

# Children Learn What They Live

If children live with *criticism*,  
They learn to *condemn*.

If children live with *hostility*,  
They learn to *fight*.

If children live with *ridicule*,  
They learn to be *shy*.

If children live with *shame*,  
They learn to feel *guilty*.

If children live with *encouragement*,  
They learn *confidence*.

If children live with *tolerance*,  
They learn to be *patient*.

If children live with *praise*,  
They learn to *appreciate*.

If children live with *acceptance*,  
They learn to *love*.

If children live with *approval*,  
They learn to like *themselves*.

If children live with *honesty*,  
They learn *truthfulness*.

If children live with *security*,  
They learn to have *faith* in themselves and others.

If children live with *friendliness*,  
They learn *the world is a nice place in which to live*.

By Dorothy Law Nolte

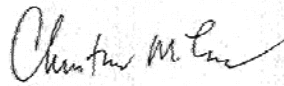
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Dear Teacher Assistant:

You are about to become an important part of the school program, sharing in the work of the team of adults who teach children. Much of the success of this educational venture depends upon you - - your actions, your enthusiasm, your professional attitude and your feelings. As a team member, your role needs to be clearly understood by you and by the teacher. When in doubt as to your role, please consult the teacher and/or principal involved. As a member on the team working to promote growth of the children, the same educational goals, objectives, and guidelines governing the ways teachers work with children apply to you. Your work is professional and confidential.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Christine M. Lee".

Christine M. Lee, Ed.D.  
Executive Director of Human Resources

**RATIONALE:**

The Oak Ridge school system believes in optimum educational opportunities for each and every student. Implementing this philosophy is often demanding and expensive. It requires good pupil-teacher ratio, support staff, appropriate materials and teachers who are stimulated and supported to develop new curricula and programs. In order to meet this kind of expectation, the Oak Ridge Schools has developed a comprehensive teacher assistant program. The teacher assistant can assist in many material preparation and clerical tasks, small group facilitation, and routine supervision under the teacher's direction. With help from an assistant, a teacher can work regularly with individual students and with small groups. Teachers can more flexibly plan for and evaluate students with other professional staff; teachers can make the time to design materials to promote the continuous progress of their students. The teacher assistant program has added to the excellence of teaching and learning in the Oak Ridge school system.

## REQUIREMENTS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF TEACHER ASSISTANTS

Assistants are classified in two categories: Teacher Assistant I and Teacher Assistant II. These are explained below:

### A. Education/training – Designation

1. Teacher Assistant I – It is desirable that this individual have at least two years of college or business college training. A high school diploma is a minimum educational requirement.
2. Teacher Assistant II – The person placed in this classification must hold a minimum of a Bachelor's degree (differing standards apply for preschool TA's and ECC employees. Contact HR Department for classification).
3. Title I employees must meet High Qualified requirements for paraprofessionals prior to hire.

### B. Personal characteristics

The assistant should be personable, able to get along with people, compassionate, dedicated, appreciative of children or youth; flexible, adaptable, creative, dependable, sensitive to needs, responsible, show initiative, have a sense of humor, common sense and good judgment; possess a pleasing voice and exhibit physical energy.

### C. Appearance

Neat, well groomed and appropriately dressed for the position.

### D. Health requirements (based on Rules, Regulations, and Minimum Standards, Tennessee State Board of Education)

All new employees are required to obtain a medical examination by a licensed physician at their own expense, verifying good health.

### E. Criminal History Employment Checks

To assure safety for both our students and employees, Oak Ridge Schools has implemented a criminal history records check program. All school system employees will be required to submit fingerprints to the TBI for review and satisfy Department of Children's Services (DCS) checks. Instructions will be provided to you by Human Resources.

