

April 13, 2011

Re: **Work Day for Educational Assistants – 2011/2012**

The following information has been forwarded to all Elementary and Secondary Principals, and Special Education staff from Earl Manners, TLDSB Human Resources Administrator and Shelley Woon, District Principal of Special Education:

“This letter is a joint communication from Special Education and Human Resources regarding the increase in the hours of work for our Educational Assistants come September 2011.

Starting **September 1, 2011**, full-time educational assistants will work seven (7) hours each day, Monday to Friday, thirty-five (35) hours per week plus have a one-half hour unpaid, uninterrupted lunch each day. Each seven hour day for a full-time educational assistant shall include two fifteen (15) minute paid rest periods. Part-time educational assistants working more than three (3) hours and less than six (6) hours per day shall have one fifteen (15) minute paid rest period. A part-time person must have a half-hour unpaid, uninterrupted lunch if working over five (5) hours.

You will need to discuss with your educational assistants their new start and end times prior to the EA Placement meetings in June, 2011.

Principals must:

- ✓ Establish a start time and end time for each educational assistant;
- ✓ Schedule a one-half hour unpaid, uninterrupted lunch for each educational assistant working over five hours per day;
- ✓ Schedule two fifteen minute rest period(s) for each educational assistant working a seven hour day;
- ✓ Schedule one fifteen minute rest period for each educational assistant working between three and six hours;
- ✓ Breaks should be scheduled within the working hours recognizing that the purpose of a break is to provide relief from the work. Therefore, scheduling breaks and lunches at the beginning or end of the work day does not meet the intention or the terms of the collective agreement; and
- ✓ Schedule classroom, supervision and other duties for each educational assistant (see examples on page 2).

Unlike the last three years, the additional time cannot be banked one day to extend another work day. Any hours beyond seven per day or thirty-five per week is considered overtime.

Some schools have educational assistants who currently agree to ride the bus with students before and after school with these hours paid at the regular and/or overtime rate as the case may be. Under the new hours of work educational assistants can be assigned a seven hour work day that includes the travel on a bus to school or to home with start and end times adjusted accordingly. Such arrangements should only be made in consultation with the Special Education Department whom can provide suggested models, and only after seeking input from educational assistants assigned to the school.

With the increase in the length of the EA workday we anticipate a number of positive outcomes. As the instructional day for students is five (5) hours plus nutrition breaks, Principals will want to schedule educational assistant hours before and after the instructional day. The following lists cover a variety of work that can be completed by Educational Assistants during the additional time beyond the instructional day that will be available as a result of the seven (7) hour day:

Data Collection

- ✓ Debriefing data to support development of IEPs;
- ✓ Documenting the activities of the day for particular students (could be a scrapbook, journal, and could include photos of work done during the day);
- ✓ Charting (i.e. behaviour logs), data tracking;
- ✓ Data entry for students with special needs; and
- ✓ Collection of data for alternate programs.

Direct Support

- ✓ Co-op programs – and accompaniment to, during and return;
- ✓ Support for end of day transitions where appropriate;
- ✓ Executive functioning support for kids – organization at beginning or end of day, homework club;
- ✓ Extra-curricular support for students with special needs. **NOTE:** Not to run extra activities for the school;
- ✓ Supervision before/after school – bus/taxi;
- ✓ Lunch support – life skills activities at lunch (i.e. board games, photo club, drop-in room); and
- ✓ Bus supervision – riding the bus to and from school with students with special needs.

Indirect Support

- ✓ Preparing work for students (i.e. board maker, laminating, printing, copying) under the direction of the teacher;
- ✓ Technology support;
- ✓ Software management on computers;
- ✓ Scanning using Kurzweil; and
- ✓ Inventory of personal care items/checking of equipment (maintaining logs).

Team Support/Communication

- ✓ Access Board emails and conference sites on a daily basis for work-related issues;
- ✓ Attend staff meetings;
- ✓ Mentoring;
- ✓ Attend School Team Case Conferences – before/after school (where the Principal deems it appropriate);
- ✓ Training (i.e. practicing/reviewing BMS, lifting, First Aid strategies); and
- ✓ Promoting skill development (i.e. on-line learning through video tutorials).

This does not mean school administrators are limited to these suggestions, but it is understood that the tasks assigned to the Educational Assistant must be scheduled and supportive of student needs.

If you have any questions about the new educational assistant work day for the 2011/2012 school year, please contact Shelley Woon, District Principal of Special Education at extension 22146 or Wilma Lynch, Senior Manger of Human Resources at 22143. Work schedules for each educational assistant are to be in place by September 1, 2011 which is a mandatory Professional Activity Day for those employees. Please ensure that your educational assistants have an opportunity to read this memo.

Thank you for your assistance.