# WHO. WE. ARE. EDUCATION SUPPORT

Meeting the Needs of the Whole Student

**PROFESSIONALS** 























ESP are critical members of the education workforce. There are more than 2.8 million ESP in our nation's public schools and colleges. One out of every 3 public school employees is an ESP.

ESP ensure students achieve at their highest levels. They keep students emotionally and physically healthy and safe. They engage students and keep them connected to the larger school community. They may be the one caring and supportive adult that every student needs to succeed. They provide instruction and academic supports, challenging and motivating students by maintaining high expectations. ESP meet the needs of the whole student, promoting quality education and fostering positive learning environments.

ESP make up nearly a half million of NEA's 3 million members and are represented in these 9 career families.



### **CLERICAL SERVICES**

Secretarial, clerical, financial, and administrative support



### **CUSTODIAL AND MAINTENANCE SERVICES**

Building and grounds maintenance and repair



### **FOOD SERVICES**

Food services, planning, preparation, and delivery



### **HEALTH AND STUDENT SERVICES**

Nursing, health and therapy support; community, family, parent, and welfare services



### **PARAEDUCATORS**

Instructional and non-instructional support



### **SECURITY SERVICES**

School guards and resource personnel, security specialists



### **SKILLED TRADE SERVICES**

Electricians, carpenters, painters, heating and ventilation specialists, machine operations, and printing services



### **TECHNICAL SERVICES**

Computer, audio-visual, and language technical support; media, public relations, writing, and art specialties



# TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Bus driving and delivery services and vehicle maintenance

Source: 2015 NEA ESP Data Book: A Workforce and Membership Profile of Education Support Professionals.

# K-12 ESP Members are

Committed to students and their success. A major source of job satisfaction is the personal fulfillment from working with students. 56% provide care to students with special needs. 35% volunteer to read books to students and 70% have volunteered in the past 2 years to assist children and benefit the community. 66% give money out of their own pockets to help students with things such as classroom materials, field trips, and class projects, averaging \$217 per year.

**Educated, well-trained, and experienced.** ESP have made significant personal accomplishments in education. Nearly one half (47%) have an associate's or more advanced degree. 66% have taken college courses, 51% take or have taken job-related classes, 46% have special certificates and 25% have a license. On average, ESP have been employed in public schools for 13 years. 85% plan to stay in the profession, and 75% plan to stay with their current jobs until retirement.

Active in the school community. Three-quarters (75%) live within the school district in which they work. 39% have supported activities of a parent organization and 35% participate in the activities of an education association.

**Focused on safety.** A large majority (76%) have responsibilities for ensuring student and staff safety. Nearly all (94%) agree that intervening in bullying situations is a part of their job. 73% have seen bullying in the past month at their schools and 90% feel that they have effective strategies to handle a bullying situation.

- ⇒ 83% work full time
- 77% work in a school building
- → 44% work in a preschool, kindergarten, or elementary school
- 56% live in a small town or rural area
- **⇒** 85% female
- ⇒ Average age is 52



### K-12 ESP Workplace Conditions and Issues

**K-12 ESP want greater awareness and appreciation of the ways they contribute to great public schools.** They want job descriptions that accurately describe their work and responsibilities. Although a large majority of ESP (84%) have a written job description, 45% are often or sometimes asked to perform duties outside the scope of that description.

K-12 ESP would like to see increased wages, better retirement benefits, and improved health and dental insurance provisions.

**K-12 ESP want professional development opportunities** and chances for advancement. They want training to keep up with new technology and equipment, policies and regulations, and changing skills.

**In addition, K-12 ESP are concerned about job security** as more and more school districts are facing budget cuts and are turning to outsourcing ESP careers to private, for-profit companies.





### HIGHER ED ESP MEMBERS ARE



Educated, well-trained, and experienced. A majority (60%) had to meet requirements to obtain their jobs, such as college credits (35%), special coursework (24%), special certificates (18%), 2 year associate's degree (29%), or 4-year college degree (20%). 14% must take classes or exams regularly to retain their positions.

**Committed.** Most (84%) plan to remain in the ESP field and 62% plan to stay in their current jobs until retirement.

Active in the school community. Nearly a majority (42%) have spent money to purchase food or school supplies for students. 14% have taught or supported a school tutoring program, 16% have volunteered to read books to students, 20% have coached or supported a sports program and 19% have taught or supported art or musical activities. 42% have spent money to purchase food or school supplies for students.

