



# 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 *JMC*  
Mr. Paul Starck-King, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations *TK*  
Ms. Cathy Hamilton, District Administrator for Substitute Teachers & Teaching Assistants *cl*

RE: New Pay Rates for Substitute Teachers and Substitute Teaching Assistants

DATE: October 9, 2018

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

## Substitute teachers:

District 97 currently has 154 active substitute teachers who provide absence coverage for up to 533 teaching staff. Substitute teachers are hired to cover teacher absences due to illness, personal leave, long term leave, and release time for teachers. Substitute teachers are paid a daily rate of \$103. If a substitute teacher works in a long term assignment, the rate of pay increases to \$180 per day to cover additional responsibilities such as planning and family communication.

Nationwide<sup>1</sup>, there has been a shortage of substitute teachers with a national fill rate of 78<sup>2</sup>-81<sup>3</sup>%. Illinois is experiencing the same substitute teacher shortage. Legislation was recently approved to alter the requirements for short term substitute teaching licenses to address this shortage. District 97 has been impacted by the shortage too. Last year, the average fill rate was 76%.

The administration has been monitoring fill rates for the past year and has been working to increase the number of substitute teachers for the district. The district has received feedback from current substitutes and substitute candidates that the daily rate being offered by District 97 was less than what could be earned in most districts. Last November, data was collected on the daily substitute rate from thirty school districts in the Chicago suburbs. The mean, median and mode for daily rates was \$110 per day which is above the current \$103 per day in District 97. In order to be competitive during time of shortage, the administration is recommending that the daily rate for substitutes increase to \$110.

<sup>1</sup> Source, Frontline Education Research and Learning [A Year in Review: National 2017-2018 Employee Absence and Substitute Data](#)

<sup>2</sup> National middle school fill rates are 78%

<sup>3</sup> National elementary school fill rates are 81%

Substitute teaching assistants:

District 97 employs 111 teaching assistants. Teaching assistants may be assigned to an individual student, may assist with a specialized program or may provide support with larger class sizes. When a teaching assistant is absent, a substitute teaching assistant is secured. Last year, the administration reported on difficulty filling teaching assistant absences. In January of 2018, the Board approved an increase in the rate of pay for substitute teaching assistants from \$10.15/hour to \$45.00 per half day and \$90.00 pre full day. Since January, the administration has continued to monitor fill rates for teaching assistants. These fill rates have been significantly lower than the district fill rates. There are currently 55 substitute teaching assistants. Of the 55 teaching assistant substitutes, 43 are also signed up in the system to be substitute teachers.

Strategy:

Increasing the rate of pay for substitute teachers helps position District 97 to be competitive in a challenging job market. Matching the rate of pay for substitute teachers to substitute teaching assistants will create a financial incentive for our current substitute teachers to accept either substitute teaching or substitute teaching assistant positions. Coupled with the increased rates of pay, the administration will begin a local recruitment campaign with a goal of increasing fill rates. District 97 has hired 23 new substitutes since the start of the school year but needs more to be able to increase the fill rate.

Mr. Starck-King has reviewed the District 97 FY19 budget line items associated with the recommended increases. He has confirmed that funds are available to accommodate the increases effective upon approval by the Board of Education.