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Columbus schools cutting 13 secretaries from center

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Columbus City Schools notified 13 secretaries at the district's Northgate Center curriculum-development center yesterday that their positions will be eliminated by the start of the school year in August, the union president in charge of non-teaching employees confirmed.

By Bill Bush, The Columbus Dispatch

Columbus City Schools notified 13 secretaries at the district's Northgate Center curriculum-development center yesterday that their positions will be eliminated by the start of the school year in August, the union president in charge of non-teaching employees confirmed.

Lois Carson, president of the Columbus School Employees Association, said that an unknown number of supervisors also were notified yesterday that their jobs are being cut.

The Northgate Center, at 6655 Sharon Woods Blvd. on the North Side, is a hub for support-staff members who are responsible for curriculum leadership and development, staff development, professional development, book adoptions and other programs.

Carson is one of the secretaries whose position was cut, but that doesn't necessarily mean she will lose a job because, under the union contract, she can bump other secretaries in the district with less seniority.

“I’m not sure what’s going to happen to us,” Carson said. “I don’t know where I’m going. I know I have a job because I have 27 years in.”

District spokesman Jeff Warner couldn’t say yesterday how many employees ultimately could be affected by the general realignment of staff members, who will be redeployed to “further support schools in particular that are underperforming.”

“Some staff positions are being eliminated,” Warner said. “There are administrator and supervision positions that are being eliminated. ... Our goal is to realign resources and reduce administrative overhead.”

Rhonda Johnson, president of the Columbus teachers union, said she doesn’t think that any teachers on special assignment to work at Northgate on curriculum and other issues will have their positions eliminated, although their work location might change.

“I can’t say that they won’t be affected at all,” Johnson said. “I’m saying that their position won’t be cut. There is a difference.”

Interim Superintendent Dan Good said last week that he plans to cut \$1.5 million a year in administrative costs through streamlining. Yesterday, Good increased the dollar savings to \$2 million a year.

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