principal, supervisor or designee.

**If I have questions, who do I contact?**

Employees may speak with their principal if they have questions. Principals may direct employees to their assigned Human Resources staffing director if they need additional support handling employee questions or concerns.

**Tentative Time Line**

April 29	Area Meetings
May 3	Surplus Worksheet due to HR
May 3-7	HR Identifies Staff Reduction for the County
May 10	Principals/Supervisors are notified of RIF'd employees in their school/division
May 10-12	Principal/Supervisor meets with RIF'd employee(s) using the prepared script
May 12	Contracts/Letters delivered to the school
May 13	Contracts/Letters given to staff
May 24	Contracts due to school secretary
May 26	Contracts due to the County Office
TBD	Principal identifies reassignees
TBD	Reassignment Meeting
June-July	Competitive Rehires
June-July	Competitive New Hires

# How Does the Reduction In Force Affect My Benefits? <240 Day Certified Employees

## General Insurance Questions:

- **When will my insurance coverage end?** *If you fulfill your contract for the school year, you may retain benefits through the summer (paychecks being received through the summer). The last paycheck with deductions will be dated and distributed on 7/31/10 and coverage will terminate 8/31/10. If your summer pay is not sufficient to cover your benefit deductions, you will receive a separate billing, and you will be responsible for submitting a check/money order to the Benefits Office for your benefit coverages.*
- **What are my COBRA options?** *Since your termination was involuntary, you qualify for premium reductions for your health (medical, dental, vision) benefits under COBRA, should you elect it. COBRA is not applicable for life, cancer, or other insurances.*
  - a. *For health insurance coverage, COBRA paperwork and rates for all medical plans are administered by and provided by the State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP); they will contact you via mail regarding COBRA health insurance options and costs. You may continue your current health plan elections only under COBRA; rates are attached.*
  - b. *If you are currently enrolled in one of the CCSD dental insurance plans, T.W. Lord & Associates will contact you regarding COBRA options for dental.*
  - c. *If you are currently enrolled in the District vision insurance, the CCSD Benefits Office will contact you regarding COBRA options for vision.*
- **COBRA Costs:** *Although you will receive an official notification regarding your rights under COBRA, the monthly COBRA rates for dental and vision under the premium reduction are as follows:*

<u>Dental</u>	<u>Single</u>	<u>Family</u>
Low (United Concordia)	\$4.10	\$11.22
High (MetLife)	\$9.47	\$26.03

  

<u>Vision</u>	<u>Single</u>	<u>Family</u>
Opt. 1	\$.44	\$1.06
Opt. 2	\$1.54	\$3.73
Opt. 3	\$1.73	\$4.19
- **Optional Considerations:** *If you are currently enrolled in one the CCSD cancer plan options, you may consider converting that policy to a personal one. If desired, you should contact T.W. Lord & Associates (770) 427-2491. Life insurance may also be converted to a personal policy if desired. Please contact T.W. Lord & Associates for additional information.*

## Other Benefits Topics:

### Sick Leave

- **Do I get paid for the sick leave that I haven't used?** *Employees are not compensated for unused sick leave.*
- **If I go to work in another Georgia school district, may I transfer my unused sick leave there?** *You may transfer up to 45 days to another school district within the State of Georgia.*
- **If I go to work in another state, may I transfer my unused sick leave there?** *Unused sick leave may not be transferred from one state to another.*
- **What can I do with my unused sick leave?** *If you are a TRS eligible employee, your unused sick leave may count as service credit towards your retirement.*

### Teachers Retirement System

- How does retirement affect my eligibility for health insurance? *An employee must be employed by a school system at the time of retirement in order to qualify for continuation of medical benefits. Questions? Contact the State Health Benefit Plan – (404) 656-6322 or (800) 610-1863.*

- **Since I am terminating employment, what happens to the funds in my TRS account?** *When you terminate your employment, you may apply to TRS for a refund of your contributions and interest (distribution); however, you are not eligible for a refund if and after you accept other TRS covered employment. Your payment from TRS is a lump-sum distribution of your contributions and interest. Partial withdrawals and loans are not allowed. You may reference the TRS member handbook or website ([www.trsga.com](http://www.trsga.com)) for additional information, instructions and information on taxation of distributions.*

