

Contact: Susan Anderson

FACULTY REDUCTION IN FORCE--IOWA BRAILLE AND SIGHT SAVING SCHOOL

Action Requested: Consider approving the recommendation of the Interim Superintendent of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School to conduct a reduction in force at the campus by terminating the contract of one teacher, reducing the contract of one probationary teacher, and terminating the contract of one probationary teacher.

Executive Summary: The Iowa Code and the Board of Regents policy allow for a faculty reduction in force to occur under certain conditions. Interim Superintendent Schild has determined that, due to a reorganization and lack of work, she must recommend terminating the contract of one teacher, reducing the contract of one probationary teacher, and terminating the contract of one probationary teacher. The requisite policy and procedures have been followed with respect to these recommendations, and one or more of the individuals in question may request a private hearing before the Board at a later Board meeting.

Background: The Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School has been involved in both a Task Force study during the 2004-05 school year and a Coordinating Council review during the 2005-06 school year to determine economies and efficiencies that would better serve the children in Iowa who are blind or visually impaired. A result of the studies is to plan programs to better reach student needs throughout the state. The great majority of students who are blind or visually impaired are educated in their local public and private school districts. The number of students educated on campus in Vinton has continued to decrease. From 1996 to 2006, the school's on-campus student enrollment has declined from 54 on-campus students to 34 on-campus students. The number of students needing services in their public or private schools is nearly 400. To achieve economies and efficiencies, a reorganization of programs and services will begin in the 2006-07 school year to better meet the needs of the majority of students.

The Board approved a faculty Reduction in Force Policy and Procedures on March 16, 1994. The policy and procedures are in compliance with Iowa Code chapters 262 and 279. The policy states that a Reduction in Force may be proposed by the Superintendent of the School to the Board of Regents whenever there is a lack of work, lack of funds, a reorganization, or a change in enrollment. The recommendation to reduce a faculty contract and to terminate two faculty contracts is being presented in accordance with the approved Faculty Reduction in Force Policy and Procedure.

To allow for reorganization, the Interim Superintendent's recommendation is to reduce the contract of one faculty member and terminate the contract of another faculty member to reorganize programs and services. The recommendation to terminate the probationary contract of the third individual is based on lack of work. The Board has a confidential memorandum that provides the Interim Superintendent's reasons for recommending the contract terminations and reduction for the three individuals.

Interim Superintendent Schild has provided the three faculty members with the notice of the termination that is required by law. Each of them may request a private hearing before the Board as permitted by law. The Board may act on the Interim Superintendent's recommendations at this meeting with regard to those individuals who do not request private hearings.