

Transfer Possibilities for Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessionals who have been identified for excessing from their schools may want to transfer to a paraprofessional vacancy at this time. Each vacancy is posted for five days outside of Room 126 at the MPS central office. You must go there to learn about the current vacancies and to apply for positions that interest you.

By transferring now to a position at another school which will be funded for 2010-11, you can avoid waiting until next school year to obtain a position at the reassignment assembly.

Budget Cuts and Excessing

Many principals have determined that general and paraprofessional EA positions will be cut from their school's budget for next year. In several schools, the principal has informed the EAs who have been identified for excessing.

Same Procedures Per Contract

The MBSD/MTEA Educational Assistant Contract spells out the required steps when excessing is necessary. As in the past, EAs who volunteer to reduce their hours or who are identified for excessing will be asked to sign a confirming letter. Principals send these letters to central office, along with their EA staff reports, and the MTEA office receives a copy. We usually receive these reports in March, but MPS has not set a timeline for this spring.

Questions and Concerns

Frequently-asked excessing questions are addressed on the back of today's Team-Mate.

Candidates Needed for Five Positions

At this time, there are no declared candidates for five EA leadership positions in our union: **Treasurer**, a two-year term; **Elementary "B"** representative (two-year term); and three representative positions (four-year terms): **Senior High, Bilingual** and **At-Large "G."**

Additional Nominations at March 10 Meeting

Nominations will be taken from the floor at the March 10 meeting of MEAA Chairpersons. The meeting will be held after school at Serb Hall, 51st and Oklahoma.

To be nominated from the floor, you must be present to accept the nomination in person or submit a signed statement of acceptance **at the meeting**. If you cannot attend, your signed statement should include your school, home phone number, and the position you're seeking.

Union Leadership Candidates

The members listed below have declared their candidacy for the election of EA leaders which will be held in April.

MEAA Officers

President:	Cecelia Collins Tjuna C. Eggson Bama Grice	King High School Clark Street Metcalf
Vice-President:	Gwendolyn P. Anderson	53rd Street
Secretary:	Carol Sims	King High School

MEAA Executive Council

Elementary "E"	Michelle R. Allison	35th Street
Middle School	Millicent Smith	Hartford
At-Large "F"	Karon L. D'Agostino	Browning
School Safety	Ben Duke	School Safety
Elementary "A"	Bridgett Franklin	Cass Street
At-Large "D"	Charles Smith	School Safety



Excessing: Questions and Answers

Q. If EA excessing is necessary, does the contract allow you to volunteer?

A. Yes. In fact, the contract requires the administration to first determine if there are any qualified volunteers for excessing. The contract defines a qualified volunteer as an assistant in the job classification (general or paraprofessional) identified for excessing, who is in a position that can be filled by another assistant with the same number of hours who would otherwise be excessed.

Q. If budget cuts make excessing necessary but there are no volunteers, how does the administration determine which EAs are excessed?

A. Educational assistants with the least systemwide seniority are to be excessed first. The contract states: "In any reduction of educational assistants by excessing, those within the building with the greatest systemwide seniority shall be retained without a reduction in hours provided they have the necessary qualifications for the work available and there are positions with the appropriate number of hours available."

Q. What does the "necessary qualifications for the work available" mean?

A. Based on past practice and grievances, in almost all situations, a general educational assistant after a reasonable and appropriate training period has the "necessary qualifications" for any general assistant position. Likewise, in almost all situations, a paraprofessional after a reasonable and appropriate training period has the necessary qualifications for any paraprofessional position.

Ask an MTEA staff member if there is any question about "necessary qualifications" being used as an exception to seniority rights.

Q. Can being bilingual be a "necessary qualification?"

A. Yes. In fact there is a contractual "bilingual-paraprofessional" position description. EAs in bilingual positions must be bilingual.

Q. Does the number of years assigned to a school affect who is excessed?

A. **No.** Excessing is by systemwide seniority. It's how long you have worked as an EA, **not** how long you have been at the school.

Q. Does the source of funding affect who is excessed?

A. No. EAs with the least systemwide seniority are excessed - regardless of how their positions are funded.

For example, suppose your school has just two 30-hour paraprofessional positions - one funded by Title I and the other by special education. Suppose the Title I position is not being funded for next school year, and the person in the position is more senior.

In this example, the more senior paraprofessional would remain at the school and be assigned to the special education position next year. The less senior paraprofessional would be excessed.

Q. If you are notified that you will be excessed at the end of the school year, could your excessed status change before school starts in the fall?

A. If you are identified as excessed, you will most likely not have a position at your current school in the fall. However, your situation could change between now and the start of next school year.

There may be changes - based on the school board's final budget action or an unexpected increase in state and/or federal funding over the summer. There may be personnel changes at your school due to leaves, resignations, retirements, etc.

If your position is reinstated by the first student day of next school year, the contract allows you to return to your school.

Q. Is being excessed the same as being laid off?

A. **No!** Excessing means only that you will not have a position at your current school. Excessing does not mean that you are out of a job with MPS. Layoffs are handled on a systemwide basis under a contractual process that is **completely separate from excessing**.

Q. If there are questions about excessing at your school, what should be done?

A. Please call Acquintis Chesir of the MTEA staff at 259-1990 or e-mail him at acquintischesir@mtea.weac.org.