#### **Tax-Sheltered Annuities**

- **What happens to my funds in my tax sheltered annuity plan (i.e., Symetra, Lincoln, ING, MetLife, USAA, or VALIC)?** *The funds may be withdrawn or left in the plan. If you desire to withdraw funds or roll them over to another vendor, you should contact your current vendor to obtain the appropriate forms and to obtain information regarding any applicable penalties for doing so.*

#### **Optional Spending Accounts**

- **I am currently participating in the Optional Spending Account. How will my remaining funds be handled?** *Deductions are taken on a current month's basis; therefore, the last payroll deduction will be 5/31/10 (the May deduction provides benefit eligibility through 5/31/10). You have until the end of the current plan year (12/31/10) to submit any outstanding receipts; however, you will not be reimbursed for any dates of service after 5/31/10. You must provide vouchers with accompanying receipts.*

#### **Unemployment**

- **If I am laid off due to a reduction in force, am I eligible for unemployment benefits?** *Yes.*
- **How do I apply for unemployment?** *You must file in person at the Georgia Department of Labor located at 465 Big Shanty Road, Marietta, GA 30066. Tel# 770-528-6100.*
- **What do I need to bring with me to file my unemployment claim?** *From the DOL website...*
  - *Your social security number (a claim cannot be filed without it)*
  - *Employer-issued separation notice*
  - *Names and addresses of all employers for the last 18 months and the dates worked for each*
  - *Proof of immigration status if not a US citizen*
  - *Personal check with account number and back routing number if you want benefits deposited directly into a checking or savings account*
  - *Please note: Claims are effective on the date they are filed and not retroactive to the last day worked*
- **Can I make my application on-line?** *No, your initial application must be in person.*
- **How much does unemployment pay?** *The State legislature sets the unemployment rate. Currently it pays two-thirds of average weekly wage up to a maximum of \$330.00 per week.*
- **When would my unemployment begin?** *Benefits become effective the date you make your application; however if you are receiving summer pay unemployment benefits begins after summer pay concludes. Unemployment is not paid retroactively; therefore, if you file after you become eligible, it will not pick up payments for anytime you were eligible before you filed.*
- **How long would I be entitled to receive benefits?** *Georgia employers are responsible for up to 26 weeks of unemployment.*
- **How can I continue to obtain unemployment after 26 weeks?** *Extensions beyond 26 weeks for unemployment are implemented and funded by the State and Federal governments.*

## Memorandum

TO: Employees Affected by the Reduction in Force

FROM: Donald Dunnigan, Ed. D.  
Chief Human Resources Officer

DATE: May 19, 2010

SUBJECT: Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) Separation Notices

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In compliance with GDOL guidelines, the District is submitting the GDOL Form 402A, *Mass Separation Notice*, to the GDOL for the official identification of all employees affected by the current reduction in force. Per GDOL guidelines, the Mass Separation Notice replaces the individual separation notices. As a result, individual separation notices will be unnecessary.

Several initiatives are underway to support separated employees at this difficult time. The GDOL has advised that effective May 21, 2010, separated employees may apply for unemployment **online** at [www.dol.state.ga.us](http://www.dol.state.ga.us). In addition, the GDOL and partner organizations will host a series of employment transition workshops at locations across the state. Laid-off workers will be briefed on how to file for unemployment insurance benefits and the wide-range of support, re-employment, training and career transition services available at the state and local level. The locations, dates and times are listed below:

- The Atlanta Marriott Century Center, June 4-5 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- Atlanta Airport Marriott, June 4-5 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- Marietta Campus, Chattahoochee Technical College, June 4-5 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- Macon State College, June 4-5 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- Albany, Hilton Garden Inn, June 4-5 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- Paulding Campus, Chattahoochee Technical College, June 11-12 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- Dalton, N.W. Georgia Trade and Convention Center, June 11-12 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- Savannah Hyatt Regency, June 19 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Plans are also underway to establish permanent transition centers strategically located across the state to offer a comprehensive array of employment related information, resources and services. The department and partner agencies will help with securing employment, retooling skills or going back to school. State and federal financial resources are available for education, training, job search and related expenses.

