



Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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

FROM: Ms. Laurie Campbell, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources
Mr. Paul Starck-King, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations
Ms. Cathy Hamilton, District Administrator for Substitute Teachers & Teaching Assistants

RE: New Daily Pay Rate for Individuals with Credentials to Substitute Teach

DATE: October 23, 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 increasing the rate of pay from \$103 per day to \$110 per day for individuals who have the credentials to substitute teach. If approved, a substitute teacher who accepts a substitute teaching assistant position will be paid a daily rate of \$110. An individual who possesses only substitute teaching assistant credentials will be paid the current rate of \$90 per day.

Strategy: The decision to recommend an increase in pay is one aspect of a plan to increase the fill rate for substitute teachers and for substitute teaching assistants.

Increase rate of pay to match market rate: The decision to recommend the pay increase is one aspect of a plan to increase the fill rate for substitute teacher and teaching assistant absences. Increasing the rate of pay for substitute teachers helps position District 97 to be competitive in a challenging job market.

Financially incent those with credentials to substitute teach to accept substitute teaching assistant positions: Paying individuals with the credentials to substitute teach will create a financial incentive for our current substitute teachers to accept either substitute teaching or substitute teaching assistant positions. Based on our data collection from local districts, many have successfully implemented the strategy of paying both substitute teachers and substitute teaching assistants the same rate.

Recruit locally: This change in pay for both substitute teachers and for substitute teaching assistants will be coupled with a strong recruiting program to hire additional substitute teachers and substitute teaching assistants. The administration will begin a local recruitment campaign with a goal of increasing fill rates. The recruitment plan includes attendance at job fairs, community outreach, updated fliers outlining the application process, and the creation of a short recruiting video.

Update communication information: Human Resources staff members have been working with Chris Jasculca and Amanda Siegfried to prepare a short recruiting video designed to recruit substitutes. Information about the need for substitute teachers and teaching assistants have been provided to principals to share at their monthly PTO meetings.

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.

Nationwide¹, there has been a shortage of substitute teachers with a national fill rate of 78²-81³%. 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.

Requirements for substitute teachers: In order to be a substitute teacher in Illinois, candidates must possess a valid Illinois teaching license or substitute teaching license. Individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution of higher education can apply and obtain substitute teaching license from the state of Illinois. Any individual with a valid Illinois teaching license is also permitted to substitute teach in Illinois.

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 per 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.

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

² National middle school fill rates are 78%

³ National elementary school fill rates are 81%

Credentialing for substitute teaching assistants: In order to be a substitute teaching assistant in District 97, candidates must possess a valid Illinois paraprofessional license. Individuals with a teaching license may also substitute as a teaching assistant. The state of Illinois awards paraprofessional licenses based on the following requirements

- Applicants must be at least 20 years of age and have one of the following:
 - Associate's degree or higher, or
 - 60 semester hours of coursework, or
 - High School Diploma or GED and a score of 460 or higher on the ETS Parapro test, or
 - High School Diploma or GED and the following scores on the ACT Workkeys:
 - Applied Math-4
 - Workplace Documents-4

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