

TEACHER AIDES/ASSISTANTS

Teacher assistants shall be employed to the extent possible within funding limitations upon a written recommendation by the principal and approval by the superintendent or his designee. The use of assistants will permit teachers more time to devote to instruction, more effective grouping for instructional purposes, and greater individualized attention for meeting pupil needs.

Assistants may not have direct responsibility for or supervision of student instruction or activities but shall be under the supervision of a licensed staff member in accordance with state law. If a licensed teacher to whom an assistant teacher has been assigned is required to be absent from the classroom, the assistant teacher may assume responsibility for the classroom in lieu of a substitute teacher. In no event shall a teacher assistant assume sole responsibility for more than three consecutive school days. The District adheres to MS Code Section 37-21-7 (6) for the minimum salary of assistant teachers.

I. OBJECTIVES

Teacher assistants are employed so that the professional teachers may direct their energies to the students' education. The Superintendent and/or staff development committee shall develop an appropriate in-service training program for teacher assistants. The basic objectives for the use of teacher assistants are:

1. To make it possible for teachers to use more variety in structuring classroom activities which will result in more meaningful education for children and youth.
2. To enable the teacher to do more creative teaching, and to use a greater variety of instructional media.
3. To enable the teacher to develop effective programs focusing upon the individual needs of each student.
4. To provide increased time for individualizing instruction, evaluating learning situations, student counseling and guidance for other instructional activities that will improve educational opportunities for boys and girls.
5. To relieve teachers of the numerous semi- and non-professional tasks which have become cumulative, and which have come to consume a disproportionate amount of the teacher's time and energies.

II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Teacher assistants may be assigned to: (1) provide one-on-one tutoring for eligible students, if the tutoring is scheduled at a time when a student would not otherwise receive instruction from a teacher; (2) assist with classroom management, such as organizing instructional and other materials; (3) provide assistance in a computer laboratory; (4) conduct parental involvement activities; (5) provide support in a library or media center; (6) act as a translator; or (7) provide instructional services to students while working under the direct supervision of a teacher.

Teacher assistants may assume limited duties that are assigned to similar personnel who are not working in a program supported with Title I funds, including duties beyond classroom instruction or that do not benefit participating children, so long as the amount of time spent on such duties is the same proportion of total work time as prevails with respect to similar personnel at the same school.

The principal and supervising teacher are jointly responsible for making final decisions related to the duties and responsibilities to be assigned to an assistant.

The duties of teacher assistants may be further restricted or regulated by program requirements of the funding plan under which they are employed.

III. ALTERNATIVE OPTION

As an alternative to employing assistant teachers, any school district may use its allotment provided for the purpose of employing licensed teachers for kindergarten, first, second and third-grade classes; however, no school district shall be authorized to use the funds for assistant teachers for the purpose of employing licensed teachers unless the district has established that the employment of licensed teachers using such funds will reduce the teacher-student ratio in the kindergarten, first, second and third-grade classes. All state funds for assistant teachers shall be applied to reducing teacher-student ratio in Grades K-3.

It is the intent of the Legislature that no school district shall dismiss any assistant teacher for the purpose of using the assistant teacher allotment to employ licensed teachers. School districts may rely only upon normal attrition to reduce the number of assistant teachers employed in that district.

SOURCE: Jackson Public School District, Mississippi School Boards Association
LEGAL REF.: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-21-7; Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard
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