

THE PURPOSE OF THE TEACHER ASSISTANT MANUAL

The Atlantic Union Conference educational system, in response to the commission from Jesus Christ, the Master Teacher, endeavors to provide the best possible Seventh-day Adventist education.

The primary intent of this *Manual* is to give guidelines for the teacher assistant, the teacher, the principal, and the school board.

- A. The teacher assistant is to:
 - 1. Work under the supervision and direction of the teacher.
 - 2. Support the teacher in creating a Christ-centered academic learning environment.
 - 3. Be responsible to the teacher, principal, school board, and the conference office of education.
- B. The teacher is to utilize the talents, abilities, and experience of the teacher assistant.
- C. The school board is to operate in harmony with the policies of the conference office of education and the Atlantic Union Conference *Education Code* (called the *Code* in this *Manual*).

Use of the *Manual* will help the teacher, the teacher assistant, and the principal to recognize the importance of developing a mutually supportive relationship of respect and confidence resulting in a positive learning environment.

Note—Employment of and financial arrangements for a teacher assistant must be done within the established guidelines of the local school board in conjunction with the local conference superintendent of schools.

OBJECTIVES OF THE TEACHER ASSISTANT PROGRAM

The purpose of the teacher assistant is to support the classroom teacher as together they:

- A. Aid students' mental, spiritual, social, and physical development
- B. Increase students' quantity of learning opportunities
- C. Provide students with individual assistance
- D. Help students to review concepts and to practice skills
- E. Complete clerical duties and the preparation of instructional materials

- F. Maintain an orderly and attractive classroom
- G. Foster a disciplined learning environment

DEFINITIONS OF TEACHER ASSISTANTS

A teacher assistant is one who helps the teacher in the performance of his/her functions (*Code 1436*). A teacher assistant is not responsible for the total instruction in any grade or subject. Initial instruction in any class or subject is the responsibility of the teacher.

- A. An instructional assistant is directly involved with the instruction of students and students' learning outcomes. This assistant may perform additional duties designated by the teacher.
- B. A noninstructional assistant performs tasks that do not include direct student instruction.
- C. A volunteer teacher assistant provides instructional and/or noninstructional service to the teacher without remuneration.

CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING NEED

To aid the school administration and the school board in determining when a teacher should be given a teacher assistant, the following criteria shall be used:

- A. Teacher assistants are to be provided when the number of students exceeds the guidelines of *Code 1430* shown below:

Recommended Maximum Teacher/Pupil Ratio Without a Teacher Assistant	
1 teacher: Kindergarten*	10
1 teacher: Kindergarten* and Grade 1	15
1 teacher: Kindergarten* and Grade 1 and Grade 2	12
1 teacher: 1 grade, Grade 1	24
1 teacher: 1 grade, Grades 2-8	27
1 teacher: 2 grades, no 1 st grade	27
1 teacher: 2 grades, with 1 st grade	22
1 teacher: 3 grades, Grades 2-8	20
1 teacher: 3 grades, Grades 7-9	15

1 teacher: 4 grades, no 1 st grade	22
1 teacher: 4 grades, Grades 1-4	20
1 teacher: 4 grades, Grades 5-8	22
1 teacher: 6 grades, no 1 st grade	20
1 teacher: 6 grades, with 1 st grade	18
1 teacher: 7 or more grades	12

*National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2013.

- B. In addition to considering the classroom configuration and the number of students, a teacher assistant may be needed when:
1. There are several students needing extra academic assistance
 2. The teacher serves as the principal
 3. The teacher is responsible for time-consuming co-curricular activities

PROCEDURE FOR HIRING A TEACHER ASSISTANT

- A. The principal, in consultation with the classroom teacher, will seek qualified candidates and arrange for personal interviews.
- B. The principal will submit suitable candidates' names to the school board and the conference office of education for approval, indicating the specific role the individual will be expected to fill, e.g., instructional or noninstructional assistant, full- or part-time, paid or volunteer.
- C. The conference office of education will assume responsibility for background checks on prospective teacher assistants prior to their employment.
- D. Prior to employment the principal will give a copy of the *Atlantic Union Conference Teacher Assistant Manual* to the potential employee and will discuss the contents.
- E. The teacher assistant's Letter of Intent to Employ issued by the conference should be written based upon school board and conference policy.
- F. The teacher assistant shall be informed in writing that she/he is an at-will employee.
- G. There should be on-going informal evaluation of the teacher assistant's performance. In addition, it is recommended that the evaluation forms in this *Manual* be used, followed by conferencing between/among the teacher assistant, the classroom teacher, and the principal. A report about the efficacy of the teacher assistant program should be given to the school board.

EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHER ASSISTANTS

A. Instructional Teacher Assistant

A remunerated instructional teacher assistant in a Seventh-day Adventist school must meet these requirements:

1. Be a member of and regularly attend a Seventh-day Adventist church, within the constituency of the school whenever possible.
2. Believe in the doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist church and demonstrate support of these beliefs through personal living.
3. Return a tithe through a constituent church.
4. Submit to background checks and any governmental requirements such as fingerprinting.
5. Be legally employable with a governmental work permit/work visa.

In addition, the instructional teacher assistant is to:

1. Enroll his/her school age children in the school if educationally and medically appropriate.
2. Be a high school graduate who demonstrates competence in the areas in which he/she is to assist.
3. Exhibit acceptance of students and have Christ-like love for them.
4. Have competency in the English language and use appropriate communication skills.
5. Exhibit skills in human relations.
6. Maintain confidentiality.
7. Demonstrate an understanding of a variety of teaching methods.
8. Dress professionally.
9. Give evidence of physical and mental health which qualifies him/her to instruct and/or associate with children.
10. Sign a Conflict of Interest Statement.

B. Noninstructional Teacher Assistant

A remunerated noninstructional teacher assistant in a Seventh-day Adventist school must meet these requirements:

1. Be a member of and regularly attend a Seventh-day Adventist church, within the constituency of the school whenever possible.
2. Believe in the doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist church and demonstrate support of these beliefs through personal living.
3. Return a tithe through a constituent church.
4. Submit to background checks and any governmental requirements such as fingerprinting.
5. Be legally employable with a governmental work permit/work visa.

In addition, the noninstructional teacher assistant is to:

1. Enroll his/her school age children in the school if educationally and medically appropriate.
2. Exhibit acceptance of students and have Christ-like love for them.
3. Demonstrate professionalism, cooperation, and competence while carrying out assigned responsibilities such as clerical work and playground supervision.
4. Have a positive, supportive attitude and a sense of humor.
5. Maintain confidentiality.
6. Give evidence of physical and mental health which qualifies him/her to associate with children.
7. Maintain a professional appearance.
8. Sign a Conflict of Interest Statement.

C. Volunteer Teacher Assistant

A volunteer teacher assistant is to:

1. Demonstrate support for the beliefs and doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist church in the school/classroom.

2. Submit to background checks and any governmental requirements such as fingerprinting.
3. Exhibit acceptance of students.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES OF TEACHER ASSISTANTS

A. Instructional Teacher Assistant

The primary responsibilities of the instructional teacher assistant include but are not limited to the following:

1. Assist with small groups and tutor individuals.

Note—Initial instruction in any class or subject is the responsibility of the teacher. Report all classroom concerns directly to the teacher.
2. Assist students on either end of the learning spectrum.
3. Listen to students read and respond.
4. Read aloud to students.
5. Respond to students' requests for help and report to the teacher the challenges noted.
6. Assist with PE, music, art, crafts, creative arts, practical/vocational arts, and career education.
7. Assist the teacher with testing.
8. Follow established procedures outlined by the teacher for classroom discipline, emergencies, and students' concerns.
9. Maintain strict confidentiality.
10. Refrain from taking sides between students and teacher.
11. Avoid favoritism.
12. Report study/work practices of students when conferencing with the teacher.
13. Help in the development of listening and learning centers.

14. Assist the teacher in both instructional and noninstructional activities as directed.
15. Show loyalty and support to the teacher recognizing that he/she is professionally trained, qualified, and is responsible for the total classroom program.
16. Cooperate with and respect all school personnel.
17. Uphold, support, and follow school regulations and policies. Adhere to the school's routines, practices, and channels of communication.
18. Use discretion in discussing school or community matters.
19. Be at each assigned task on time; make arrangements in advance to be absent.

B. Noninstructional Teacher Assistant

The primary responsibilities of the noninstructional teacher assistant include but are not limited to the following:

1. Assist the classroom teacher in a variety of noninstructional activities.
2. Follow established procedures outlined by the classroom teacher to:
 - a. Do clerical assistance.
 - b. Check papers.
 - c. Duplicate materials.
 - d. Collect lunch money and record class fund-raising orders.
 - e. Prepare bulletin boards.
 - f. Supervise students during study, play, lunch, pre- and post-school hours.
 - g. Help repair books, check books in and out, reshelve books.
 - h. Assist with general housekeeping duties, cleanup, and orderliness.
 - i. Operate, inspect, maintain, and store equipment.
 - j. Accompany students on errands/activities outside the classroom.
 - k. Assist with field trips (the classroom teacher is in charge).
 - l. Help sick and injured students.

- m. Communicate with parents of absentees.
 - n. Answer the classroom telephone.
3. Show loyalty and support to the teacher recognizing that he/she is professionally trained, qualified, and is responsible for the total classroom program.
 4. Cooperate with and respect all school personnel.
 5. Uphold, support, and follow school regulations and policies. Adhere to the school's routines, practices, and channels of communication.
 6. Use discretion in discussing school or community matters.
 7. Be at each assigned task on time; make arrangements in advance to be absent.