**Focused on safety.** One out of ten (10%) have intervened to prevent bullying behavior, and 12% have tried to intervene to stop campus violence such as harassing, intimidating, or threatening others.

### FAST FACTS

- 92% work in publicly funded 2 or 4 year colleges and universities
- ⇒ In the ESP field for an average of 14 years
- ⇒ NEA members for an average of 12 years
- 82% have had at least some college work (29% hold 2-year associate's degree, 23% Bachelor's, and 12% Master's degree or higher)

**EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS** 



### HIGHER ED ESP WORKPLACE CONDITIONS AND ISSUES

Higher Ed ESP need good job descriptions to help ensure they are working within their job classification and legal authority. 21% believe that their job descriptions do not accurately represent the kind of work they do. 46% have no input into updating or changing their job descriptions and 55% have been asked often or sometimes to perform duties outside of their job descriptions.

**Nearly half (46%) of Higher Ed ESP would like** more promotion opportunities. 33% would like improved wages. 26% would like to receive more professional development opportunities. 23% would like improved dental insurance benefits provided by employers.

**Higher Ed ESP are concerned about privatization** on campus, particularly in food services, technical services, custodial services, and skilled trades.

Overall, they find satisfaction in their jobs, primarily because they feel personally fulfilled by working with students

For more information, visit nea.org/ESPhighered





### CLERICAL SERVICE ESP

We interact daily with students, parents, and staff. We also make the first and last impression about a school and its school district. Clerical service ESP are on the front lines of all office operations, working in settings from schools to administrative offices to transportation facilities. Our daily workload often includes processing important paperwork, scheduling, maintaining records and files, acting as a "chief information officer," and even acting as a nurse when no health service professionals are available

**Clerical services are one of the nine ESP career families.** NEA ESP make up nearly a half million of NEA's 3 million members. As a critical part of the education workforce, NEA clerical service members meet the needs of the whole student, ensuring students and schools succeed.

# Career Titles Include, But Are Not Limited to

- Secretaries, Administrative and Office Assistants
- Data Entry, Payroll, and General Office Workers
- ✓ Bookkeepers and Accounting and Financial Assistants
- Registration, Records, and Attendance Technicians
- Receptionists
- ✓ Non-managerial Office Supervisors

- ⇒ 91% work full-time
- ⇒ 98% female
- ⇒ NEA members for an average of 12 years
- ⇒ 15% of the total K-12 NEA ESP membership
- Average age is 53



### CLERICAL SERVICE ESP MEMBERS ARE

**Committed to students and their career.** On average, an NEA clerical service member has been employed in their ESP field for 15 years. 92% plan to stay in the ESP field and 74% plan to stay in their current careers until retirement. 66% have spent their own money to purchase food or school supplies for students.

**Well-trained and experienced.** Nearly 3 out of 4 (72%) have completed some college coursework and 31% are required to take classes or examinations on a regular basis to keep their jobs.

Active in the school community. A large majority (71%) live in the communities where they work. 27% have volunteered to read books to students, 44% support a parent organization, and 22% have volunteered to teach or support art or musical activities.

**Focused on safety.** More than half (57%) have responsibilities that involve promoting school safety. 88% believe it is their job to intervene when bullying occurs and 87% feel that they have effective strategies for handling bullying situations.

For more information, visit nea.org/ESPclerical





We keep schools safe, clean, and healthy We prevent the spread of illness and infection We maintain a comfortable, healthy climate

### CUSTODIAL AND MAINTENANCE SERVICE ESP

We keep schools safe and clean for students, staff, and the community. In addition to performing the heavy cleaning and grounds keeping duties that are most often associated with our jobs, custodial and maintenance service ESP perform a dizzying array of other tasks, such as clearing snow, making electrical repairs, cleaning up spills, painting, maintaining boilers, and any number

of other necessary tasks. One of our most important responsibilities is to ensure proper indoor air quality, uniform temperatures, and efficient heating and ventilation for our schools.

**Custodial and maintenance services are one of the nine ESP career families.** NEA ESP make up nearly a half million of NEA's 3 million members. As a critical part of the education workforce, NEA custodial and maintenance service members meet the needs of the whole student, ensuring students and schools succeed.

