

# Teacher layoffs dip this year

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

It's that time of year again when Farmington teachers reach into their mailboxes to find pink slips.

Because of continued declining enrollment in the district and teachers returning from leaves of absence, 42 teachers will be receiving layoff notices from the Farmington School District.

"In the last several years this has been one of the most uncomfortable

recommendations we make to the board of education," said Superintendent Lewis Schulman.

School trustees unanimously voted 7-0 to authorize the layoffs which are effective June 14.

But not all 42 teachers will be without a job when school doors open in the fall. Anticipating teacher retirements, resignations and vacancies, administrators expect to recall 25 of the 42 teachers at the beginning of the school year.

"This is the smallest number (of

layoffs) we have had in a number of years," said Zan Alley, executive director of the Farmington Education Association (FEA).

In 1984, trustees authorized the layoff of 76 teachers, 10 of whom remain on the recall list, Schulman said.

"The numbers are reducing," Schulman added. "I hope in the next two years we'll see the eventual elimination of the pink-slipping of teachers."

Even though administrators and FEA officials know some of the teachers

will be recalled, the layoff notices are required to be issued by April 30, according to terms of the contract between the district and the FEA, as well as state law.

Attempts to reduce the layoff list this year resulted in the involuntary transfer of more teachers, said Robert Coleman, district personnel director. This year, five teachers are being involuntary transferred as compared to three or four in previous years, he added.

# Parents protest teacher transfer

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have taken place at elementary schools for some time as enrollment has declined.

Of the five teachers to be transferred, three are at the high school level, one at the middle school and another at the elementary level.

MacKenzie has been teaching two vocal music classes at North and three classes at Warner Middle School, said Robert Coleman, district personnel director.

Now because of declining enrollment in the high schools and teaching assignment changes that must be made at North Farmington, MacKenzie has "become an involuntary transfer," Coleman said.

Although two classes of vocal music will be offered at North in the fall, other teaching assignment changes would leave MacKenzie with only those two classes to teach. While she is certified to teach social studies, she is not able to bump the existing social studies teachers, Coleman said.

With assignment changes due in the fall, music teachers will each have a school of their own rather than having to be shared between schools, Coleman said.

"Mrs. MacKenzie has the option of selecting one of four middle schools and two high schools," Coleman said.

MacKenzie and the other four teachers have their choice of where they wish to be transferred based on their credentials and qualifications, Coleman said.

In mid-May, Coleman said, the involuntary transfer teachers will be placed according to their choice, followed by the teachers coming back from leave of absence. When teachers in the two groups have been placed, teachers who have been laid off will be considered, he said.

Despite administrators' attempts to explain the situation, which has caused the involuntary transfers, parents were still unhappy.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I fear for the future of my daughters. Their future is in your hands," said Ruth McKinnon. She has two daughters who will be entering North in the fall.

Another parent asked administrators why more vocal music classes couldn't be added to the curriculum so the program could be enhanced and MacKenzie could stay at North.

"I think there is a way out for the board and administration by offering a

class that's desired," said Tom Lowrie, suggesting a class on music theory.

But administrators repeated that they had no choice.

"This change was carefully examined and in light of the needs of the district will be implemented," Schulman told parents.

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