



# Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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TO: Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent of Schools Board of Education

FROM: Laurie Campbell, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources  
Dr. Alicia Evans, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations

RE: New Pay Rates for Substitute Teaching Assistants, Playground Supervisors, Custodial Substitutes, and Lunchroom Workers

DATE: January 9, 2018

District 97 employs temporary, at-will staff as custodial substitutes, playground supervisor, substitute teaching assistants, and lunchroom workers. This group of employees are not affiliated with any union/labor group and do not receive fringe benefits. The administration is recommending new pay rates for each group of employees effective upon approval by the Board of Education. Below please find information regarding the rationale for each rate change.

- Custodial substitutes are assigned to cover cleaning shifts for absent custodians. Custodial substitutes may be assigned to long-term or short-term absences at any of the eleven District 97 sites. The current rate of pay for custodial substitutes is \$10.00 per hour. The administration is recommending that the rate be increased to \$12.00 per hour. This rate of pay has not changed for at least five years. While the recommended rate represents a twenty percent increase, the District has had difficulty hiring and retaining high quality custodial substitutes. According to the Illinois Department of Labor, the 2015 Cook County prevailing wage rate for regular first year janitorial staff is \$13.35 per hour. The rate of \$12.00 per hour is also less than the starting rate established in the Board's 2015-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Service Employees International Union.
- Substitute teaching assistants work in the schools covering absences for the 111 teaching assistants employed by District 97. The District has had significant difficulty filling the positions when teaching assistants are absent. In the month of December, the District averaged six unfilled teaching assistant positions per day. When a position goes unfilled, other staff need to cover and/or the assistance in the classroom is simply not available on that day. The District has been increasing the substitute teaching and substitute teaching assistant pool. However, the difference in the rate of pay between substitute teaching and working as a substitute teaching assistant does not make it appealing for substitute teachers to accept substitute teaching assistant positions. The current rate of pay for substitute teaching assistants is \$10.15 per hour while the daily substitute teaching rate is \$103.00 per day. District 97 collected data on the rate of pay for substitute teaching assistants in suburban school districts. Currently, District 97 is far below the market average. Along with increasing the number of substitute teachers and teaching assistants, it is necessary to increase the pay rate for the substitute teaching assistants in order to appropriately fill absences. The administration is recommending

that the pay structure change from hourly to half-day and full-day rates. This structure coincides with the manner in which leave time is managed. In addition to changing the structure for pay, the administration is recommending an increased rate of \$45.00 per half day and \$90.00 per full day. Doing so will retain the current substitute teaching assistants. It will also make it more financially desirable for current substitute teachers to accept a substitute teaching assistant position. As was noted in the December 19th Long-Term Substitute Report to the Board, Mrs. Hamilton continues to recruit, interview and hire new substitutes and substitute teaching assistants. The administration will continue to monitor fill rates for teaching assistants once the change in pay has taken effect.

- Playground supervisors are hired to help maintain a safe and orderly environment on the playground during lunchtime. While District 97 teachers often provide lunchtime supervision at the schools, there are times and instances where more supervisors are needed. Currently the rate of pay for playground supervisors is \$9.84 per hour. This rate was last changed in 2015. The administration is recommending increasing the rate of hourly rate by \$1.16 to a total of \$11.00 per hour. This represents an increase of 11.78%.
- There are three different levels of workers responsible for food service at District 97 school. Lunchroom managers oversee the service of food, collection of funds, and work done by the lunchroom workers. There are two different levels of lunchroom workers - Lunchroom Worker I and Lunchroom Worker II. Lunchroom Worker I is considered an entry level position. Typically, a Lunchroom Worker I will advance to a Lunchroom Worker II, or higher paying, position. The current rate of pay for Lunchroom Worker I is \$10.75 per hour. District 97 Food Service Coordinator, Ms. Carla Ellis, has had difficulty filling the vacant Lunchroom Worker I positions. Staff employed as Lunchroom Worker I serve food and provide a clean eating environment for the students. According to the Illinois Department of Labor, the 2014 prevailing wage rate in Cook County for a regular first year food service worker was \$10.67 per hour. The administration is recommending a 2.32% increase to the current rate bringing it to \$11.00 per hour.

Dr. Evans has reviewed the District 97 FY18 budget line items associated with the recommended increases. She has confirmed that funds are available to accommodate the increases effective upon approval by the Board of Education.