

South Whittier School District

Budget Reduction Questions and Answers for Employees

Questions Relative to Certificated Personnel

1. Is March 15th the deadline for informing classified employees if they are going to be laid off?
No, March 15th is the deadline to notify certificated employees. Classified employees being laid off require a 45 day notice and that may happen at any time.
2. Do teachers need to have a special education credential in order to bump into a special education position?
Yes, a special education teacher can only be bumped by a more senior teacher with a special education credential.
3. Can a teacher be given a chance to obtain a special education credential before being laid off?
No, but a teacher may obtain a special education credential and then apply for any special education positions that occur.
4. Will the final decision about certificated lay offs be made by March 15th?
No, teachers are given a preliminary lay off notice by March 15th. A determination and final notice is sent by mid-May.
5. How many teachers will be laid off?
Preliminary lay off notices will be sent to 39 teachers.
6. Has the district thought about testing and how scores will be effected with teachers being laid off in the middle of the testing process?
Teacher lay off notices will be for the 2009-10 school year. All teachers currently employed will work through June, 2009.
7. How is seniority determined if two teachers being laid off that have the same hire date?
A tie breaker resolution was passed by the board that outlines the steps in breaking a tie. However, there may be unique situations that will need individual study to determine seniority. Mrs. Laidemitt will work with these teachers on an individual basis.
8. Since funding for the Reading First program has been eliminated, will we still have testing?
Yes, quarterly benchmark testing and spring STAR testing will continue.
9. Is there a teacher seniority date list available?
Yes, SWTA presidents and Mrs. Laidemitt have the list. See them.

10. Regarding Class Size Reduction (CSR), do we have to eliminate or keep it all?
No, CSR must be implemented or eliminated in a prescribed order. Implementation must be in this order: 1st grade, 2nd grade and then either kindergarten, 3rd grade or both. If you eliminate class size reduction, it must be done in reverse order: kindergarten or 3rd grade, 2nd grade and then 1st grade. It is possible to have only 1st grade CSR or only 1st and 2nd grade CSR.
11. Can a teacher agree to a job sharing position rather than being laid off?
No, lay offs must occur in seniority order. There are no exceptions.

Questions Relative to Classified Personnel

1. How were classified layoffs determined?
The state has many mandates for school districts. Examples are: there must be a teacher in every classroom, all special education students must be served, etc. Funding must first be appropriated for mandated services. All other non-mandated services were considered for reduction to reduce district expenses.
2. Why is the district laying off library clerks when we have new libraries?
The district has beautiful new libraries and highly values them. At this time the budget crisis makes it necessary to lay off library clerks, but all efforts will be made to keep libraries open and books circulating. When budget conditions improve, library clerks will be rehired.
3. What is the process if a person is laid off and positions become available? Will the employees have to go through an interview process?
No, employees will not have to go through an interview process. Positions are reinstated by seniority.
4. Can a classified employee bump to a previous position?
Yes, a classified person receiving a lay off notice can bump an employee holding a position they previously held. The person that may be bumped will receive a notice also.

General Questions

1. Is the district bound by the budget if the state gives out more money?
No, the district can adjust its budget as new budget figures are revealed.
2. If the district does not participate in the Class Size Reduction (CSR) program does the district lose money from the state?
The district would lose the money it receives for the CSR program. However, the program is not fully funded by the state and the district must contribute \$1.1 million to

operate the program. If we opt out of the program, we would realize a savings of \$1.1 million.

3. Who is on the Budget Committee?

Members are: 3 teachers, 3 classified employees, 1 parent from each school, one principal, the Assistant Superintendent of Business Services and the Director of Fiscal Services.

4. How were the members of the Budget Committee chosen?

The teacher and classified unions each chose their representatives. Parents were chosen by the principal of each school.

5. Does the Budget Committee make decisions?

No, the purpose of the committee is to give feedback to the Board of Trustees regarding budget decisions.

6. If a school closes, when will employees be notified if they are being moved to another school?

The District is currently conducting a demographic to provide information for facility decisions. It is hoped that decisions will be made and staff informed before the end of the school year.

7. Will there be summer school for special education students?

Yes, special education summer school must be held. It is mandated by law.

8. How can an employee contact the Superintendent to recommend suggestions?

Contact the Superintendent via e-mail (ekwek@swhittier.k12.ca.us), send a letter or make arrangements to see him.

9. In the new budget 3 tiers of categorical programs are outlined. Please explain this in simple language. What about special education?

Tier I – no cuts

Tier II – 15% cuts and no flexibility to transfer out funds to the general fund

Tier III – 15% cuts and flexibility to transfer fund to general fund

Special education is under funded and those funds will stay intact to operate current programs.

10. What is the definition of flexibility as used in the budget presentation?

During this financial crisis, the state has adopted a rule to allow Districts to transfer funds (flexibility transfers) from one program to another to meet local needs. The transfers are meant to provide assistance for Districts to help offset the full impact of reductions to base funding (ADA). The maximum transfer amounts cannot exceed total revenues loss (ADA) by the South Whittier. Unfortunately, we have limited funds to transfer into the General Fund to soften the loss of ADA Funding.

11. Currently a band teacher from Cal High teaches the band program at GMS. Will that continue?

Yes, that program is scheduled to continue.

12. Will the AVID program at GMS continue?

Yes, AVID will continue.

13. Will the after school programs continue?

Think together is funded by a grant. It is not affected. Other after school programs funded by categorical money will continue at this time.