# Career Titles Include, But Are Not Limited to

- ✓ Building and Grounds Maintenance Staff
- ✓ Custodians
- Mechanics (except vehicle) and Repairers
- ✓ Laborers, Helpers, and Warehouse Personnel
- ✓ Non-managerial Supervisor

- 95% work full time
- ⇒ 81% work in school buildings
- → 70% male

- ⇒ Average age is 52
- ⇒ NEA members for an average of 10 years
- **⇒** 8% of the total K-12 NEA ESP membership



### Custodial and Maintenance Service ESP Members are

**Committed to students and their career.** On average, they have been employed as ESP for 13 years. 91% currently plan to stay in the ESP field, and 81% plan to stay in their current position until retirement. 38% have given money to purchase food or school supplies for students.

**Well-trained and experienced.** One-third (33%) are required to take classes or examinations on a regular basis to keep their jobs. 27% are required to have licenses while 20% are required to have special certificates.

**Active in the school community.** Nearly 3 out of 4 (71%) live in the communities where they work. 28% have supported a parent organization, and 19% have coached or supported a sports program.

**Focused on safety.** A large majority (79%) have responsibilities that involve promoting school safety and 95% feel safe at their schools. 83% believe that it is their job to intervene when bullying occurs and 76% feel they have effective strategies for handling bullying situations.

For more information, visit nea.org/ESPcustodialmaintenance





### FOOD SERVICE ESP

We ensure that students have access to safe and nutritious meals. Food service ESP provide a fundamental component of student success–nutrition—which influences students' behavior, energy levels, thinking, physical health, and overall wellbeing. We know that students who are undernourished are not able to learn. Some of the more important aspects of food service careers include proper food handling, adapting recipes for children with special dietary needs, and nutrition

proper food handling, adapting recipes for children with special dietary needs, and nutrition education and practice. The meals that we provide meet recommended dietary guidelines and help students develop lifelong healthy eating habits.

**Food services are one of the nine ESP career families.** NEA ESP make up nearly a half million of NEA's 3 million members. As a critical part of the education workforce, NEA food service members meet the needs of the whole student, ensuring students and schools succeed.

# Career Titles Include, But Are Not Limited to

- Cooks and Food Preparation Workers
- ✓ Dietitians and Dietary Technicians
- ✓ Food Service Workers
- ✓ Cashiers
- ✓ Non-managerial Supervisors

- ⇒ 60% work full-time
- ⇒ 97% female
- 67% work in school buildings; 32% work in central food facilities
- ⇒ Average age is 54
- ⇒ NEA members for an average of 9 years
- ⇒ 8% of the total K-12 NEA ESP membership



### FOOD SERVICE ESP MEMBERS ARE

**Committed to students and their career.** On average, an NEA food service member has been working in the ESP field for over 12 years. 92% plan to stay in public education, and 81% plan to stay in their current jobs until retirement. 56% have spent their own money to purchase food or school supplies for students.

**Well-trained and experienced.** More than a third (37%) have special certificates and 41% have taken special classes or exams.

**Active in the school community.** A large majority (83%) live in the communities where they work. 26% have volunteered time to support a parent education association. 17% have coached or supported a sports program and 16% have volunteered to read books to students.

**Focused on safety.** A majority (64%) have responsibilities that involve promoting school safety. 85% believe bullying is a problem in their schools. 87% believe that it is their job to intervene when bullying occurs and 78% feel they have effective strategies for handling bullying situations.

For more information, visit nea.org/ESPfood





We keep students healthy
We remove barriers to education
We counsel students and families who
need help

# HEALTH AND STUDENT SERVICE ESP

We perform a wide variety of jobs that improve and protect student health and welfare. In addition to the traditional tasks of providing first aid, monitoring immunizations, conducting health screenings, and assisting sick and injured children, we provide education that encourages students to maintain good health independently. Health and student service ESP also help

students surmount physical obstacles to their learning by assisting students with chronic conditions and disabilities. We also help parents and families take advantage of assistance and services that are available to support their children's education.

**Health and student services are one of the nine ESP career families.** NEA ESP make up nearly a half million of NEA's 3 million members. As a critical part of the education workforce, NEA health and student service members meet the needs of the whole student, ensuring students and schools succeed.