You are encouraged to visit the GDOL Website [www.dol.state.ga.us](http://www.dol.state.ga.us) for further information.

# Cobb County School District

## Instructions for completing the *Certified Staff Performance Evaluation Appeal Form*

### I. IDENTIFICATION

**Name:** Self-Explanatory

**SSN:** Last four digits only

**Current Date:** Date that the Appeal Form is completed.

**School/Department:** School or Department to which employee is assigned.

**Date of Annual Evaluation Conference:** Date on which you and your evaluator met for your Annual Evaluation Conference.

**Name of Principal/Supervisor:** Self-explanatory. If you work in a school, the Principal is your Supervisor even if you were evaluated by an assistant administrator.

**Name & Position of Evaluator:** If your Principal was your evaluator, record his/her name again.

### II. EVALUATION COMPONENT(S) BEING APPEALED

Your appeal may address one, two, or all three components: one or more Performance Standard(s), one or more Duties and Responsibilities, AND/OR your Overall Annual Rating. Check as applicable.

### III. BASIS FOR APPEAL

Your appeal may be based upon one or both appeal criteria: 1) Evaluator failed to follow District Rules and procedures regarding performance evaluation; and/or 2) Evaluator was unaware of significant information when making the evaluation. Check as applicable.

### IV. EVIDENCE

Provide written summary of your evidence that one or both appeal criteria were met (See Section III of Appeal Form). Remember to limit your commentary and evidence to the topic of the appeal basis. You may attach additional pages, if needed.

### V. SIGNATURE

Provide your signature and date the form is completed in this section.

### VI. SUBMITTING AN APPEAL

The Principal/Supervisor receives and responds to ALL appeals. Provide the original of the Appeal Form to your Principal/Supervisor within 10 school days of your annual evaluation conference; do not submit your appeal to an Assistant Administrator or Assistant Principal. The Principal/Supervisor will respond to the appeal, in writing, within 20 school days of the receipt of the Appeal Form.

Upon receipt of your Principal/Supervisor's written response to your appeal, you may submit an Appeal Form to the Chief of Human Resources should you desire. The Chief of Human Resources, your Area Assistant Superintendent (if applicable), and the Director of Evaluation Systems will review your appeal and collectively respond, in writing, within 20 school days of receipt of the Appeal Form. The decision of this body is final.

# Cobb County School District Performance Evaluation Appeal Form for Certified Staff

(Refer to Performance Evaluation Appeal Instructions for additional information.)

## I. IDENTIFICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_ SSN \_\_\_\_\_ Current Date \_\_\_\_\_  
School/Department \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Annual Evaluation Conference \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Principal/Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_  
Position of Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_

## II. EVALUATION COMPONENT(S) BEING APPEALED – Check as applicable.

- Rating on one or more Performance Standard(s) (PS):  PS "A"  PS "B"  PS "C"  PS "D"  
 Rating on one or more Duties and Responsibilities: #1 #2 #3 #4 #5 #6 #7 #8 #9 #10 #11 #12  
 Overall Annual Evaluation Rating

## III. BASIS FOR APPEAL – Check one or both, as applicable.

- Evaluator failed to follow District Rules and procedures regarding performance evaluation.  
 Evaluator was unaware of significant information when making the evaluation.

## IV. EVIDENCE – Narrative account of evidence as indicated by checkmark(s) in Section III. Additional paper may be attached.

**Evaluator failed to follow District Rules and procedures regarding performance evaluation.**

**Evaluator was unaware of significant information when making the evaluation.**

## V. SIGNATURE

Employee \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Provide original of this evaluation appeal document to your Principal/Supervisor within 10 school days of your annual evaluation conference.  
See Performance Evaluation Appeal Instructions (EMWeb) for additional information.