

Non-Certified Advisory Council
Q&A
October 13, 2015

When 30 hour teacher assistants are hired for a school, is the school system designating them to be used only in 1st grade or can they be used in 2nd and 3rd grade, if needed?

The Board is committed to full coverage in K-1 classes and worked diligently to stretch the allotment to make that a reality. The following statement was made to principals at the September 30th Leadership Team meeting.

Dr. Cartner informed the principals that the Board worked really hard to get to this point and while he is not going to say that they “must” use the TAs only in K-1 classrooms, principals should keep in mind two concerns of the board which are (1) that TAs are being used in K-1 and (2) that TAs are being used for instruction. He indicated that he is not certain that this plan will be able to be maintained in future years. – Larry Cartner

Non-certified staff such as custodians, maids, secretaries, bookkeepers, and data managers do not get a supplement. In the past, we were told we do not receive a supplement because we do not work with children. Everyone employed with the school system works with children at some point.

Although ECPPS values all of its employees, there is not a supplement for classified personnel at this time. As you may be aware, supplements are paid using "local" funds. These funds come directly from our local county government. Our community continues to struggle to meet the financial demands of the school system in all areas. Our building needs continue to remain unfunded. Until the economy in our area provides additional money we do not anticipate an opportunity to increase our request for funding to offer supplements for classified staff. – Dianne Meiggs

There is a major need for full time nurses in the buildings. First responders are pulled from the classroom as teacher assistants to help with medical needs when the nurse has to leave.

We acknowledge the need for increased nursing staff presence in schools and are working toward that end. One item affecting this right now is that one of our nurses is out on leave and the others are covering her schools. Once that nurse returns, nurse availability will be increased. – Lisa Ewers

Would it be possible to give the classroom telephones the ability to dial long distance?

Classroom phones are not set for long distance calls as a means of avoiding larger/higher school costs for long distance calls. – Larry Cartner

Is it possible to hire nurse's aides to work at the schools that don't have full time nurses? Not having full time nurses are a huge issue, and even worse at the elementary schools. If one employee is out at elementary and the nurse is not there, you have one person left to do 3 jobs. It's hard to get good or any volunteers to help.

I am working to address the nursing needs / shortage. I will be meeting with some folks tomorrow (Fri) who may be able to offer us some options for increasing nursing staff for the remainder of this year. Part of the difficulty right now is that we are short one nurse who's out on maternity leave. Current nurses are covering her schools. She returns mid-November. – Lisa Ewers

In the past, 12 month employees were told that they may get cut back to 11 months to save money. Is this something that is being considered now?

All employment decisions are based on a variety of situations, some of which are budget concerns. If a decision to "cut back" hours or months is made the employees that are affected are notified by their supervisor as soon as possible. We try to keep the communication lines open to avoid any rumors. We try to notify people about personnel decisions as quickly as possible. – Dianne Meiggs

Can you ask about the one-time 750.00 bonus? Will everyone receive it? When?

All state funded personnel in an LEA employed on November 1, 2015 (teachers, instructional support, non certified and central office personnel) are eligible to receive a \$750 bonus. Eligible personnel have to be permanent, and the amount is prorated for permanent part time. The electronic check will be issued in December and will be separate from your monthly check. Taxes will be taken out of the check. No retirement will be deducted. – Dianne Meiggs

The information is also posted on our home page – Larry Cartner

[http://www.ecpps.k12.nc.us/pages/ECPPS/Faculty_Staff/Faculty_Staff/Employee_Bonuses - State Budge](http://www.ecpps.k12.nc.us/pages/ECPPS/Faculty_Staff/Faculty_Staff/Employee_Bonuses_State_Budge)

Do non-certified employees have to work on the required workdays? Can they make their own decision if they need to work or not? Some employees try to schedule appointments for these days.