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

The following job description is intended to be illustrative rather than restrictive. These are suggestions to help you plan and develop your job effectively. As the working relationship between teachers and assistants develops and the assistants' abilities and interests become known, tasks other than those listed below may become part of the assistants' responsibilities. Nevertheless, it should be kept in mind that this is not a teaching position, but the position of an assistant to teachers. When working with an assistant, the teacher must plan and supervise the work carried out by the assistant.

1. Assist in the supervision of on-going activities related to extending skills, e.g., working with students in small group instruction.
2. Assist in organizing and preparing materials for instruction such as instructional computer sites, charts, posters, maps and other visual aids. Duplicate materials and prepare copies as needed.
3. Help to reinforce skills in small groups or with individual students.
4. Relieve teacher of some clerical duties such as checking tests, completing records, filing materials and computer data entry.
5. Moderate and monitor discussions in small groups.
6. Assist student groups in carrying out special assignments.
7. Take attendance and keep records; supervise testing; check students' written work for teacher evaluation.
8. Collect, record and account for monies.
9. Assist teachers in producing, collecting and organizing materials for instruction; copy data on various forms, records and reports; assist in preparation of teachers' reports and team reports.
10. Compile instructional resources for particular areas of study; collect and distribute materials in the classroom.
11. Record grades, prepare requisitions, take and make telephone calls for teachers; run school-related errands for teachers.
12. Set up and operate video and computer equipment.

13. Prepare materials for homebound students and assist students with makeup work.
14. Assist in planning and supervising field trips.
15. Supervise students in cafeteria, restrooms, corridors, media center and playground.
16. Give first aid to students if qualified.
17. Conduct locker inspection.
18. Assist in keeping room attractive by organizing materials, preparing bulletin boards and arranging classroom furniture for special purposes.
19. Repair damaged books or materials.
20. Facilitate and supervise small group activities, usually in the physical presence of a teacher.
21. Perform certain housekeeping duties such as attending to ventilation, lighting and keeping materials in place.
22. Perform other related duties as the need arises.

### **TEACHER/ASSISTANT RELATIONSHIPS:**

#### **A. Relationships to the teacher and the students**

1. The assistant, as part of the entire staff, is a member of a team. All share responsibility for the school program.
2. A warm relationship, established through mutual respect, should exist among students, teachers and assistants. This will create a good climate for learning.
3. The classroom teacher has the responsibility for planning, instructing and evaluating. The assistant's counsel may be useful and valuable, but in the final analysis, the major decisions belong to the teacher.
4. Careful planning is necessary to insure harmony and cooperative effort between assistants and teachers. In cases where problems are not solved successfully by the assistants and teachers, the principal will assume leadership.
5. The teacher assistant will not replace the teacher as an instructor. The assistant will help by carrying out the plans of the professional. Evaluation of students is the responsibility of the teacher.

6. The assistant will conduct groups in an interesting and orderly manner. The assistant may use minimal corrective measures and reprimand, but regular and official discipline should be left to the classroom teacher.
7. Both teacher and assistant should accept the limitations placed upon an assistant by the trained professional.
8. In general, where several teachers are involved, an assistant should receive instructions from one person designated for this duty.

B. Relationships to the community

1. School concerns should be discussed in a professional way in order to keep the confidence of the teacher, staff members and community.
2. Assistants should observe the ethics of the professional in relationships in the community.

**ETHICAL PRACTICES OF TEACHER ASSISTANTS**

1. Be confidential about school information.
2. Refrain from commenting unprofessionally either in school or out of school concerning students, school staff or school policies and philosophy.
3. Deal justly and impartially with students regardless of their physical, mental, emotional, political, economic, social, racial or religious characteristics.
4. Recognize the differences among students and seek to meet their individual needs.
5. Consult with the teacher when questions or problems concerning children present themselves; or if the problem is of major significance where the welfare of the child is being jeopardized, to go to the person next in line of authority. The assistant's responsibility ends there.
6. Participate in and conduct oneself in a responsible manner in the development and implementation of school policies.
7. Give prompt notice of any change in availability of service or in change of position.

