

# QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHER ASSISTANTS

## 1. General Qualifications:

The teacher assistant should be a Seventh-day Adventist in good and regular standing, who upholds the standards of the church and supports and promotes the philosophy and principles of Seventh-day Adventist education.

### A. Personality and Personal Appearance:

1. Neatness, cleanliness and an attractive appearance.
2. Demonstrate a positive, supportive attitude.
3. Be healthy, happy and pleasant.

### B. Professional Ethics and Attributes:

1. Loyalty to the teacher, recognizing that he/she is professionally trained and qualified and is the director of the program.
2. Demonstrate confidence in the support for the teacher's program.
3. Uphold, support and follow school regulations and policies.
4. Adhere to school routine, practices, channels of communication, etc.
5. Refer all matters pertaining to student/school affairs to the teacher for attention.
6. Use discretion in discussing school or community matters with others.
7. Refrain from interfering between student and teacher unless specifically called upon to do so by the teacher.
8. Maintain strict confidentiality.
9. Regular and prompt in attendance and will notify the teacher well in advance when unable to meet a scheduled appointment.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES AND FUNCTIONS OF TEACHER ASSISTANTS**

Among the many tasks an assistant may be called upon to perform is a general category which is difficult to define. This is the area of listening, supporting, inspiring and serving as a general troubleshooter.

Disadvantaged students, in particular, are quick to detect negative attitudes and feelings of others and are sensitive to deficiencies in their own personal relationships. Assistants can watch for signs of trouble — they can encourage students and develop and use their\* own special skills to the general good of all in the classroom. They can interest students in the variety of activities open to them in the program. They can sympathize with and help to calm students who have been hurt or upset.

Most of these activities do not require special skills or professional training, yet they represent an area in which the assistant can make a most significant contribution. The importance of simple acceptance of, and love for, the students cannot be overemphasized.

### **I. INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS:**

Instructional assistants assist the teacher in the classroom and are directly involved in working with students. The amount and kind of professional supervision which the teacher can provide is crucial in deciding what specific duties the assistant can and should perform. The determination of the existing educational needs and the planning and design of programs and procedures to meet those needs is the professional function of the teacher. The degree to which an assistant may participate in the planning and implementation of such programs/procedures must be determined on an individual basis, as must the amount of supervision necessary to maintain a good program.

Procedures will vary from school to school. The teacher may plan cooperatively with the assistant, or may do all the planning and merely assign clearly limited implementation duties to the assistant. Assistants may tutor individual students, or may be permitted to instruct groups of students using materials and techniques selected or designed by the teacher.

When a certified volunteer is serving as an assistant and has been approved by the school board and the conference Office of Education, permission may be granted for that person to perform all the functions of a teacher as a volunteer teacher.

The following are sample tasks which may be performed by an instructional assistant:

1. Work with individuals or groups of students to master basic skills.
2. Assist in listening and interest centers.

3. Assist with testing.
4. Supervise seat work and then share information concerning student progress with the teacher.
5. Offer enrichment activities in areas such as physical education, music, crafts, creative arts, fine arts, practical/vocational arts, career education, etc.
6. Serve as resource person.
7. Assist with exceptional students.
8. Read aloud to students.
9. Listen to students read/recite.
10. Tutor individuals or small groups of students in well-defined subject areas in which the teacher believes the assistant is competent (In most cases the teacher should be present in the room when this takes place.)
11. Identify study/work problems of students and report to teacher.
12. Hear requests for help and expressions of learning difficulty from students and report to the teacher.

## **II. NON-INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS:**

Many required classroom/school non-instructional functions may be delegated to an aide. The following are sample tasks which may be performed in this way:

1. Assist in the library by helping to repair books, check books in and out, replace/shelve books, etc.
2. Prepare bulletin board and other instructional materials.
3. Provide clerical assistance, e.g., typing, filing, checking papers, duplicating materials, collecting petty cash, etc.
4. Keep basic records, e.g., health, immunization, cumulative folders, etc., under teacher supervision.
5. Inspect, store, operate and/or maintain audio-visual material/equipment.
6. Monitor student activity during study, play, lunch, pre- and post-school hours.

7. Escort students on errands/activities outside the classroom and within the school.
8. Make arrangements for and assist teacher with field trips. (It is understood that certified personnel will be in charge during field trips.)
9. Assist with sick/injured students.
10. Answer telephone.
11. Play educational games with students.

## **RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRINCIPAL/TEACHER TO THE ASSISTANT**

The educator should regard the teacher assistant as a colleague and co-worker and include the aide as far as possible in the planning, development and implementation of the goals/objectives relating to the tasks in which the assistant is involved.

The following guidelines may assist the educator in working with the teacher assistant:

1. Direct and supervise the teacher assistant.
2. Discuss informally with the assistant the goals to be achieved.
3. Plan ahead for the assistant, providing information such as where to find materials, how to set up an activity and which books are to be used, etc.
4. Recognize the talents and abilities of the assistant and use them to full advantage. As the assistant's knowledge and experience increase, his/her responsibilities should be increased accordingly.
5. Expect the assistant to be prompt, regular in attendance and always willing to follow instructions.
6. Keep the administration/school board informed of the assistant's activities and performance.
7. Make the assistant aware of any changes in the schedule.