


**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804**

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

February 8, 2024

TO: The Honorable Shanty Asher
Chairperson, Human Resources Committee

FROM: Keith T. Hayashi
Superintendent 

SUBJECT: Committee Action on Recommendation Concerning Declaration of Annual Reduction in Force for Classified Employees to Initiate Collectively Bargained Placement Rights for Employees Displaced Due to Changes in Staffing Needs

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) requests authorization from the Hawaii State Board of Education (Board) to commence a Reduction in Force (RIF) for classified employees whose positions will not be funded in School Year 2024-2025 due to lack of work, need, or funds.

As part of the annual budget process, principals and program officials decide on changes in funding and/or allocated personnel based on available resources for student educational needs. As a result, 56 permanent employees may be entitled to placement rights in positions that will not be funded next school year; however, this may change.

Affected employees will be provided at least 90 days prior written notice or no later than April 2, 2024. The Office of Talent Management (OTM) anticipates that most affected employees could be placed in other positions within the Department, including permanent, temporary, and part-time positions. The Board has authorized a RIF in each of the past ten years. The Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA) and United Public Workers (UPW) have been notified about the anticipated RIF.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board authorize the Department to commence a RIF for classified employees so that the Department may initiate the collectively bargained reassignment and bumping rights processes for the affected employees.

3. RECOMMENDED EFFECTIVE DATE

Discussion and action are to be taken at the Board's February 8, 2024 meeting.

4. DISCUSSION

a. Conditions leading to the recommendation:

Every year, as part of the annual budget process, principals and program officials must make decisions about changes in program needs, funding, and/or allocated personnel. When the decisions result in eliminating filled positions due to lack of work, need, or funds, the employees in those positions may be entitled to placement rights under the respective collective bargaining agreements. In the past ten years, the majority (98%) of employees were successfully placed into other positions, obtained positions through the normal recruitment process, or chose to resign or retire.

Before the Department can initiate the placement processes, it requires Board authorization in the form of a declaration of a RIF (sometimes referred to as "layoff"). The RIF procedures require at least 90 days prior written notice to the affected employees, which the Department intends to provide no later than April 2, 2024. Therefore, the Board's action is requested at the February 8, 2024 meeting.

The RIF declaration will affect 56 employees; however, this number may change due to possible adjustments in staffing needs before the start of the RIF process. Of these, 48 are cafeteria employees whose positions were identified for reduction due to the annual meal count assessment conducted by the School Food Services Branch.

b. Previous action of the Board on the same or similar matters:

The Board authorized a RIF for each of the past ten years.

c. Other policies affected:

None.

d. Arguments in support of the recommendation:

The Department's principals and program officials have determined that staff reductions are warranted upon consideration of the needs of our students and available resources.

OTM anticipates that most affected employees could be placed in other positions within the Department, including permanent, temporary, and part-time positions. However, the final decision is ultimately made by each employee.

Board authorization is requested at the February 8, 2024, meeting as a delayed decision will result in additional costs to the Department to fund positions beyond July 1, 2024, to comply with the 90-day prior written notice.

e. Arguments against the recommendation:

None.

f. Other agencies or departments of the State of Hawaii involved in the action:

None.

g. Possible reaction of the public, professional organizations, unions, Department staff, and/or others to the recommendations:

The HGEA and UPW have been notified about the anticipated RIF. There may be concerns regarding the number of impacted cafeteria employees. As always, the Department will work collaboratively with all eligible employees and their unions to address their questions and find other placements within the Department.

h. Educational implications:

The educational implications were the primary consideration of school/district/state administrators when determining the need to reduce positions.

i. Personnel implications:

The Department will follow the staff placement processes in accordance with the respective collective bargaining agreements.

j. Facilities implications:

None.

k. Financial implications:

Schools and complex areas can redirect resources, as appropriate, to maximize student learning.

5. OTHER SUPPLEMENTARY RECOMMENDATIONS

None.

KTH:sb