

PROFESSIONAL STAFF PROBATIONARY TERM AND CONTINUING CONTRACT

Teachers

Probationary Term

A probationary term of service of three years in Essex County School Division is required before a teacher is issued a continuing contract. A mentor teacher is provided to every first year probationary teacher to assist him or her in achieving excellence in instruction. Probationary teachers with prior successful teaching experience may be exempt from this requirement with approval from the superintendent. Probationary teachers are evaluated at least annually in accordance with policy GCN Evaluation of Professional Staff. A teacher in the first year of the probationary period is evaluated informally at least once during the first semester of the school year. The superintendent considers such evaluations as one factor in making recommendations to the Essex County School Board regarding the nonrenewal of such teacher's contract.

In order to achieve continuing contract status, every teacher must successfully complete training in instructional strategies and techniques for intervention for or remediation of students who fail or are at risk of failing the Standards of Learning assessments. Essex County School Board provides said training at no cost to teachers it employs. If such training is not offered in a timely manner, no teacher will be denied continuing contract status for failure to obtain such training.

Once a continuing contract status has been attained in Essex County Public School Division in this state, another probationary period need not be served unless such probationary period, not to exceed two years, is made a part of the contract of employment. If a teacher separates from service and returns to teaching service in Virginia public schools by the beginning of the third year, the person shall be required to begin a new probationary period, not to exceed two years, if made part of the contract.

If a teacher who has not achieved continuing contract status receives notice of re-employment, he must accept or reject in writing within 15 calendar days of receipt of the notice. Unless a conference with the superintendent is requested as specified in the Code of Virginia, or in the case of reduction in force, written notice of nonrenewal of the probationary contract must be given by the Essex County School Board on or before June 15 of each year. If the teacher requests a conference with the superintendent, then written notice of non-renewal by the Essex County School Board must be given within thirty days after the superintendent notifies the teacher of his intention with respect to the recommendation.

Continuing Contract

Teachers employed after completing the probationary period are entitled to continuing contracts during good behavior and competent service. Written notice of

noncontinuation of the contract by either party must be given by June 15 of each year; otherwise the contract continues in effect for the ensuing year.

The Essex County School Board may reduce the number of teachers, whether or not such teachers have reached continuing contract status, because of decrease in enrollment or abolition of particular subjects.

Furthermore, nothing in the continuing contract shall be construed to authorize the Essex County School Board to contract for any financial obligation beyond the period for which funds have been made available.

As soon after June 15 as the school budget is approved by the appropriating body, the Essex County School Board furnishes each teacher a statement confirming continuation of employment, setting forth assignment and salary.

Within two weeks of the approval of the school budget by the appropriating body, but no later than July 1, the Essex County School Board will notify any teacher who may be subject to a reduction in force due to a decrease in the Essex County School Board's budget as approved by the appropriating body.

Principals, Assistant Principals, and Supervisors

A person employed as a principal, assistant principal or supervisor, including a person who has previously achieved continuing contract status as a teacher, shall serve a probationary term of three years in such position in the same school division before acquiring continuing contract status as a principal, assistant principal or supervisor.

Continuing contract status acquired by a principal, assistant principal or supervisor shall not be construed (i) as prohibiting the Essex County School Board from reassigning such principal, assistant principal or supervisor to a teaching position if notice of reassignment is given by the Essex County School Board by June 15 of any year or (ii) as entitling any such principal, assistant principal or supervisor to the salary paid him as principal, assistant principal or supervisor in the case of any such reassignment to a teaching position. No such salary reduction and reassignment, however, shall be made without first providing such principal, assistant principal or supervisor with written notice of the reason for such reduction and reassignment and an opportunity to present his or her position at an informal meeting with the superintendent, the superintendent's designee or the Essex County School Board. Before recommending such reassignment, the superintendent shall consider, among other things, the performance evaluations for such principal, assistant principal or supervisor. The principal, assistant principal or supervisor shall elect whether such meeting shall be with the superintendent, the superintendent's designee or the Essex County School Board. The Essex County School Board, superintendent or superintendent's designee shall determine what processes are to be followed at the meeting. The decision to reassign and reduce salary shall be at the sole discretion of the Essex County School Board.

The intent of this section is to provide an opportunity for a principal, assistant principal or supervisor to discuss the reasons for such salary reduction and reassignment with the superintendent, the superintendent's designee or the Essex County School Board, and the provisions of this section are meant to be procedural only. Nothing contained herein shall be taken to require cause for the salary reduction and reassignment of a principal, assistant principal or supervisor.

As used in this policy, "Supervisor" means a person who holds an instructional supervisory position as specified in the regulations of the Board of Education and who is required to hold a license as prescribed by the Board of Education.

Adopted: September 10, 2018

Revised: September 14, 2020

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-294, 22.1-303, 22.1-304.

Cross Refs.: GBM	Professional Staff Grievances
GCB	Professional Staff Contracts
GCE	Part-Time and Substitute Professional Staff Employment
GCN	Evaluation of Professional Staff
GCPA	Reduction in Professional Staff Work Force
GCPB	Resignation of Staff Members
GCPD	Professional Staff Discipline
GCPF	Suspension of Staff Members