**Educational Assistants**

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Educational Assistant Support Protocol

**Philosophy**

Since the mid 1980's, the Government of New Brunswick has endorsed the philosophy of the inclusion of exceptional children into the regular classroom setting. In order to meet the needs of these exceptional children, many and varied types of resources and supports have been introduced. One type of support system is the assignment of an Educational Assistant.

**Educational Assistant Support**

The Educational Assistant works under the supervision and direction of the student's classroom teacher(s), resource teacher, principal and/or other professional staff.

Educational Assistants are paraprofessionals employed by school districts to support the inclusion of exceptional children. They should not be viewed as a student's personal assistant, but rather as a support to a teacher or classroom. In fact, very few students require full time Educational Assistant support. Educational Assistants are generally shared with other students or assigned on a part-time basis. The capacity of the present school-based resources and the extent of the student's exceptionality will be factors in determining the amount and kind of support needed.

In order for children to lead full and productive lives, they must be given the opportunity to move from dependence to relative independence leading to a decrease in support services. It is recognized, however, that some children will always require ongoing support.

The request process emphasizes a collaborative approach at the school level. The school-based team helps the teacher develop and implement all possible strategies and resources prior to a referral to the district level for Educational Assistant support. Class size and composition, support services, and workload of the teacher are taken into account when determining the amount of Educational Assistant support required.

**Request Process**

1. The student's name is forwarded to the school-based team for discussion. Referrals may come from teachers, parents, other professionals, etc.
2. The school-based team will consider all current information from which it will identify the student's strengths and needs.
3. The team will undertake a problem-solving process to generate strategies to address identified strengths and needs. These strategies will be prioritized and implemented.
4. Informal and, if warranted, formal assessment will occur.
5. A Personalized Learning Plan will be developed, if necessary.
6. Current school resources will be reallocated.
7. A request for Educational Assistant support, with accompanying documentation, may be submitted to the Office of the Superintendent if the educational planning process has identified this need.

**Things To Remember**

* The school-based team may be composed of classroom teachers, resource teachers, guidance personnel, school administrator, and district personnel when required.
* All requests must first be addressed to members of the school-based team. The principal is usually the contact person for this team.
* Very few children require full-time Educational Assistant support.
* An Educational Assistant is not to be viewed as a personal assistant for an individual student, but rather as a support to a teacher or classroom.
* The placement of an Educational Assistant and the number of hours assigned are ultimately educational decisions; however, parents and other professionals are consulted as a part of the educational planning process.
* The amount of Educational Assistant support can vary from year to year depending on the changing needs and resources.

*Please contact the school principal if you have questions or comments regarding Educational Assistant support.*

Employment as an Educational Assistant

The Educational Assistant works under the supervision and direction of the student's classroom teacher(s), resource teacher, principal and/or other professional staff. Educational Assistants are employed by school districts to support the inclusion and the special education goals of students who have been deemed exceptional according to the Education Act.

Educational Assistants have become valuable members of the educational support staff for students with special academic, physical and/or behavioral needs. Often the support provided by an Educational Assistant is the essential component in the successful inclusion of special needs students.

Hours worked vary from 3-6 per day and starting and ending times vary according to the school and the student’s needs.

**Permanent Educational Assistants**

* Permanent Educational Assistants are members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees – Local 2745.
* Vacancies are posted as per the Collective Agreement.
* Screened candidates will participate in an interview with a District Selection Team.
* Successful candidates will be notified by phone, then by letter within a 2-week period following the interviews.

**Casual Educational Assistants**

* As the need arises, all Casual Educational Assistant (C.E.A.) applications are screened by a district team.
* Only the highest-ranking applications of all the submissions are selected for further processing.
* Successful candidates’ names go on a Supply database.
* The C.E.A. database is renewed annually in August and is updated regularly throughout the school year.
* C.E.A.'s can be called either on a day to day basis or for short to long term positions depending on the need.
* C.E.A.'s are used to replace absent (permanent) Educational Assistants or in a newly identified position until that position has been properly advertised.
* C.E.A.'s may select designated school areas where they want to work. This will be indicated on the database.
* C.E.A.'s may apply for any newly identified internal/external E.A. positions that are advertised to the general public in the newspaper or online. C.E.A.'s do have job rights over the public applicants.

**Criteria**

* The minimum criteria is one year post-secondary training and experience in a related field.
* Diplomas or Certificates obtained via on-line institutions are NOT accepted as post-secondary training.
* Examples of related fields are programs or degrees in Early Childhood, Youth Care, Human Services Counsellor, Educational Assistants, etc. Courses are offered through community colleges, institutes, and universities.
* Examples of related experience are jobs in Youth Care, Group Homes, Support Services, Relief Care, Supported Employment, or Training Centres.
* Candidates who not worked in a related field of study but possess other post-secondary programming may be required to complete academic testing.
* Selected candidates must successfully pass Personal and Criminal Reference Checks and Policy 701 Student Protection Policy Training before being hired or added to the database.
* Must be knowledgeable about and abide by the Department of Education's Educational Assistant Guidelines for Standards and Evaluations.

**Application Process**

* Must submit résumé and complete an application for each advertised position.
* Applications can be obtained on the ASD-N website or from the Receptionist at the School District Anglophone North School District Office.