All employees have a supervisor. Decisions about "having to work" on required workdays (or any other day) depends on both the position and the supervisors direction. Please advise everyone to communicate with their supervisors about work hours. If the supervisors have questions they also can call their supervisors for clarification. Remember each situation is different. Each school may also operate differently based on the needs of that individual school. – Dianne Meiggs

An employee would like to know, why, on PLC workdays the non-certified employees have to work. Especially custodians, who could do a rotating basis to work.

Decisions about "having to work" on required workdays (or any other day) depends on both the position and the supervisors direction. Please advise everyone to communicate with their supervisors about work hours and working on teacher workdays. Remember each situation is different. Each school may also operate differently based on the needs of that individual school. – Dianne Meiggs

It would also seem that this is an optimal time for custodians and maids to work (deep cleaning) as there are no students in the building. – Larry Cartner

What does the future of Regular and EC Teacher Assistants look like?

Teacher Assistant allotments are on a year to year basis. The General Assembly, when it returns in the short session in April 2016, has the prerogative to change the allotment in year 2 of the approved budget. The current General Assembly has some very deeply held beliefs about education and the personnel involved in education. It is important that you stay tuned to the events of the legislature when they are in session. Basically, everything is on the table each session. – Larry Cartner

Current EC TA positions will remain for this year. – Lisa Ewers

When a school goes in lock-down, why isn't there a police officer on site (in the building) until we receive an all clear?

Generally, the situation that caused the lockdown, wherever it might be in the community requires all available officers to respond, leaving few officers to cover for the many that are dealing with the crisis. If ever there is a need for an officer to be present, we can certainly make that request. When a lock down is done correctly, you are in one of the safest places you can be. – Larry Cartner

If there are cuts at the beginning of the next school year will staff be notified earlier in the summer?

Since we have a two-year budget we should be able to notify staff before the school year ends if we have to cut any positions. Some classified positions are temporary "pending available funding" which means they will get a letter in May that the position may not be funded. Other classified positions may also receive a letter in May letting them know we may not have funding based on declining enrollment to continue to fund the position. We make every effort to notify staff as soon as we find out the financial status of the school district. Our goal is to notify anyone who may not be returning, based on funding, by June of each year. – Dianne Meiggs

The General Assembly is also free to change the approved budget when they return for the short session in April 2016. – Larry Cartner

The Teacher Assistants that kept their positions are now paid hourly. With the new budget, why were they not returned to salary and new hire to hourly?

Classified personnel are hourly employees. That is one reason why they clock in and out each day. ECPPS provides a courtesy for teacher assistants called "income averaging" for pay periods. That means that a teacher assistant that works 7.84 hours each day gets paid in equal checks for the school year. Some months have holidays, annual leave, and non-student days which would make checks smaller. ECPPS averages the total hourly time with all of the leave to make the checks equal each month so no one has a hardship especially during December and March. Your actual check is then adjusted if you take sick days or other leave. – Dianne Meiggs

Are non-certified staff members such as teacher assistants able to take part in professional development on mandatory teacher work days? Example taking a technology class like google docs.

We strongly encourage teacher assistants to participate in professional development activities. If you are interested in attending please make sure you complete the registration information. Sometimes we do have a limited number of seats. Note: If you are not scheduled to work on a Teacher Workday you may still attend but you will not be compensated for the time. – Dianne Meiggs

Are non-certified staff members entitled to take off the optional teacher workdays along with the certified staff members?

Like any other leave you should communicate with your supervisor. They will determine if you can take annual leave on that day. – Dianne Meiggs

If non-certified staff have to clock in/clock out for coming in late or leaving early at least a half day and take leave. Does a teacher need to put in for leave if they are gone half a day even if someone is covering one of their classes and one is their planning period.

Generally all staff should take leave for time they miss during any given day. There are circumstances when a supervisor (Principal) will authorize a person to be off without filing the paperwork. If you have any questions, and have a need to know, the best advice is to talk to your supervisor (Principal). – Dianne Meiggs