



Handbook for Educational Assistants

(Items outside of Benefits Packages – Support Staff

Updated January, 2010

1. Salary

- a) **Substitute Educational Assistants** Substitutes to be paid at the first step of the educational assistant salary scale. On a short-term basis, substitutes will be hired only for L-2 or L-3 assignments. For extended periods of time, substitutes will be hired in all situations.
- b) **Employment Insurance** Educational assistants will be laid off for holidays as follows:
 - Christmas and Easter from the last day that students are in attendance until the first day that students return.
 - Summer layoff will occur upon completion of total hours allocated to the individual educational assistant position.

A Record of Employment request form will be posted on First Class for each group eligible to apply for Employment Insurance Benefits for the Christmas Break, Spring Break and Summer Break. The Records of Employment are submitted electronically and will only be issued for those employees who submit the request form to the Melita Division Office.

- c) **Other Information** See “Section 2 - Benefits & Procedures Support Staff”

2. Work Guidelines

- a) **Holidays** Educational Assistants are expected to take their holidays during the Christmas Break, Spring Break and Summer Break.

Any requests for unpaid leave outside of these breaks must be requested in writing to, and approved by, the Student Service Coordinators.

- b) **Part-Time Educational Assistant Expectations During Full Day PD** Educational assistants who are working part time will be paid for and expected to attend a portion of the day equal to their employment time. Educational assistants in this situation are invited to attend the balance of the day's offerings. The principal and resource teacher may authorize full day attendance at the inservice with pay if the P.D. offering is particularly valuable to specific Educational Assistants duties.
- c) **Attendance at Staff Meetings** Regular staff meetings will be open to educational assistants to attend but are not compulsory. Educational assistants will not be compensated financially or otherwise for attending such meetings. This procedure does not preclude the principal from calling a special staff meeting for educational assistants either during the regular school day or after hours. The principal will determine compensation.
- d) **Study/Preparation Time** Staff in charge of supervising educational assistants should consider the importance and need to allow assistants some study or preparation time during the school day when certain types of duties are assigned (e.g. to work with a novel, to preview a chapter or unit).

- e) **Meeting Time with Teachers** Resource teachers should endeavor to schedule regular meeting time for the educational assistant with the classroom teacher and resource teacher.
- f) **Assignment Decision for the Next School Year** Division and school administrators will inform educational assistants of their job assignments for the next year once teacher assignment and special needs student placement decisions have been made. A call back letter will be sent to assistants during the summer confirming employment and specifying the start date.
- g) **Assignment to Educational Assistant Positions** Assignments to positions will be at the discretion of the school principal, resource teacher and the coordinator of student services and will take into consideration the following:
- How long the assistant has worked with an individual student – in most cases no more than two years.
 - Compatibility of assistant and student.
 - Ability of assistant to handle the assignment as regards personality and academic ability.
 - Compatibility of assistant and classroom teacher.
- h) **Seniority** Regional seniority lists based on community regions will apply, namely,
- Wawanesa region including Green Acres and Nature Valley Colony Schools
 - Waskada
 - Souris region including Newdale and Souris River Colony Schools
 - Pierson
 - Hartney region including Maple Grove Colony School
 - Deloraine
 - Melita

Seniority can only protect a position for a person at that person's current level of employment. (E.g., half-time, three-quarter time, etc.)

- k) **Promotion and staff changes:** When a vacancy occurs or a new position is created it will be advertised in schools on the First Class vacancies site, on the division website and in newspapers as appropriate. In the case of an extended position, the person working part time in the affected classroom will be considered for the extra hours of employment

When choosing an applicant for a vacant position the division shall base its decision on the applicant's qualifications and his/her ability to satisfactorily perform the duties of the position.

Educational assistants who are working part time may request consideration for full time in the future. However, the assignment of a full time working opportunity will be at the discretion of the employer and will take into consideration whether or not the best interests of education for children are best served.

