

## What are the daily hours of work for Teacher Assistants?

Teacher Assistants in the Strait Regional School Board are unionized employees. As unionized staff, their work arrangements are governed by a collective agreement. The standard work day for Teacher Assistants in our Board is 5.5 hours per day. Some Teacher Assistants work longer hours because they provide supervision for students requiring support on the school bus due to safety concerns. The need for bus supervision is determined during the annual Teacher Assistant Audit. As with other forms of Teacher Assistant support, the amount of Teacher Assistant bus supervision that a student requires often decreases as they become more independent. Bus supervision is provided from pick up to drop off at the student's school bus stop.

## How are the daily schedules of Teacher Assistants made?

School Administrators and teachers set the daily schedules for Teacher Assistants. They consider any tasks that students can complete independently, student personal care and behavioural challenges, the timetable of classes in the school, the requirements for student supervision and many other factors in making the schedules. In addition, rotations of Teacher Assistants to work with different students are encouraged to promote student independence, to the extent possible.

## Where can I get more information?

Teacher Assistants make an important contribution to the support services available at our schools for students with special needs in personal care and/or behavior. More information on Teacher Assistant services may be obtained through the chart below:

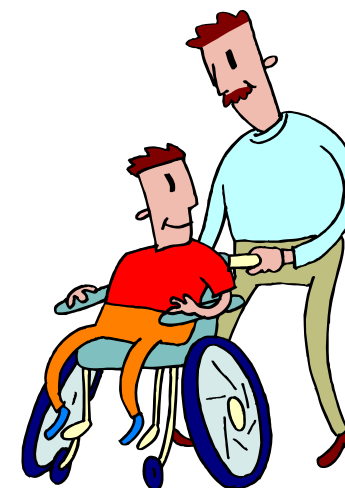
Topic	Contact
Teacher Assistant Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinator of Student Services: 902-625-7133</li> </ul>
Teacher Assistant Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinator of Student Services: 902-625-7133</li> </ul>
Allocation of Teacher Assistants to schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinator of Student Services: 902-625-7133</li> </ul>
Daily schedules of Teacher Assistants at schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School Principal</li> </ul>
Provincial Department of Education <i>Teacher Assistant Guidelines</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>studentservices.ednet.ns.ca/sites/default/files/ta-full.pdf</li> </ul>
General inquiries and to access additional copies of this brochure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>902-625-2191/1-800-650-4448</li> <li>www.srsb.ca</li> <li><a href="mailto:srsb@srsb.ca">srsb@srsb.ca</a></li> </ul>

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Strait Regional School Board  
Programs and Student Services

## Teacher Assistant Services

### A Guide for Parents/Guardians



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## **Who are Teacher Assistants?**

Teacher Assistants are para-professionals who work in our schools. They assist teachers with programming for students with special needs in personal care and/or behavior.

## **What are the qualifications of Teacher Assistants?**

Minimum qualifications include a high school diploma and completion of a recognized teacher assistant training program or equivalent, such as early childhood education or continuing care. Additional training and/or certification may be required to meet identified student needs.

## **What services do Teacher Assistants provide?**

Working under teacher direction, the Teacher Assistant provides support to students who cannot independently complete personal care and/or behavioral tasks. Teacher Assistants may assist students with personal hygiene, mobility, assistive technology, exercise, and/or appropriate behavior in all school settings.

Teacher Assistant services, like all other aspects of school programming, are designed to promote increased student independence, to the extent possible, as students progress through school.

## **How are Teacher Assistants allocated to schools?**

Each spring, school board personnel conduct a thorough review of Teacher Assistant services, known as the Teacher Assistant Audit. During the Audit, factors such as student needs, student transfers, school enrollment and the range of student services available within the school are taken into account. Because Teacher Assistant services are one of many school supports for students with special needs, the allocation of Teacher Assistants must be considered within this full range of services. It cannot be done in isolation. Once the Audit is completed, Teacher Assistant positions are allocated to the schools for the following school year. If students requiring Teacher Assistant support move or other changes occur during the school year, each situation is addressed on a case-by-case basis.

## **Will a letter from a doctor or other outside professional ensure that a student receives Teacher Assistant support at school?**

No. While information from health care professionals is welcomed and valued in identifying student strengths and challenges, the allocation of Teacher Assistant support is an educational decision made by school board personnel. Through the Teacher Assistant allocation process described above, school board personnel determine how Teacher Assistant support is allocated and adjusted at each school.

## **Are Teacher Assistants assigned to individual students?**

No. Teacher Assistants provide support to students and classrooms rather than working as personal assistants to individual students.

Teacher Assistants are assigned to schools. At the school level, their daily schedules are created and adjusted by school administrators and/or teachers. Teacher Assistants often work with several different students during the school day. Very few students require full-time Teacher Assistant support. As well, most students require less Teacher Assistant support over time as they learn to be more independent at school. For this reason, the amount of Teacher Assistant support that a student requires as they progress through the grades at school often decreases.

## **Do students receive support from different Teacher Assistants as they progress through school?**

Yes. Rotations of Teacher Assistants are recommended so that students:

- learn to work with different adults; and
- do not become too dependent on one individual.

All students, including those with special needs, work toward maximum independence at school, including the ability to work with different adults and age peers in all school settings.