
To: Education Assistants, Principals, and Vice Principals

Copy: CUPE – Local 1091

From: Learning Services – Inclusive Learning, and Human Resources

Date: September 8, 2023

Subject: **Education Assistant Learning Improvement Fund (LIF) – Update & Allocation**

As in past years, the District and CUPE representatives met in May 2023 to discuss the allocation and use of the funds in the 2023-2024 school year and have signed a Letter of Agreement that provides the framework for usage of LIF. The following provides information about the purpose of LIF, how the funds are allocated, how the time is accounted for from an administrative perspective, and guidelines on how LIF time could be used.

What is the Support Staff Learning Improvement Fund?

In general, when the funds were established in 2014, the extra time allocated to education assistants was intended for:

“enhancing incremental EA hours for initiatives such as consultations, collaborative planning meetings, student coverage and innovative practices for existing EA positions” (Provincial Framework Agreement),

and, from the Ministry’s LIF regulations, there is also the

“provision of additional...teacher assistants and other paraprofessionals.”

How is the 2022-2023 LIF being allocated?

1. Additional Time Added to Continuing Education Assistant Positions

The LIF minutes are allocated to **continuing education assistant positions** which were in the allocation as at June 30th for the following school year, as follows:

LIF Time = 60 minutes per week for EA positions of 26 hours or more

LIF Time = 30 minutes per week for EA positions of less than 26 hours

Job postings will indicate if a position is LIF eligible and, if so, LIF time allocated to a position is indicated in the EA's assignment letter (found in the employee folder on Employee and Admin Connect).

The LIF time **is not allocated** to:

- **casuals** called out for LIF-eligible positions; casuals are not assigned and do not work the additional time associated with the Learning Improvement Fund
- **temporary** positions created by extra hours added to a school

2. Peer Support Positions

Four continuing 30-hour Peer Support Facilitator positions will be funded and three of those positions with an additional 5 temporary hours added to each position for the school year. The Peer Support Facilitator positions do not have LIF time allocated.

How is the time tracked/accounted for?

Employee Time Records

The LIF time has been added to the FTE of each eligible education assistant and will be reflected on the pre-printed timesheet summary.

For purposes such as sick leave and the use of banked time and overtime, the LIF time will be applied on an equal minutes per day basis. **daily work time = continuing hours + LIF time divided by 5.**

Planning & Recording the Time

Planning for the use of the additional time will be discussed by the principal, and/or vice-principal, and the education assistants, and will take into account the input and needs of various other stakeholders. The plans developed for the use of the LIF time should be communicated clearly to all school staff.

Important: The LIF time does not have to be used on a per-day, or even per week basis, however, it should (normally) be used on a bi-weekly basis.

Education Assistants are asked to keep a record of how the LIF time is being used, this will be reviewed by principals on a periodic basis.

What are considered appropriate LIF activities for Education Assistants?

The following activities are considered to be appropriate for the scheduling of EA LIF time. It is intended that **activities take place outside of normal school hours.** Please keep in mind that the list below is not comprehensive and is meant as a guideline. Planning for the use of the additional time should focus on the needs of each school and classroom.

- collaborative planning with the classroom teacher and/or resource teacher(s)

- meeting as a group with the school-based team and/or administrators to discuss students and support, including the development of safety plans
- supporting education assistants in learning the technology of the special needs computers and their possible applications to individual students
- supporting transitions, for example, EAs to new students, EAs to new teachers, and students making a transition from one grade to the next
- creating materials to support student learning
- attending staff meetings to participate in dialogue about school-wide issues and/or EA-teacher collaboration regarding student learning
- attend IEP meetings and Care Team meetings, and other meetings with the caregivers/guardians and community-based supports
- *professional development related to the implementation of student IEPs
- supporting students at the end of the school day with such things as student planners, organization, homework, and waiting for the bus, etc.
- other activities discussed and agreed to in advance by the EA and school administrator(s)

(*Note: this does not include professional development initiatives for the purposes of maintaining or recertifying qualifications required to hold or obtain education assistant positions.)

If you have any questions regarding the Learning Improvement Fund in general, please contact Nicole Braid, District Principal, Employee Services.

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