



Anchorage School District

Education Center

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Principals/Directors

FROM: Matthew Teaford, Chief Human Resources Officer

DATE: April 16, 2020

SUBJECT: Nontenured teachers

If a principal intends to recommend nonretention of a nontenured teacher at the conclusion of the 2019-20 school year, the principal should schedule a meeting with the teacher during the latter part of April or early part of May. The purpose of the meeting will be to inform the teacher that the principal intends to recommend nonretention. The meeting is not required under the Negotiated Agreement; however, the meeting will be in lieu of and is consistent with the practice of providing notice of intent to recommend nonretention at a final determination meeting following unsuccessful completion of a plan of improvement or growth.

Following is the suggested protocol for the meeting:

- 1) The principal will email the nontenured teacher a notice of Zoom meeting. The email should include an attached letter on school letterhead which includes a Zoom meeting link and statement of reason for the meeting. The subject line of the letter should be "Recommendation for Nonretention." The meeting should NOT be referred to as a final determination meeting. The letter will indicate the time and date for the meeting, that the teacher can arrange to have union representation, and that the purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the principal's intent to recommend nonretention.
- 2) At the meeting, the principal will verbally describe the reasons for the recommendation for nonretention. The principal will focus on the evaluation itself and the teacher's failure to obtain proficiency ratings across all standards. The principal should NOT focus on the plan (POI/POG) and lack of progress, nor entertain discussion about whether or not the plan successfully addressed prior concerns or provided adequate opportunity for improvement. The principal should also discuss any other reasons supporting the recommendation to nonretain, such as areas of concern that were addressed through unit level discipline. The principal will likely need to prepare a

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write-up of the reasons for their own reference to guide the discussion, but should NOT provide a written statement of reasons for the nonretention recommendation at the meeting.

- 3) At the conclusion of the meeting, the principal will state that the next step will be a written communication recommending nonretention from the principal to the chief human resources officer (CHRO), who will make the final decision. If the final written decision from the CHRO is to nonretain, the decision will explain the teacher's right to request a statement of the reasons for nonretention and the right to request an informal hearing. Again, these rights will be outlined in the final decision letter from the CHRO to the teacher.
- 4) Following the meeting, the principal will need to prepare and email a memorandum to the CHRO that sets out the reasons in support the principal's recommendation to nonretain.

Other guidance

- The meetings described above should be scheduled in late April or early May. Not earlier. This will allow the principal sufficient time to develop the summary of concerns they will verbally present to the teacher during the meeting and may also benefit the teacher by providing additional time for improvement.
- The unusual circumstances presented by the closure should not be regarded as an opportunity to nonretain all nontenured teachers. Principals should recommend nonretention only in cases where they genuinely believe a teacher is not fit to continue into tenured employment as a teacher with the district.
- The focus of the nonretention recommendation will be on the teacher's deficiencies in certain areas identified in the evaluation. Examples of other concerns outside of the evaluation may include a lapsed certificate, attendance concerns, or other teacher conduct addressed in formal discipline either at the school or district level or both.
- Note that there is intentional de-emphasis on citing lack of progress made on a plan of improvement or growth. This is because in most cases the plan would not have concluded as of March 6th. The nonretention recommendation decision should instead be based on concerns that resulted in poor performance ratings in areas of the evaluation itself and on any other relevant concerns.