# Career Titles Include, But Are Not Limited to

- ✓ Licensed Practical Nurses
- ✓ Nurses' and Health Aides
- ✓ Health Technicians
- ✓ Family and Parent Services Aides
- ✓ Community Welfare Services Workers
- ✓ Non-managerial Supervisors

- ⇒ 90% work full-time
- ⇒ 75% work with special education students
- ⇒ 93% female

- NEA members for an average of 10 years
- ⇒ 5% of the total K-12 NEA ESP membership
- ⇒ Average age is 51



### HEALTH AND STUDENT SERVICE ESP MEMBERS ARE

**Committed to students and their career.** On average, NEA health and student service members have been working in public education for 12 years. 87% plan to stay in the ESP field, and 80% plan on staying in their current positions until retirement. 82% have spent their own money to purchase food or school supplies for students.

**Well-trained and experienced.** Almost a third (30%) have earned a 2 year college degree, 26% a Bachelor's degree, and 27% a Master's, Professional, or higher degree. 54% take special coursework for their positions, 56% have special certificates, and 66% have licenses.

**Active in the school community.** A majority (66%) live in the communities where they work. 50% have volunteered time to support a parent education association. 34% have volunteered to read books to students and 23% have volunteered to teach or support art or musical activities.

**Focused on safety.** A majority (82%) have responsibilities that involve promoting school safety. 96% believe it is their job to intervene when bullying occurs and 91% feel that they have effective strategies for handling bullying situations.

For more information about, visit nea.org/ESPhealthstudent





### **PARAEDUCATORS**

Our careers have changed dramatically since we were first introduced into classrooms as teacher aides. Our duties are no longer limited to recordkeeping, preparing materials, or monitoring students in lunchrooms and other settings. Today, paraeducators assist with classroom instruction and provide direct services to students and their parents. A large number of us work with students with special needs, and all of us have professional responsibilities that contribute directly to academic achievement.

**Paraeducators are one of the nine ESP career families.** NEA ESP make up nearly a half million of NEA's 3 million members. As a critical part of the education workforce, NEA paraeducator members meet the needs of the whole student, ensuring students and schools succeed.

# Career Titles Include, But Are Not Limited to

- ✓ Instructional and Non-instructional Assistants
- ✓ Teachers' and Program Aides
- ✓ Library Aides, Technicians, and Assistants
- ✓ Preschool Caregivers
- ✓ Building, Bus, and Playground Monitors
- ✓ Crossing Guards

- **○** 58% work at preschool, kindergarten, or elementary levels
- ⇒ 78% work with special education students
- ⇒ 83% work full-time

- ⇒ 94% female
- Average age is 51
- 49% of the total K-12 NEA ESP membership



### Paraeducator Members are

**Committed to students and their career.** On average, NEA paraeducator members have been working in public education for 12 years. 80% plan to stay in the ESP field, and 71% plan to stay in their current jobs until retirement. 75% have spent their own money to purchase food or school supplies for students.

**Well-trained and experienced.** A quarter (25%) have a 2 year college degree, 25% a Bachelor's degree, and 9% a Master's, Professional, or higher degree.

**Active in the school community.** A large majority (74%) live in the communities where they work. 42% have supported a parent organization and 47% have volunteered to read books to students. 26% percent have taught or supported art or musical activities, 29% have supported a school or tutoring program, and 22% have coached or supported a sports program.

**Focused on safety.** A majority (80%) have responsibilities promoting school safety. 97% believe it is their job to intervene when bullying occurs and 94% feel that they have effective strategies for handling bullying situations.

For more information, visit nea.org/ESPparaeducator

For information on paraeducator careers, visit the NEA Paraeducator Institute site at nea.org/ParaeducatorInstitute





### SECURITY SERVICE ESP

designing and implementing security policies and crisis response plans.

Our careers have become more challenging, and our responsibilities have dramatically increased. An important role NEA security service members have on a daily basis is to counsel or just be a friend to the students with whom we interact. We have a clear understanding of not only security techniques, but also the unique nature of the school population we are working with. We are drug and substance, firearm and weapons experts. On a wider level, we are active in

**Security services are one of the nine ESP career families.** NEA ESP make up nearly a half million of NEA's 3 million members. As a critical part of the education workforce, NEA security service members meet the needs of the whole student, ensuring students and schools succeed.

