



Teacher Leave Program Evaluation

Researched by Jamie Gellner, Division Program Evaluator, in
conjunction with Human Resources and the Department of
Instruction



Research Purpose

- The purpose of this program evaluation is to determine teacher personal and professional leave compliance with School Board Policy.

Fundamental Questions

- Why is teacher leave important?
- How much Professional and Personal leave are teachers taking? Are Personal and Professional leave being taken consistent with School Board policy? How does our program compare to our “like” market?
- Do we have sufficient substitutes to cover the leave that teachers are taking? How does ACPS substitute pay compare to our “like” market?

Why important? Educational Research

- Cost of teacher absence, financially and academically, is high
- Every 10 absences lowers average mathematics achievement equivalent to the difference between having a novice teacher and one with more experience (Center for American Progress, 2012)
- Chronic student absenteeism where the majority of teachers are also frequently absent (Civil Rights Data Collection, 2013-14)
- Little evidence nationally to show any connection between attendance policies and impact on teacher attendance, but studies don't look at *enforcement* of policies and school culture (National Council for Teacher Quality, 2014)
- No correlation between amount of leave time districts give teachers and the percentage of teachers absent more than ten days (National Council for Teacher Quality, 2016)

Data Gathering and Program Procedures

- Researched our policy and “like market” policies for comparison
- Reviewed Absence Management and Great Plains (HR and financial system) data for school year 2015-16
- Presented preliminary findings to principals in July 2016

How much leave are teachers taking?

2015-16 Absence Management Data and Great Plains data

- Some teachers took more than 2 days Personal Leave and/or were taking this leave on “blackout days” as defined by policy
 - Personal leave was being used during the first ten days and in the last five days
 - Large numbers of teachers were taking Personal leave on days before or after a student holiday
- Professional leave often occurred on school days
- Discrepancies between the Great Plains data and the Absence Management System

Number Teachers Taking Leave in Absence Management System

	Personal Leave	Professional Leave	% of Teachers Personal	% of Teachers Professional
0 days	416	424	33%	33%
1-2 days	441	374	35%	30%
3-5 days	268	300	21%	24%
6-9 days	115	126	9%	10%
10+ days	25	41	2%	3%
Total Teachers	1265	1265	100%	100%

*AMS does not include all leave, only days that required a sub

Personal Leave Days Occurring

- 103 days approved first ten days
- 101 days approved last five days
- 300 days approved before/after student holidays

- Most schools and teachers doing well
- Small amount of schools and small amount of teachers making large impact

Other Counties' Personal Leave

School System	How many do they earn each year?	How many can they use?	Cumulative? (For all "no" answers, unused personal converts to sick leave)
Albemarle	2	unclear	no
Chesapeake	3	3	no
Chesterfield	2	5	yes, up to 45 days
Charlottesville City	3	3	no
Fairfax	5	5	no
Hanover	2 days years 1-3; 3 days all other years	2 days years 1-3; 3 days all other years	no
James City	5	5, only 3 can be taken consecutively	no
Loudoun	3	3	no
Prince William	3	3	no
Spotsylvania	2; 1 per semester	unclear	yes, up to 5
Staunton	3	unclear	yes, up to 5

ACPS Policy Considerations

(Places where it is “unclear”)

- No guidelines around professional leave
- Revising paragraph stating, “Under special circumstances, a Principal/Department Head may authorize two days of non-cumulative, unpaid personal leave each year. The Superintendent/Designee may extend the unpaid personal leave to five consecutive days for emergencies or circumstances that...deserve special consideration” (5).
- Charts at end of policy confuse personal leave

