

CAPITOL HILL CLUSTER SCHOOL LSAT RESOLUTION REGARDING STUART-HOBSON MIDDLE SCHOOL AND WATKINS ELEMMENTARY SCHOOL NEW GRADE CONFIGURATIONS

OVERVIEW

As a result of the 5th grade's return to Watkins Elementary School from Stuart-Hobson Middle School for the 2011-2012 school year, the Human Resources Department of DCPS has initiated a "right size grade configuration" process. Since DCPS treats the Cluster as three separate schools from a budgetary and personnel perspective, an "excess" process will be initiated as there will no longer be a 5th grade at Stuart-Hobson.

Excessing is a process undertaken when teaching positions are eliminated, either through the closure of a school, or in the case of Stuart-Hobson, when a grade-level is dropped. When a teacher is excessed, he/she is not let go from DCPS, rather just the school with the shortage of positions. The teachers serving those eliminated positions must reapply and go through a hiring process again.

In the Cluster's case, only elementary-certified teachers at Stuart-Hobson will be affected by the excess process, which currently includes the 5th and 6th grade general education teachers. Although the teacher's position will no longer exist on the Stuart-Hobson budget, he/she will remain an employee of DCPS and will only need to interview at Watkins (or some other school) and then be accepted by the principal to be re-established at a school.

IMPLICATION

The excess process largely will be a HR formality with minimal - if any - disruption to the Cluster's strong, well-established, and high-performing teachers. There will be open 5th grade teaching positions available at Watkins Elementary for excessed Stuart-Hobson teachers to apply as well as the remaining 6th grade at Stuart-Hobson.

LSAT also encourages the opportunity for all excessed teachers to review and proffer their value, performance, and commitment to the Cluster community, believing it can be a positive and affirming exercise. LSAT is confident that those attributes will be fairly evaluated and appreciated by the Cluster administrator team, which will have the sole authority for personnel decisions, as they conduct the interview and hiring process.

CONCLUSION

LSAT encourages DCPS HR and the Cluster administrator team to initiate the excessing, interviewing, and hiring process as soon as possible in order to provide certainty and stability to students, parents, teachers and administrators. Currently, DCPS HR plans to send out its notifications to excessed employees in "late Spring 2011," yet LSAT believes that the process should commence sooner and not be dependant upon a vague and historically unreliable schedule offered by DCPS HR.

LSAT believes that it is in the Cluster's community best interest to alleviate any uncertainty as soon as possible in order to begin the planning process for the 5th grade's return to Watkins with the teachers commissioned with leading those classes.

LSAT also affirms its appreciation and respect for our strong, well-established and high performing teachers and affirms its commitment to support and insure a fair, swift, and positive process with a focus on how best to serve our students.