RESPONSIBILITIES *NOT* ASSIGNED TO TEACHER ASSISTANTS

A teacher assistant is *not* to be given any of the following responsibilities:

- A. Planning long-range scope and sequence of curriculum
- B. Developing lesson plans
- C. Deciding on educational materials and methods to be used
- D. Teaching specific subjects or grades
- E. Giving initial instruction in basic skills
- F. Developing evaluative instruments
- G. Evaluating students' work
- H. Determining students' grades
- I. Conferring with parents about grades and student behavior
- J. Setting classroom policy
- K. Deciding on discipline methods; corporal punishment never is to be used
- L. Counseling students

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TEACHER, THE PRINCIPAL, AND THE TEACHER ASSISTANT

The teacher and principal should:

- A. Determine the existing educational needs in the classroom. Design a program and procedures to meet those needs. Determine the degree to which an assistant may participate in the implementation of the program and procedures. Provide a detailed job description, outlining the specific duties of the teacher assistant according to the assistant's background, training, and experience.
- B. Regard the teacher assistant as a coworker. Involve him/her in planning, development, and implementation of the goals and objectives relating to the tasks to which the teacher assistant is assigned. Include him/her, as far as possible, in staff and worship schedules.
- C. Provide orientation in the following areas:
 - 1. Chain of command.
 - 2. School personnel.
 - 3. Use and location of materials.
 - 4. Acquisition and use of library materials and instructional media.
 - 5. School plant.
 - 6. Lunch policies and procedures.
 - 7. Playground rules.
 - 8. First aid procedures.
 - 9. Emergency drill procedures.
 - 10. Schedules.
 - 11. Procedures for notifying the school of anticipated absences or late arrival.
 - 12. Limits of authority.
 - 13. Corporal punishment, which never is to be used.
- D. Ensure that the teacher assistant has been adequately prepared before requiring active participation.
- E. Determine the level of supervision the teacher assistant needs.
- F. Encourage the teacher assistant to keep a notebook of directions, assignments, techniques, and ideas.

- G. Provide regular direction, supervision, educational opportunities, and evaluation of performance.

EDUCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Instructional teacher assistants may participate in conference in-services and have the option to take one free course per year from a Union-approved college or university that will enrich their contribution to the classroom/school.

VOLUNTEER TEACHER ASSISTANTS

Volunteer teacher assistants may be instructional or noninstructional. Utilizing volunteers opens an avenue for Seventh-day Adventists parents and church members to become actively involved in the school's program. The special talents, abilities, and skills of volunteer teacher assistants should be used to provide enrichment, reteaching, and/or practice for students. The conference office of education assumes responsibility for background checks on prospective volunteer assistants prior to their involvement in school activities.

RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEER TEACHER ASSISTANTS

- A. TA Form 5 (at the end of this *Manual*) provides an inventory to be used in identifying the strengths of persons interested in serving as volunteer teacher assistants. The form may be distributed to parents at registration and could be distributed to adults in the constituent churches.
- B. A request for volunteer assistants may be publicized in the church newsletter, church bulletin and letters; posted on the church bulletin board; and announced during church meetings, Home and School Association programs, and at school-sponsored activities.

TA Form 1

TEACHER ASSISTANT SELF-EVALUATION FORM

To be used four times during the school year. The teacher, teacher assistant, and principal should retain copies.

Check the best description.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
My relationship with the teacher is:			
My rapport with the students is:			
My rapport with the administration is:			

Rate yourself according to the following scale:

5 = Exceptional
4 = Above Average
3 = Average
2 = Below Average
1 = Unsatisfactory

1. _____ I am empathetic to students and their problems.
2. _____ I am reliable in completing assignments and responsibilities.
3. _____ I am flexible.
4. _____ I am helpful.
5. _____ I am competent.
6. _____ I am cheerful and pleasant.
7. _____ I exhibit a positive attitude.
8. _____ I am organized and able to multitask.
9. _____ I am punctual.
10. _____ I am neat and well groomed.
11. _____ I am alert and aware of what is going on.
12. _____ I am friendly with students, staff, parents, and visitors.
13. _____ I help keep the classroom neat and orderly.
14. _____ I am efficient and thorough.

TA Form 2

EVALUATION OF THE TEACHER ASSISTANT BY THE TEACHER

Each marking period the teacher rates the teacher assistant's performance and the degree to which students and parents accept the teacher assistant. The teacher, teacher assistant, and the principal should retain copies.