## EVALUATION

Teachers' assistants are evaluated annually. During the last month of school the Teacher Assistant Evaluation sheet should be completed. The evaluation form is filled out by the principal with the assistance of the teacher(s) involved. It is signed during a conference by the assistant, teacher(s) and principal. One copy is sent to the Central Office and one copy remains in the principal's files.

There may be an informal evaluation at approximately mid-year by the teachers working with the assistant and/or assistants involved. Weaknesses, strengths and areas for improvement should be discussed. The principal should be involved in the informal evaluation.

The assistants are evaluated in 5 categories. Each is listed below with questions which may help in the evaluation procedure.

### I. Relationship with teacher(s)

- Is the Teacher Assistant cooperative, enthusiastic, flexible, receptive to suggestions?
- Is there evidence that the assistant enjoys the work?
- Does the assistant create a good learning atmosphere?
- Can the assistant become involved in important activities when not directly responsible for children or directed to do so by teacher?
- Does the assistant see things to be done and do them?

### II. Relationship with students

- Does the Teacher Assistant show interest and have rapport with students?
- Does the assistant manage groups well?
- Does the assistant show decided interest in working with youngsters?
- Do students perceive him/her positively?

### III. In class assistance

- Can the Teacher Assistant tutor and supervise students independently?
- How well does the teacher assistant manage materials and supplies?

### IV. Clerical duties

- Does the teacher assistant work efficiently and effectively?

### V. Other factors

- Does the Teacher Assistant have good attendance, punctuality and initiative?
- Does the assistant express good public relations skill and professionalism (confidentiality and good ethics)?
- Can the assistant receive constructive criticism without being offended?
- Can the assistant accept criticism without feeling animosity toward those offering the criticism?
- Is the assistant poised and confident when dealing with children?
- Can the assistant maintain discipline without losing his/her "cool"?



- Does the assistant look objectively, rather than subjectively at problems where the children are concerned?

## **WORK SCHEDULE**

Teacher assistants work 191 days each year. They work 183 student days. There is 1 discretionary work day and 7 holidays observed for employees in active status.

## **PAYROLL/TIMEKEEPING**

In Tennessee, employers must provide a 30-minute break to employees who work at least six consecutive hours.

In many cases, due to a specific job assignment, a teacher assistant will not be provided a duty free lunch. For that reason, ORS compensates this group of employees for a 30-minute break every day. Teacher Assistants only clock in at the beginning of the day and clock out when they depart work at the end of the day.

There is no other rest break requirement in Tennessee statute; however, ORS typically allows time for short breaks throughout the workday as needed. These breaks are paid as well.

Teacher assistants are paid in twenty-two payments from the middle of August until the end of June. Pay is directly deposited on the fifteenth and thirtieth of each month in employee bank accounts.

All Teacher Assistants must record hours worked in the Skyward True Time system. Specific procedures are outlined in the Time Record Guidelines. Supervisors must approve recorded hours and should be consulted regarding questions.

## **Fringe Benefits**

### **1. Retirement**

Full time assistants are required to join the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS) after a 6-month waiting period. Effective October 1, 2014, the 7% contribution will be deducted by payroll each month and is matched by the Board of Education at a rate determined by TCRS. Any employee eligible for the Legacy TCRS plan pays a 5% contribution rate. The contribution is deducted before taxes. Part-time assistants are not eligible to participate in this program.

### **2. Sick Leave**

Full-time Teacher Assistants accrue sick leave without loss of pay each year at the rate of 1 day per month of service. Sick leave days are cumulative throughout employment. Sick leave may be used for personal illness, and shall be extended to cover illness or death of a member of the employee's immediate family (immediate family being defined as the employee's spouse, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law). Approval of the supervisor for sick leave with pay is

required and pay for an absence of more than 3 successive days requires a doctor's certificate. A doctor's certificate may be required for any day claimed as sick leave. Any absences exceeding ten days require approval by Human Resources.

