

MEMORANDUM

To: All APS Supervisors

From: Skye Duckett, Chief Human Resources Officer

Date: May 1, 2020

Subject: Supervisor Details Regarding Superintendent's Budget Outlook Memo

The Superintendent recently provided updated guidance to employees regarding the District's financial outlook and steps being taken as a result. Please make sure that you provide a copy of that email to any of your employees, contractors, or volunteers who do not regularly access email.

As a supervisor, you have additional responsibilities regarding this guidance. In addition to the information below, please make sure you have also read the previous [April 27th memo to supervisors](#).

Budget update

In addition to the Superintendent's detailed coverage of our financial outlook, please note that the conservative budget scenario for next year assumes no increase to compensation, which minimizes the need to reduce current staff and their salaries. Most budget reduction strategies would target non-personnel expenditures or vacant positions.

However, a worst-case scenario would be a 10% cut in funding from the current year. This would create a \$46 million funding gap from our current, proposed budget and an overall reduction of about 4.37% from the current year budget. Principals and supervisors are being advised that the gap could be closed by the following strategies:

- Increasing available resources by carrying over \$15 million from the current year's spending freezes
- Decreasing proposed expenditures by \$31 million through the following:
 - Postponing the current textbook adoption
 - Sweeping school based reserves
 - Truing-up state health plan benefits
 - Reducing Central Office non-personnel expenditures
 - Assuming some lapsed salary savings (would reduce flexibility in using savings)
 - Reclassifying eligible expenses to the CARES act funds

These recommendations are being made in order to preserve jobs and employee salaries (i.e. try to minimize the need for future furloughs). Schools still have a Title I holdback that may be released and carryover for Title I may be greater than in past years because of the spending freeze.

Central positions hiring freeze

The District is implementing a freeze on all new hires for central (non-school) positions that are not directly related to the COVID-19 emergency response. Continued hiring is automatically allowed for school-facing operations positions, like custodians, bus drivers and police officers. All other requests for hire will require a Chief Officer to submit a hiring freeze exception request, as follows:

- Positions to be posted on or after 5/1/20: Submit Hiring Freeze Exception (HFE) form to Human Resources (HR) prior to posting.
- Positions that were already posted, but for which a hiring recommendation has not been submitted to HR as of 4/30/20: Submit HFE form to HR prior to recommending for hire.
- Electronic signatures or email approvals are acceptable in place of a physical signature.

The process to request an exception is as follows:

- Download and fill out the [Hiring Freeze Exception \(HFE\) request form](#).
- Obtain the signature of the hiring supervisor.
- Obtain the signature of the hiring chief officer.
- Complete a cover sheet to the Superintendent for signature.
- Submit the cover sheet and the signed hiring freeze exception form to the Superintendent.
- Superintendent will review the documentation.
- Superintendent will approve or deny the request.
- Superintendent will return the form to the Chief HR Officer.
- HR will notify the supervisor of the decision.
- Supervisor will submit a job requisition (request to post.)
- Interviews and hiring process proceed as usual.

For the Hiring Freeze Exception (HFE) request form, supervisors will need to include:

- Justification as to why the position is COVID-related or legally mandated and the impact to the safety of staff and students if the position isn't filled;
- A rationale for why the work can't be done using existing resources, based on the current org chart; or
- An explanation for why the impact to the division/department if the position isn't filled.

School-based hiring slowdown

Out of an abundance of caution, the District is also slowing down school-based hiring until at least June 1st, when we expect to have more clear revenue estimates. School leaders should note the following:

- Hiring may continue as usual for instructional positions of teacher, administrator, instructional coach, counselor and special education paraprofessionals.
- Hiring for all other school-based positions is paused until at least June 1st.
- Offers made to candidates by HR prior to May 1st will not be affected by the slowdown.
- Principals may request an exception by emailing their Associate Superintendent and including justification as to why the position must be filled now and the impact to the safety of staff and students if the position isn't filled before June 1st. If approved, the Associate Superintendent may forward the request to the Chief Human Resources Officer for final approval.

Internal promotions

School principals and central supervisors must also follow the processes outlined above if requesting to post for promotional opportunities open only to internal staff. Requests will be reviewed to ensure positions are eligible for internal posting.

Continued operations

As many of you have heard, Governor Kemp issued an executive order yesterday evening that allowed many more businesses to resume operations and lifted the shelter-in-place requirements for most Georgians. However, the executive order does not change anything for APS. We can continue only our essential operations as we have throughout this crisis, but we must continue to faithfully implement social distancing and other safety measures, such as wearing personal protective equipment. So, to the extent you have employees continuing to report to work, please ensure they are following these protocols.

Please note that this guidance may change on a daily basis. Check email frequently for updates, as well as the district's [health alerts page](#).

For any supervisor questions regarding employment matters, please contact Skye Duckett, Chief Human Resources Officer, at 404-802-2304 or sduckett@atlanta.k12.ga.us. For questions regarding COVID-19 or health matters, please contact Valencia Hildreth, Comprehensive Health Services Manager, at 404-802-2674 or Valencia.hildreth@atlanta.k12.ga.us.