

RECOGNITION & RESPECT



Education assistants' unpaid work Survey summary for School District 8 Kootenay Lake

CUPE, BC REGIONAL OFFICE

January, 2009

Prepared by: John D. Malcolmson,
Research Representative

Recognition & Respect

EA unpaid work survey summary for School District 8 Kootenay Lake

Survey response rate

| SD | Name | Survey Responses | District EA Count (SSEAC data) | % Response Rate |
|----|---------------|------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| 8 | Kootenay Lake | 38 | 119 | 31.9% |

Assignment breakdowns of survey respondents

| Do you work at: | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent |
| Elementary school | 60.5% |
| Middle school | 5.3% |
| High school | 34.2% |
| Alternate school | 0.0% |
| Combination or other | 10.5% |

| Is most or all of your assigned work directed to: | |
|--|------------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent |
| One (1) special education student for the year | 39.5% |
| Multiple special education students for the year | 18.4% |
| Predominantly special education but also other students | 34.2% |
| Students predominantly outside the special education field | 2.6% |
| Other | 5.3% |

Average current EA assignments by school level

| How many total hours per week are you currently assigned? | |
|---|----------------|
| Answer Options | Hours per week |
| Elementary | 23.0 |
| Middle | 30.5 |
| High school | 28.0 |
| Alternate | - |
| Combination/other | 14.1 |

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 | 51.4% |
| I intend to bid into other EA positions that come available in order to increase my allocation of paid hours. | 8.1% |
| I would like to get more paid hours for my current position than are now allocated. | 40.5% |

Unpaid hours

| Do you work extra voluntary and unpaid hours on the job? | |
|--|------------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent |
| Yes | 84.2% |
| No | 15.8% |

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 | 1.6 |
| Middle | - |
| High school | 2.3 |
| Alternate | - |
| Combination/other | 3.0 |
| District average unpaid hours | 2.0 |

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 | 48.4% |
| During lunch | 41.9% |
| Before shift | 41.9% |
| After shift | 54.8% |
| At home | 41.9% |
| Field trips beyond regular work hours | 38.7% |
| Camping trips (overnight) | 9.7% |
| Other | 25.8% |

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 | 59.4% |
| Consult with teachers or administrators or others | 81.3% |
| Attend IEP or other work-related meetings | 28.1% |
| Provide coverage for drills or assemblies | 0.0% |
| Provide coverage for field trips during school hours | 21.9% |
| Accompany students during work experience or community-based activities | 21.9% |
| Provide coverage outside assigned hours because of: | 12.5% |
| a. Problematic behaviour of student at the end of the day or during break periods | 15.6% |
| b. Transportation scheduling | 9.4% |
| c. Parent late picking up child | 15.6% |
| d. Lack of coverage and/or unfilled absences | 9.4% |
| e. Another staff member not reporting on time | 9.4% |

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 | 50.0% |
| I have a professional commitment to my job and work | 90.6% |
| My day's routine improves when I work these hours | 46.9% |
| Administrators expect me to work extra voluntary and unpaid hours | 12.5% |
| Teachers expect me to work extra voluntary and unpaid hours | 9.4% |
| Co-workers (other EAs or support staff) expect me to work extra voluntary and unpaid hours | 0.0% |
| Parents expect me to work extra voluntary and unpaid hours | 3.1% |
| I feel obliged to meet my students' needs | 78.1% |
| I feel obliged to guarantee my students' safety | 46.9% |
| I feel obliged to cover emergency situations with my students | 46.9% |
| The schedule does not allow for coverage for break times | 18.8% |
| Other reason | 25.0% |

Remedies for unpaid work: Kootenay Lake EAs speak out

“In my opinion and experiences TAs at the secondary level have a great amount of unpaid prep they do for modifying students’ programs. It is impossible to do the job without a considerable investment of your own personal time.”

“When asked to work extra, administration suggests we leave early for that day and not bank time. Sometimes this isn't possible or reasonable. I can't leave student(s) 15 min before the end of class when assisting them with a test or assignment. Therefore I don't.”

“There needs to be paid time for making materials for students.”