- l) **Layoffs and recalls:** It is recognized that job security shall increase in proportion to length of service. Therefore, in the event of a layoff, employees shall be retained in an order of seniority provided they have the skill, ability and qualifications to perform the required duties.

Seniority will be applied as a principle of retaining staff during a time of lay-off of staff at any time during the school year. The person who is lowest on the seniority list will be considered first for bumping by the more senior worker. However, the least senior person will not be bumped if that person has taken specific longer term training in order to work with a particular child (e.g., sign language to work with a hearing impaired child, or a speech/language assistant who works with the caseload supervised by the speech/language pathologist). In that situation the next person up from the bottom of the seniority list will be considered for bumping.

Seniority will not be transferable from one area of the division to another; however, in the event that an educational assistant with past experience from one area wins a job competition in another area within a year of leaving the previous position, experience can be transferred.

- n) **Layoff of an assistant caused by the transfer out of a student funded level II or level III:** If a Level II or Level III funded student transfers out of a school during the school year, the following guidelines will apply: - i) A date of layoff notice will be established. This date will be either the last day of school for the student who is transferring out, or if advance notice is given by the family to the school, the layoff notice date may be exactly two weeks prior to the date of departure of the student. In either case, the affected employee(s) will be given two weeks of notice of layoff. ii) The loss of EA time to the school affected will be equivalent to the amount of EA time which had been assigned to that Level II or Level III funded student. iii) The educational assistant affected by the layoff will be, by the principle of seniority, the least senior educational assistant on the staff of that seniority area. iv) The student services coordinator will exercise discretion to ensure the best interests of all students are met
- o) **Employee Transfer:** If an educational assistant with permanent status loses his/her position due to a cutback in the total number of positions, he/she can transfer into a position at another school within the same region provided he/she has more seniority than, at minimum, the least senior assistant working in that school, and provided that the transferring person possesses the necessary skills, abilities and qualifications.

If a new position becomes available in a school, for hiring that takes effect at the beginning of a school year, an assistant with permanent status in another school in the same region may apply for the position and will be granted an interview for the position.

p) **Recruitment and Selection Procedures**

- i) Advertising for educational assistant positions will be conducted through the school division office.
- ii) The advertisement will be placed in schools, on the First Class vacancies site, on the division website and in newspapers as appropriate and will contain relevant information regarding the position and a closing date for applications. Applications by interested parties will be received by the division at any time during the year and placed on file.

- iii) The selection procedure will include short listing where applicable, reference checks and an interview procedure. The interview process will be conducted by a team selected by the school administration and the coordinator of student services. The decision of the interview team will be relayed to the superintendent for board approval. The interview must be conducted using the Southwest Horizon School Division Educational Assistants Interview Guide.
- iv) Upon ratification the administrator and/or coordinator of student services will send letters to successful and unsuccessful candidates.

q) **Supervision and Evaluation of Assistant Positions**

The responsibility for the supervision and evaluation process of the assistant positions will rest with the principal in consultation with the resource teacher and classroom teacher. In the case of assistant positions, which involve more than one school, such as the speech assistant position, the speech/language pathologist, specialized or appropriate supervisor will be consulted. The line of authority for supervision of an assistant position will be established in each school by the principal and made known to the teacher involved and to the educational assistant. Essential to the supervision process is the opportunity for frequent meeting-contact time between the assistant and classroom teacher and also involving the administrator.

A performance evaluation review will be conducted during the first year of any assistant position and thereafter when considered appropriate, except that a performance review is required a minimum of every four years. The performance review should be based on the effectiveness of the assistant in carrying out tasks assigned, as well as on the relationship established with students and teachers which relates positively to meeting the objectives of the position. A standard division evaluation form for assistants will be circulated. The performance review will involve input from the classroom teacher and results will be discussed with the assistant. Copies of the performance review should be given to the assistant and one copy forwarded to the division office.

r) **Professional Development of Educational Assistant Positions**

Professional development is encouraged, or can be requested by administration, teacher or educational assistant, and approved by the coordinator of student services, when it is deemed necessary for a particular assignment.