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# Union challenges CPS over new teacher policy

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The union that represents more than 2,500 teachers in the Cincinnati Public Schools is filing a grievance over a new policy that will involuntarily move the district's best-trained teachers to the lowest-performing schools next year.



The Enquirer reported on the policy June 15.

The re-assignments are part of a plan to scale down the district's teacher training program to save about \$1 million next year. The new policy is also intended to improve academic performance at struggling schools.

The teachers' old jobs inside of the training program will be eliminated, saving money.

The union believes the new policy violates the union's contract, said Julie Sellers, president of the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers. The union also disagrees with downsizing the training program.

All of this comes during a critical point in contract negotiations between the union and the district. A chief item of talk, according to the union, is teacher assignments, including assignments at the neediest schools.

"But that process must be methodically constructed with balance, teacher input and probably some special incentives," Sellers said in a news release. "What the superintendent did here was shoot from the hip, which often only hits one's foot."

Superintendent Mary Ronan said earlier this week that she'll stand by her plan, even if it earns her a grievance. The administration believes the contract language gives the superintendent the right to assign staff based on what will best serve the students.

The seven-member school board also stands behind the new policy, according to board President Eileen Cooper Reed.

"One of the things in the Race to the Top application that the state fell down on was the inability to put teachers in schools where the students needed the most help," said Cooper Reed, referring to the federal competition in which schools can win money for their plans for reform.

"The board fully stands behind the decision the superintendent made and she's well within her rights on the contract."

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