3. Emergency Leave

A maximum of 3 days per school year with pay may be taken for emergency leave. The leave may be taken in the event of death or severe illness in the immediate family ("immediate family" being defined as spouse, child, father, mother, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, grandparents, grandchildren, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, and sister-in-law) and for other compelling reasons which must be reported to the immediate supervisor. Emergency leave is not accruable. Written application for leave shall be submitted and approval must be given by the staff member's supervisor.

4. Group Health Coverage

Assistants who work full time are eligible for the State of Tennessee group health insurance coverage with a portion of the premium paid by the Board of Education.

5. Group Term Life Insurance

Full-time assistants are eligible for coverage under a \$50,000 group term life insurance policy with the premium paid by the Board of Education. Supplemental coverage is available through payroll deduction.

6. Dental Insurance

Full-time assistants are also eligible for individual coverage paid by the system, family coverage available through payroll deduction.

7. Vision Insurance

Full-time assistants are also eligible for individual coverage paid by the system, family coverage available through payroll deduction.

All teacher assistants are covered by the school system's liability insurance.

## **TEACHER ASSISTANT ABSENCES**

### Absences

In case of necessary absences, the teacher assistant shall follow procedures established by the principal of the school.

1. Use of Substitute for a Teacher Assistant

Generally, there are no substitutes for assistant absences; however, certain circumstances may make it necessary. Acceptable circumstances may include the following:

- a. if it is known in advance that the assistant will be absent three or more successive days;
- b. if the assistant's schedule involves working with a group or groups regularly each day in the instructional program when there is no

- teacher available;
- c. if the assignment of the assistant is to supervise some area such as the playground or cafeteria and there is no teacher to assume the duty;
- d. other areas deemed critical by the principal.

The hourly rate for a substitute for a teacher assistant is \$7.54.

## **SELECTION PROCEDURES**

1. The employment practices of Oak Ridge Schools are based on equal opportunity and affirmative action. Individuals interested in a position as a teacher assistant should apply online at [www.ortn.edu](http://www.ortn.edu) using the support application form. Online applications remain active for one year and may be updated by applicants at any time.
2. When vacancies occur, principals select qualified applicants from the online applicant pool and establish a time for personal interviews. Applicants may be interviewed by both teachers and principals. Final recommendations are the responsibility of the principal.
3. When the teacher(s) and principal make their selection, the recommendation is forwarded to the Human Resources Office for review prior to approval by the Superintendent.
4. When hires are approved by the superintendent of schools an employment packet is prepared by the Human Resources Office. Human Resources will contact new employees regarding employment requirements soon after approval is finalized.

# OAK RIDGE SCHOOLS

## Teacher Assistant Evaluation Form

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### RATING SCALE:

**O** - Outstanding   **A** -Average   **N** -Needs improvement   **U** -Unsatisfactory   **N/A** -Not applicable

Name of TA \_\_\_\_\_

<b>O</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>N/A</b>
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School: \_\_\_\_\_

### I. Relationship with Teacher(s)

- A. Is cooperative
- B. Is enthusiastic
- C. Is flexible
- D. Is receptive to suggestions


Additional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

### II. Relationship with Students

- A. Interest in Students
- B. Ability to manage groups
- C. Children's reaction to TA


Additional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

### III. In Class Assistance

- A. Tutorial ability
- B. Supervision of children
- C. Neatness in classroom
- D. Materials


Additional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

### IV. Clerical Duties

- A. Efficiency (speed and promptness)
- B. Caliber of Work


Additional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

### V. Other Factors

- A. Attendance
- B. Punctuality
- C. Initiative
- D. Relationship with other staff members and public
- E. Confidentiality (school & community)


Additional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**List Employee's Strong Areas:**

**Areas requiring improvement:**

**Areas discussed during evaluation session:**

Recommended for Continued Service \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Years employed with Oak Ridge Schools: \_\_\_\_\_

**Attendance Record:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date