

Peralta Federation of Teachers

Democracy in Education

Education for Democracy

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To: All full-time, regular tenured and tenure-track faculty
From: Debbie Weintraub and Mark Greenside
Subject: Faculty Service Areas (FSA's) and Lay-offs.

Faculty Service Area(s) are the areas you are considered legally competent to work in as a faculty member. For classroom teachers, this means the disciplines you are legally allowed to teach: math, English, auto mechanics, psychology, etc. If you do not have an approved FSA in an area, you cannot legally teach in that area. This is crucial and vital in a lay-off situation.

FSA's are often confused with **Minimum Qualifications**. Minimum Qualifications are what you have to possess (through academic degrees and course work, experience, credentials, or equivalency) in order to be hired. In Peralta, Minimum Qualifications and FSA's are the same. In other words, if you have the MQ's, you have the FSA—BUT IT IS NOT AUTOMATIC. **YOU MUST APPLY FOR EACH FSA, AND IT IS THE FACULTY MEMBER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO DO SO. IF YOU DO NOT APPLY FOR IT, AND IT IS NOT ON RECORD WITH THE DISTRICT BY FEBRUARY 15TH OF EACH ACADEMIC YEAR, IT DOES NOT COUNT AND IS NOT VALID IF THERE ARE LAY-OFFS THAT YEAR.**

MQ's are for hiring. FSA's come into play in a lay-off situation. If the District initiates a reduction in force, faculty are laid off (and rehired) according to their seniority and their FSA's. For example, if the District chooses to lay-off 10 faculty members in math, several things will happen. First, all part-time teachers in math will be terminated. Second, the 10 full-time teachers in math with the *least seniority in the District* will be notified of the District's intent to lay-off. If any of those 10 have FSA's *and* seniority in other areas, for example physics, then the math teacher bumps into physics and the physics teacher gets laid-off unless s/he has an FSA *and* seniority in (for example) astronomy. Then the astronomy teacher gets laid off, unless s/he has an FSA and seniority in Geography or Geology or, etc etc. etc.

You can see why it is important to have as many FSA's as you qualify for. Under the law and the contract, the District is required "to provide each faculty with current and updated information regarding policies and changes in FSA's, minimum qualifications, and competencies as they apply to Peralta." They are also required "Once a year, by October 31...to publish and mail...a list of all FSA's currently approved by the District." The District has failed to do this for the past three years. The District has notified PFT that it intends to have this information available very soon. That's what the attached form is for. It is to update and supplement—not override--the last FSA list on file. What is on

record for you will be what was cited in the District's last FSA list and this updated list combined.

There are two important dates to remember: If the District intends to initiate faculty lay-offs, it must notify the effected faculty in writing by **March 15th**. The last date to apply for an FSA for use in any academic year is **February 15th** of that year. In other words, you must have your FSA on file by February 15 for it to be effective in a lay-off year.

It is always to your benefit to have as many FSA's on file as you are eligible for. If you are only a few units away from qualifying for an FSA, it may be worth your while—especially since the units will probably also count for salary advancement—to earn those units and the FSA. If you have any questions, call the PFT.

Attached to this letter is a form. With this form the District is beginning to update and make current its FSA files, as is required by law and the contract. Here's what you should do:

1. **Verify the FSA's you currently have on file.** Do **NOT** assume anything. If you have not actively, personally filed for an FSA, you do not have it. The only verification that matters is the District's last list of FSA's, which is at least 3 years old. The college Office of Instruction will provide you with a copy at your request. Make a copy and keep a copy in your files.
2. **Go to the web-link on the form for the State Chancellor's Office and Minimum Qualifications.** Search that link carefully and look at the MQ's in every academic and vocational area you think you might qualify and/or are close to qualifying: look at related and closely related fields. If there are areas you believe you have earned/met the MQ's, add those areas to your FSA list.
3. **Add all new FSA's you have earned in the last few years through degrees earned, courses taken, or equivalencies granted.** Keep a written record of everything.
4. **Make the form as complete as you can.** Err on the side of inclusion. Add everything you think you qualify for—including FSA's already verified and on file. Submit the form and keep a copy of it for your files.

PFT does not expect lay-offs this year or next year. However, given the current budget situation it is best to be prudent and wise. FSA's are your best protection against being laid-off. If you have any questions, call the PFT.