

## Questions from the Community

Why did we offer a retirement incentive and will we replace the teachers that sign up for the program? As a result of a flat budget goal, are we facing large staff cuts?

The ORCSD saves \$535,000 as a result of this retirement incentive offered by the School Board in the fall of 2012.

The goal of a retirement incentive is to lower costs without lowering the quality of the system. Nearly 80% of the cost of running the ORCSD is related to personnel costs both in salary and benefits. The retirement incentive was offered to encourage staff that are age and service eligible to consider retirement. The incentive plan is consistent with Board Policy GCQA, which favors reducing staff through attrition rather than through dismissal. A retirement incentive aligns with the reduction in staff policy.

In order to qualify for the retirement incentive the employee must be both age and service eligible to retire. Using those criteria it was clear that the ORCSD had staff that qualify for the retirement incentive. In the end, fourteen staff indicated that they would participate in the retirement incentive.

In November, the School Board approved those who wished to retire motivated by the retirement incentive. For this incentive plan to be successful, it must benefit both the employee and the system. The employee gains financially up to \$20,000, pro-rated, based on pay. The District benefits include hiring a replacement staff member at lesser cost or, if appropriate, by not replacing the staff member at all.

Criteria used to determine whether a retiring staff member is replaced in the ORCSD includes: Class Size Policy IIB, staffing needs based upon Individual Education Plans (I.E.P.'s) in special education, and student interest at the high school level in electives. The Board policy that states that class sizes should range from 18-22 students. The Board also recognizes that some classes by design have less than 22 students.

Examples where smaller class sizes are appropriate include:

Industrial Arts. The ORHS has only 12 workstations for Industrial Arts due to student safety and the size of the instructional areas and industrial machinery owned.

Special Education Extended Resource Rooms. These programs are for students with significant needs, thus, although the number of students may be small, the staffing needs are significant.

Advanced Placement Courses. Often these accelerated programs exist as single courses in the high school program. Students must choose between AP courses and other courses of interest and, as a result, scheduling conflicts arise, keeping enrollment lower.

The Administrative Team reviewed all fourteen requests. When considering the criteria above, it was decided that eleven of the fourteen positions would not be replaced. Again, the result is a savings of \$535,000 to the District.