

## How Association Membership Supports Education Support Professionals

NEA and Its State and Local Associations Help Education Support Professionals—

- ▶ Organize to win better pay benefits, and working conditions
- ▶ Earn no less than a living wage
- ▶ Have effective employment-related representation
- ▶ Ensure safe and clean schools
- ▶ Advocate for quality professional development opportunities
- ▶ Develop effective local, state, and national leadership
- ▶ Promote quality public education and public school employees in state legislatures and in Congress
- ▶ Defend against privatization and subcontracting of work to private, for-profit companies
- ▶ Stay informed through print and online media
- ▶ Gain access to exclusive member-only financial service and insurance benefits
- ▶ Receive on-the-job liability insurance

Education support professionals are the fastest growing membership group within the National Education Association.

Nationwide, there are about one-half million NEA members who are ESPs, making NEA the nation's largest organization of education support professionals!

More than four out of every 10 public school employees are education support professionals (ESPs) who work together with teachers and administrators to help ensure the basic right of every child to attend great public schools.

Education support professionals perform a variety of jobs that promote quality education, foster positive learning environments, provide nutritious meals, and maintain safe and clean schools for all students. ESP job families include:

- ▶ **Paraeducators** Instructional and non-instructional support
- ▶ **Clerical Services** Secretarial, clerical, and administrative support
- ▶ **Custodial and Maintenance Services** Building and grounds maintenance and repair
- ▶ **Transportation Services** Transportation and delivery services and vehicle maintenance
- ▶ **Food Services** Food planning, preparation, and services
- ▶ **Skilled Trades** Trades, crafts, and machine operations
- ▶ **Health and Student Services** Nursing, health, and therapy support; community, family, parent, and welfare services
- ▶ **Security Services** School resource, guard, police, and security specialists
- ▶ **Technical Services** Computer, audiovisual, and languagetechnical support; media, public relations, writing, and art specialties



NEA ESP Quality Department  
1201 16th Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036  
(202) 822-7931  
[www.nea.org/esphome](http://www.nea.org/esphome)



## EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS:



## Partners in Education



### Fast Facts about NEA's ESP members:

- ▶ **Eighty percent (80%)** of NEA's ESP members work full time
- ▶ **Seventy-two percent (72%)** work in a school building
- ▶ **Forty-three percent (43%)** work in a preschool, kindergarten or elementary school
- ▶ **Sixty percent (60%)** live in a small town or rural area
- ▶ **Eighty-six percent (86%)** are female
- ▶ The average age is **51** years old.

**ESPs live in their school districts:** Seventy-seven percent (77%) of support professionals live in the school districts where they work.

**ESPs are active in their communities:** Forty percent (40%) volunteer to read books to students. Forty percent (40%) support activities of a parent organization. Thirty-nine percent (39%) participate in the activities of an education association.

**ESPs are educated and well-trained:** ESPs have made significant personal accomplishments in education. More than two in five (42%) have an associate's or more advanced degree.

Sixty-five percent (65%) of support professionals take or have taken college courses. Forty-six percent (46%) take or have taken job-related classes. Forty-two percent (42%) have special certificates. Thirty percent (30%) regularly take classes or exams to strengthen and improve their work on the job.

**ESPs are committed:** Eighty-two percent (82%) of ESPs plan to stay in the profession. Sixty-seven percent (67%) plan to stay with their current jobs until they retire.

**ESPs are experienced:** On average, education support professionals have been employed in the field for 12 years. Thirty percent (30%) of ESPs have more than 15 years of experience.

**ESPs work to keep schools safe:** Seventy-eight percent (78%) of ESPs have responsibilities for ensuring student and staff safety; for fifty-one percent (51%) of them, promoting school safety is a central duty of their jobs.

Fifty-three percent (53%) have tried to intervene or stop bullying behavior within the past two years, and thirty-eight percent (38%) have tried to intervene or stop school violence.

**ESPs care deeply for students and their success.** A major source of support professionals' job satisfaction is the personal fulfillment they get from working with students.

Fifty-three percent (53%) of ESPs provide care to students with special needs.

Twenty-four percent (24%) volunteer to teach or support art or musical activities. Twenty-four percent (24%) coach or support sports programs.

Sixty-one percent (61%) give money out of their own pockets to help students with things such as classroom materials, field trips, and class projects, averaging \$163 per year.

### Workplace Conditions and Issues

ESPs would like to see increased wages, more chances for promotion, better retirement benefits, additional professional development opportunities, and improved health and dental insurance provisions.

ESPs would like to see clearer job descriptions and greater awareness and appreciation of their work. Nineteen percent (19%) do not have a written job description; fifty-five percent (55%) do not have any input into changes to their job description; and forty-five percent (45%) are often or sometimes asked to perform duties outside of their job description.

In addition, ESPs are concerned about job security as more and more school districts turn to privatizing and subcontracting their work to private, for-profit companies.

**We're NEA ESP and Proud of It!**

**Partners in Education.**

**National Education Association**

Visit us on the Web at [www.nea.org/esphome](http://www.nea.org/esphome)

**For additional information, please contact:**

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