Recommendations for Leave Policy

- Create school culture that aligns with division vision that “consistent employee presence on the job promotes and maintains excellence”
 - Establish procedures at each school and ensure teachers know procedures
- Develop ways to ensure accountability of all time
 - Provide absence tracking tool (until other technology is obtained)
 - Provide training to address discrepancies in Great Plains and Absence Management Data
- Each principal should use 5% as the number of teachers allowed off for planned leave on any given day
- Rewrite policy to make clear the number of leave days that are available for personal use
- Develop clear expectations for professional leave and add to policy
 - For days when teachers are absent, invest time and monies into recruiting high quality substitutes

Substitutes

- The school division spent \$1,347,277 for short- and long-term substitutes last year
- We used 415 substitutes last year (# of individuals who worked for us)
- The demand for substitutes often exceeded the supply, especially in October and March

October 2015 and March 2016 Absence Management System

Year: 2015-2016	<u>October</u>	<u>March</u>
Total absences per mth	<u>1934</u>	<u>2131</u>
<u>Reason</u>		
Personal	466	445
Sick	590	974
Professional	677	503
Vacancy	76	79
Other	125	130
Unfilled	291	297

Division Substitute Fill Rate

School	Total
Total	14,252
Filled	11,168
Unfilled	1,695
Fill not needed	1,389
Fill Rate	87%

Schools Below 87% Fill Rate

Burley	75%
Crozet	86%
Greer	84%
Henley	84%
Jouett	78%
MOHS	82%
Scottsville	81%
Walton	81%

<u>Substitute Pay Rates Effective School Year 2016-17</u>		
<u>School</u>	<u>Daily Rates</u>	<u>Long Term Rates</u>
Albemarle County	\$70	\$214.70
Augusta County	\$9/hr (≤ \$65.25)	\$18/hr (≤ \$130.50)
Chesterfield County	\$49 (w/o degree) \$78(with degree)	\$61 (w/o degree) \$197 (with degree)
City of Charlottesville	\$80 (min 60 hrs college credit) \$85 (licensed teacher)	\$207.00
City of Chesapeake	\$89.76 (min 30 hrs college credit)	115.93 (w/o degree) \$153.41 (with degree)
City of Harrisonburg	\$75 (2 years college) \$80 (4 yrs college)	\$129.00
Hanover County	\$83.23	Starting teacher pay (\$185 in 15-16)
Madison County	\$65	n/a
Montgomery County	\$78.78 (min 4 yr degree or enrolled)	\$111.10
Orange County	\$65.00 (w/o degree) \$70.00 (Associate's) \$90.00 (Bachelor's)	\$100 (w/o degree) \$129(Associate's) \$149(Bachelor's)
Prince William County	\$85.00 (w/o degree) \$96.00 (with degree)	\$113.00
Roanoke County	\$80	\$180.00
Rockingham County	\$75	\$115.00
Spotsylvania County	\$65.00 (w/o degree) \$80.00 (with degree)	\$120 (with degree) \$170(certified)
Stafford County	\$92 (HS diploma req)	\$128 (non licensed) \$169 (licensed)
Nelson County	\$60.61 (w/o degree) \$78.79 (with degree)	n/a
Fluvanna County (2012-13 rates)	\$65.50 (w/o degree) \$75.50 (with degree)	\$200.24

Substitute Survey

- 73% of respondents reveal they are working as many hours as they would like
- Substitute “preference” shows that each school has a sufficient pool of people willing to work there (lowest is Yancey)
- Walton, Red Hill and Yancey highest percentages of “prefer not to work there” presumably because of location (see below)
- Most substitutes marked proximity to home/location as reason for choosing job
- Many expressed a desire for more training and sense of belonging/contact in each school, specifically classroom management, technology, and emergency drills/school-specific procedures and orientation
 - Lack of adherence to substitute preferences makes them more likely to refuse a future job at school (accepting a job but being assigned to a different subject or age group at school, not getting a break)

Recommendations for Substitutes

- Raise daily salary for substitutes to be competitive with our “like” market
 - Differentiate pay scale based on education and/or experience
- Study schools with higher fill rates for substitutes and develop best practices around recruiting and retaining subs