Use this scale to respond to each statement below:

4	=	Exceptional
3	=	Above Average
2	=	Average
1	=	Below Average
0	=	Not Applicable

1. _____ Open communication exists between the teacher assistant and me.
2. _____ A culture of acceptance and support is cultivated and maintained in the classroom.
3. _____ The teacher assistant supports and implements the classroom management plan.
4. _____ The teacher assistant aids reteaching, reviewing, practice, and enrichment of skills and concepts.
5. _____ The teacher assistant participates in in-service sessions.
6. _____ Students respect the teacher assistant.
7. _____ Parents respond favorably to having this teacher assistant in the classroom.

Was your teacher assistant present as scheduled?

- 80-100% of the time
- 50-80% of the time
- less than 50% of the time

TA Form 3

EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM BY THE TEACHER ASSISTANT

Complete each semester. The teacher assistant, teacher, and principal retain copies.

Check *Yes* or *No* for the following:

1. Were you placed according to your wishes, interests, and abilities? Yes No
2. Did you meet with the principal & teacher before starting the assignment? Yes No
3. Were your questions answered during:
 - a. Interviews Yes No
 - b. Orientation Yes No
 - c. Consultations Yes No
 - d. In-services Yes No
4. Did the teacher adequately inform the students of your role? Yes No
5. Were the following provided for your use?
 - a. Adequate materials Yes No
 - b. Adequate place to work Yes No
6. Were you made aware of the results of your work by the
 - a. Principal Yes No
 - b. Teacher Yes No
 - c. Parents Yes No
 - d. Other _____
7. Was some form of appreciation expressed to you by the
 - a. Principal Yes No
 - b. Teacher Yes No
 - c. Students Yes No
 - d. Other _____
8. In which of the following areas would you like to receive training?
 - a. How to assist in reading classes Yes No
 - b. How to assist in mathematics Yes No
 - c. How to develop skills in human relations Yes No
 - d. Other (specify) _____

-continued-

9. If you are called to serve again, are you interested? Yes No
If no, please state why.

10. How would you describe your rapport with the teacher?
 Excellent Satisfactory Unsatisfactory

11. How would you describe your rapport with the principal?
 Excellent Satisfactory Unsatisfactory

12. How can the teacher assistant program be improved?

13. How can the use of teacher assistants be improved?

TA Form 4

EVALUATION OF THE TEACHER ASSISTANT PROGRAM BY THE TEACHER

This form should be completed each semester. Copies are to be kept by the teacher assistant, teacher, and the principal.

Please respond to the following items:

1. To what extent has the teacher assistant been used this year?

- a. Regularly b. Occasionally c. Not at all

If not regularly, why not?

2. Classroom management improved because of the teacher assistant.

- a. Regularly b. Occasionally c. Not at all

3. Did students show academic improvement as a result of this program?

- a. Regularly b. Occasionally c. Not at all

4. Utilization of the teacher assistant allowed the teacher to have:

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|------|------|
| a. More time for lesson preparation | Considerable | Some | None |
| b. More time for individualization | Considerable | Some | None |
| c. More time for program enrichment | Considerable | Some | None |
| d. Improved classroom management | Considerable | Some | None |

5. Has pre-job and on-the-job training for your teacher assistant been provided?

- Considerable Some None

6. Should more training be given to a teacher assistant before he/she begins to work?

- Considerable Some None

-continued-

7. What areas need to be included in future training of teacher assistants?

8. How can the teacher assistant program be improved?

TA Form 5

APPLICATION FORM VOLUNTEER TEACHER ASSISTANT

Seventh-day Adventist schools need loving Christian helpers who are friendly, patient, cooperative, prompt, dependable, and willing to share their time and talents assisting with school activities. If you would like to volunteer as a teacher assistant, part-time or full-time, please complete this form and return it to the principal.

Check the box in front of the kind of assistance you could provide:

- 1. Give worship talks
- 2. Assist with witnessing activities
- 3. Help the teacher by reviewing, reteaching; help students practice skills
- 4. Give students individual help
- 5. Supervise learning activities and educational games
- 6. Transport and help supervise students on field trips
- 7. Assist with activities for physical development
- 8. Help prepare teaching materials
- 9. Provide clerical assistance
- 10. Assist with classes in cooking, sewing, woodworking, mechanics, other (specify)

- 11. Assist with crafts, art, music, other (specify) _____
- 12. Assist with career education (state your occupation or profession)

- 13. Assist with food service, maintenance, custodial
- 14. Help with school-sponsored social activities
- 15. Other (specify) _____

Academic/Professional Training

-continued-

Experience/Ability

Interests/Hobbies

Computer Skills

I understand that all volunteers must (1) be approved by the school board and the conference board of education, (2) submit to background checks which may include fingerprinting, (3) represent the standards of the Seventh-day Adventist church.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Home Phone No.: _____ Cell: _____

Times Available: _____

Days Preferred: _____

