Guide to the Matrix & Class Selection

One of the most important—and most complicated—sections of the UTLA-LAUSD contract is Article IX-A, which covers the matrix and uniform staffing procedures for K-12 schools. Here’s a guide to some of the major elements.

The Elementary matrix

Basic principles
Seniority is one of two equal factors (along with educational program needs) that the principal is required to consider in assigning grade assignments. If anyone believes that the assignment was not made properly, he or she has three days to initiate the Dispute Resolution Procedure to contest the principal’s assignment.

Key contractual language
“The site administrator shall assign such permanent teachers who are otherwise qualified to the track and grade level openings available to permanent teachers on the basis of District seniority. The only exception shall occur when the site administrator reasonably determines that any specific assignment is not in the best interests of the educational program.” The site administrator shall assign all teachers at these sites to classes. (Article IX-A, Section 2.0c)

The Secondary matrix

Basic principles
Seniority is one of two equal factors (along with educational program needs) that the principal is required to consider in assigning classes. If anyone believes that the assignment was not made properly, he or she has three days to initiate the Dispute Resolution Procedure to contest the principal’s assignment.

Key contractual language
“Classes within a department shall be distributed by the principal (or designee) in consultation with the elected department chairs, in a fair and equitable manner, taking into account seniority and educational program needs.” (Article IX-A, Section 2.0d)

Suggested time sequence for staffing procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK</th>
<th>TIMELINE</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>ASAP</td>
<td>Principal and Chapter Chair may jointly develop alternate dates. See Article IX-A, Sections 4.0-7.0 and 9.0-10.0.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Month of April or prior to posting of Matrix</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Selection Process</td>
<td>ASAP</td>
<td>Principal and Chapter Chair may jointly develop alternate dates. See Article IX-A, Sections 4.0-7.0 and 9.0-10.0.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mid-March No later than four weeks before classes are selected</td>
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<td>II.</td>
<td>ASAP (no later than April 20) Prior to selection of classes</td>
<td>Chapter Chair elections are to be conducted using UTLA procedures—any disputes should be referred directly to UTLA. Refer to Article IX-A, Section 2.0. (Matrix must be posted no later than four weeks prior to the last work day of teacher’s assignment.)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Month of April Or earlier if a local site determines to use an earlier date</td>
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<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>Contractual date for teacher notification of tentative assignment</td>
<td>21 calendar days prior to the end of the teacher’s work year</td>
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Three methods to fill out the matrix

Chapter chairs must help determine which method is used to sign the matrix. There are three typical types, although schools can use any method agreed to by the members, the chapter chair, and the principal.

1. In a meeting with all the teachers present
2. One by one in the principal’s office with the chapter chair present.
3. Preference forms

The UTLA-preferred method

What is the Dispute Resolution Procedure?

- When certain disputes arise related to assignments to class, track and/or coordinator positions, the affected teacher may invoke the Dispute Resolution Procedure found in Article V-A of the contract.

- The process follows the “three-day” rule: Teachers have three days to start the Dispute Resolution process by requesting an informal conference with the site administrator, and administrators have three days to hold that informal conference. The complete steps of the Dispute Resolution Procedure are listed in Article V-A of the contract.

- The Dispute Resolution Procedure is only for permanent teachers and their assignments, coordinators, and five-year out-of-classroom assignments. The Dispute Resolution Procedure is not for leadership assignments, athletic assignments, or grievance procedures.

Chapter chair checklist

- 1. Read UTLA/LAUSD contract (CBA), Article IX-A, Section 2.0-9.0.
- 2. Hold meeting or survey teachers to determine which locally determined method they wish to use for requesting grade levels or classes within a department. Notify teachers who are on leave in writing (mail, email, website, etc.) of date and time of the matrix selection process.
- 3. Meet with principal to agree on the locally determined method to request classes and the timeline for the process. (If the principal and chapter chair cannot agree, call your UTLA Area Representative.)
- 4. Request an exact copy of the district seniority list from the principal.
- 5. Follow process for electing, confirming, or selecting full-time coordinator and/or departmental positions; chapter chair; released time for chapter chair, if applicable.
- 6. Principal, in conjunction with chapter chair, determines percentage of permanent to non-permanent teachers for the coming year. Principal posts matrix, which includes type of class, credentials and/or qualifications necessary, and differentials, no later than four weeks prior to the last work day of a teacher’s assignment. (If the matrix did not contain the appropriate information, if “qualifications” posted are not reasonable or valid, etc., call your UTLA Area Rep.)
- 7. Elementary permanent teachers request and are assigned classes/grade level based on the matrix; non-permanent teachers fill out preference forms and are assigned positions by principal. Secondary permanent teachers request classes/departmental assignments (Article IX-A, Section 2.0).
- 8. Principal assigns tentative classes consistent with CBA, Article IX-A, Section 2.0 by May 20, or date as negotiated with LAUSD. (If classes were not assigned consistent with Article IX-A, Section 2.0, immediately initiate the Dispute Resolution Procedure.)
- 9. Give preference forms to the principal in case of vacancies and adjustments. (Keep a copy for yourself.)

Filling Vacancies After Initial Selection

- 10. Fill vacant positions after selection and before norm day consistent with the CBA, Article IX-A, Section 2.1.
- 11. Fill vacant positions subsequent to norm day consistent with the CBA, Article IX-A, Section 2.1.
- 12. If the classes were not filled according to the contract, call your UTLA Area Representative.

Seniority is one of two equal factors (along with educational program needs) that the principal is required to consider.