



Cincinnati Federation of Teachers

Association of Cincinnati Public School Office Personnel
Local 1520, AFT, OFT, AFL-CIO

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The Cincinnati Federation of Teachers will not agree to the school district's plan announced Tuesday, June 15, to drop a large portion of its teacher evaluation system and send the eight lead teachers doing those evaluations to schools other than their former ones, in violation of the current teacher contract.

"While the superintendent says this surprise forced transfer plan is an austerity move, it's strategically senseless to gut a structure that leads to having an excellent teacher in every classroom, a structure that's existed for 25 years and has become a national model," said CFT President Julie Sellers, who has consistently clamored for collaboration, accountability and innovation since she took office in April of 2009.

The CFT is currently in negotiations with the district, and a chief item of talk is how to best use the talents of the district's best teachers, including locating them at the most needy schools. "But that process must be methodically constructed with balance, teacher input and probably some special incentives. What the superintendent did here was shoot from the hip, which often only hits one's foot."

The CFT sees this as the latest example of a board and administration that lurches from one disorganized policy to the next. And the concern that these eight transfers is only the tip of the iceberg potentially ending hundreds of lead teacher positions over time only drives up concern. "Our lead teacher program allows for differentiated pay where those who demonstrate the highest skills provide leadership, extra work and professionalism," said Sellers. "This is an innovation started by Cincinnati teachers, and we cannot let it die."

The teacher union will file a grievance over the policy, which it sees as a violation of the contract, and Sellers believes a quick arbitration will either keep the eight teachers in their current roles as teacher evaluators or allow them to return to their old schools, if that's their preference.

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