

RECOGNITION & RESPECT



Education assistants' unpaid work Survey summary for School District 6 Rocky Mountain

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Recognition & Respect

EA unpaid work survey summary for School District 6 Rocky Mountain

Survey response rate

SD	Name	Survey Responses	District EA Count (SSEAC data)	% Response Rate
6	Ricky Mountain	41	102	40.2%

Assignment breakdowns of survey respondents

Do you work at:	
Answer Options	Response Percent
Elementary school	46.3%
Middle school	12.2%
High school	36.6%
Alternate school	2.4%
Combination or other	4.9%

Is most or all of your assigned work directed to:	
Answer Options	Response Percent
One (1) special education student for the year	12.2%
Multiple special education students for the year	22.0%
Predominantly special education but also other students	58.5%
Students predominantly outside the special education field	4.9%
Other	2.4%

Average current EA assignments by school level

How many total hours per week are you currently assigned?	
Answer Options	Hours per week
Elementary	21.6
Middle	27.2
High school	26.7
Alternate	30.0
Combination/other	27.5

Assignment expectations

Which of the following best describes your expectations of your hours of work as an EA?	
Answer Options	Response Percent
I am content with the current allocation of paid hours for my position	46.2%
I intend to bid into other EA positions that come available in order to increase my allocation of paid hours.	7.7%
I would like to get more paid hours for my current position than are now allocated.	46.2%

Unpaid hours

Do you work extra voluntary and unpaid hours on the job?	
Answer Options	Response Percent
Yes	85.0%
No	15.0%

Average unpaid hours by school level

How many extra voluntary and unpaid hours do you work in a typical week?	
Answer Options	Hours per week
Elementary	3.0
Middle	2.8
High school	1.8
Alternate	2.0
Combination/other	4.0
District average unpaid hours	2.5

When is unpaid work performed?

If you put in extra voluntary and unpaid hours on the job, at what points during the day do you work in this capacity? (Check as many items as apply)	
Answer Options	Response Percent
During breaks	61.8%
During lunch	55.9%
Before shift	64.7%
After shift	76.5%
At home	61.8%
Field trips beyond regular work hours	44.1%
Camping trips (overnight)	5.9%
Other	8.8%

Unpaid work activities

If you work extra voluntary and unpaid hours on the job, what type of work do you do during this time? (Check as many items as apply)	
Answer Options	Response Percent
Prepare materials for my assignment	87.9%
Consult with teachers or administrators or others	78.8%
Attend IEP or other work-related meetings	48.5%
Provide coverage for drills or assemblies	9.1%
Provide coverage for field trips during school hours	42.4%
Accompany students during work experience or community-based activities	21.2%
Provide coverage outside assigned hours because of:	33.3%
a. Problematic behaviour of student at the end of the day or during break periods	33.3%
b. Transportation scheduling	3.0%
c. Parent late picking up child	15.2%
d. Lack of coverage and/or unfilled absences	21.2%
e. Another staff member not reporting on time	6.1%

Reasons given for performing unpaid work

If you work extra voluntary and unpaid hours on the job, what are the reasons for doing this work? (Check as many items as apply)	
Answer Options	Response Percent
There is not enough time in my regular work schedule to do my job	75.8%
I have a professional commitment to my job and work	81.8%
My day's routine improves when I work these hours	66.7%
Administrators expect me to work extra voluntary and unpaid hours	3.0%
Teachers expect me to work extra voluntary and unpaid hours	3.0%
Co-workers (other EAs or support staff) expect me to work extra voluntary and unpaid hours	3.0%
Parents expect me to work extra voluntary and unpaid hours	6.1%
I feel obliged to meet my students' needs	87.9%
I feel obliged to guarantee my students' safety	48.5%
I feel obliged to cover emergency situations with my students	51.5%
The schedule does not allow for coverage for break times	18.2%
Other reason	0.0%

Remedies for unpaid work: Rocky Mountain EAs speak out

“Any work with high needs people requires a certain amount of unpaid work, including debriefing with staff and seeking out clinical supervision for self when necessary. Burnout occurs when there is a sense of injustice and not being recognized for the work we do.”

“I feel that there is often an unexpressed expectation that SEAs will volunteer time for things such as setting up for awards day or other special days, without pay... We are also low on the totem pole -- whenever general enrollment declines, we are cut, even if the funded special needs students numbers have increased. It's like our wages are 'fluff' in the administrative budgets, nice to have us here, but first thing to cut if budgets are tight.”

“Yes. Special Education assistants etc. perform work and have responsibilities that should be reflected in their pay... The positions are so important in the classrooms, that equitable hours and pay parity with the responsibilities involved should be considered and mandated.”