How Skilled Trades Education Support Professionals Make Public Schools Great for Every Student

Education support professionals in the skilled trades make public schools great by maintaining and improving the physical quality of school buildings, offices, and facilities, and ensuring that they are safe, comfortable, and attractive for students, staff, and the community. We do a wide variety of jobs that require specialized expertise—and often licenses or certifications—in specific vocations. We also work behind the scenes to repair, maintain, and operate machinery that is essential to the smooth functioning of the education system.

We’re NEA Partners in Education
Skilled Trades ESPs Together we make things happen. and Proud of It!

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To order additional copies of this brochure, send your request to esp.program@nea.org
WE ENSURE SCHOOL SAFETY AND COMFORT.

WE MAKE SCHOOL BUILDINGS ATTRACTIVE.

WE KEEP MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT WORKING.

**NEA’s Skilled Trades Members Are:**

**Well-trained.** Fifty-three percent of us have attended college, and 31 percent have a two-year or higher college degree. Thirty-seven percent have completed specialized coursework. Forty-four percent have special licenses or certificates. Twenty-seven percent take courses or tests on a regular basis to maintain our positions.

**Committed.** On average, NEA’s skilled trades members have been working as education support professionals for 15 years. Ninety-one percent of us plan to stay in the ESP field, and 76 percent plan to stay in our current jobs until retirement.

**Active in the school community.** Sixty-three percent of us live in the school district where we work. Twenty-seven percent have volunteered to read books to children. Seventeen percent have worked with a school program. Thirty-six percent have taught or supported art or musical activities. Thirty-six percent have given our own money to purchase food or school supplies for students.

**Focused on safety.** Eighty-one percent of us have job responsibilities that involve promoting school safety. Twenty-seven percent have intervened to stop bullying behavior in school, and 21 percent have intervened to stop school violence such as harassing, threatening, or intimidating others.

**Workplace Conditions and Issues**

Skilled trades jobs need to be better defined. Ten percent of us do not have a job description, and 67 percent have no input into updating or changing our job descriptions. Fifty-four percent are asked to perform duties outside of our job descriptions, which may involve being asked to perform jobs for which we do not have the required training, licenses, or certification.

Skilled trades ESPs are concerned about contracting out of our jobs to private, for-profit companies. Fourteen percent of NEA ESP members report that skilled trades work is being contracted out in their school districts.

Skilled trades ESPs would like pay comparable to our counterparts outside public education. We also need equitable scheduling of assignments and awarding of overtime, as well as contractual comp time provisions.

To keep up with current technology, we need more support in obtaining ongoing training and professional development, particularly instruction in working safely with new methods and with dangerous chemicals, electrical wiring, asbestos, and other job hazards.

**Fast Facts about NEA’s Skilled Trades ESP Members**

- **31%** of us work in school buildings; **25%** are assigned to a central maintenance facility; **22%** report to multiple worksites; and **16%** work districtwide.
- **81%** of us have job responsibilities that involve promoting school safety.
- **98%** work full-time.
- **82%** are male, and **85%** are married.
- Our average age is **51**.

**Skilled Trades Jobs Include:**

- Electricians
- Carpenters
- Painters and Glaziers
- Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning Mechanics and Specialists
- Machine Operators, Assemblers, and Inspectors
- Printing Services Personnel
- Nonmanagerial Supervisors

We’re National Education Association

Visit us on the Web at www.nea.org/esphome

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