# Career Titles Include, But Are Not Limited to

- ✓ Security Workers
- ✓ Guards
- ✓ School Resource Officers
- ✓ Non-managerial Supervisors

- ⇒ 55% work at senior high schools
- 36% work with special education students
- ⇒ 86% work full-time

- **○** 62% male
- Average age is 52
- ⇒ 1% of the total K-12 NEA ESP membership



### SECURITY SERVICE ESP MEMBERS ARE

**Committed to students and their career.** On average, NEA security service members have been working in public education for 11 years. 81% plan to stay in the ESP field, and 64% plan to keep their current positions until retirement. 61% have spent their own money to purchase food or school supplies for students.

**Well-trained and experienced.** NEA security service members meet specific job requirements such as certifications (37%), licenses (28%), or special courses (47%). 44% have an associates degree or higher.

**Active in the school community.** A majority (63%) live in the communities where they work. 29% have supported activities of a parent organization and 37% have coached or supported a sports program.

**Focused on school safety.** Their careers are entirely focused on safety. 92% believe that bullying, such as harassing, threatening, or intimidating others, is a problem at the school where they work. 81% have seen students bullied in the last month and 42% have had a student report to them that they were bullied.

For more information, visit nea.org/ESPsecurity





# SKILLED TRADE SERVICE ESP

We maintain and improve the physical quality of school buildings, offices, and facilities, ensuring that they are safe, comfortable, and attractive for students, staff, and the community. NEA skilled trade members perform 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 school.

**Skilled trade services are one of the nine ESP career families.** NEA ESP make up nearly a half million of NEA's 3 million members. As a critical part of the education workforce, NEA skilled trade members meet the needs of the whole student, ensuring students and schools succeed.

# Career Titles Include, But Are Not Limited to

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

- 25% work in school buildings
- 22% work out of a central maintenance facility
- ⇒ 99% work full-time

- ⇒ 91% male
- ⇒ Average age is 52
- ⇒ 1% of the total K-12 NEA ESP membership



### Skilled Trade Service ESP Members are

**Committed to students and their career.** On average, NEA skilled trade members have been working in the ESP field for 16 years. 93% plan to stay in the ESP field, and 83% plan to stay in their current jobs until retirement. 36% have given their own money to purchase food or school supplies for students.

**Well-trained and experienced.** More than half (53%) have attended college, and 30% have a 2 year or higher college degree. 43% have completed specialized coursework. 42% have specialized certificates and 54% have licenses.

**Active in the school community.** A majority (58%) live in the communities where they work. 22% support activities of a parent organization and 25% have supported a sports program.

**Focused on safety.** More than 3 out of 4 (76%) have responsibilities that involve promoting school safety. 88% believe bullying is a problem at their school. 71% believe it is their job to intervene when bullying occurs and 69% believe they have effective strategies for handling bullying situations

For more information, visit **nea.org/ESPskilledtrade** 





# TECHNICAL SERVICE ESP

We lead the effort to maintain high standards of technology and communications in our schools. We install, repair and upgrade computers and networks that enable the timely communication of essential information between parents, school district employees, and students. We mentor students, teachers, and staff in the use of the latest computing and Internet technol-

ogies. In order to maintain high standards, technical service ESP are continually learning about the trends and innovations in our field. Sharing this knowledge directly contributes to student success in our rapidly changing world.

**Technical services are one of the nine ESP career families.** NEA ESP make up nearly a half million of NEA's 3 million members. As a critical part of the education workforce, NEA technical service members meet the needs of the whole student, ensuring students and schools succeed.

# Career Titles Include, But Are Not Limited to

- ✓ Audiovisual, Language, Science, Mechanical, and Electrical Technicians
- Computer Operators and Programmers
- ✓ Systems Analysts
- ✓ Data Processing Specialists
- ✓ Media and Public Relations Specialists
- ✓ Writers and Editors
- Designers, Photographers, and Graphic Artists

- 49% work at school buildings; 16% at central offices or administrative centers; 15% work at multiple sites
- ⇒ 96% work full-time

- 56% male
- The average age is 48
- **○** 2% of the total K-12 NEA ESP membership



### TECHNICAL SERVICE ESP MEMBERS ARE

**Committed to students and their career.** On average, NEA technical service members have been working in the ESP field for 13 years. 88% plan to stay in the ESP field, and 68% plan to stay in their current jobs until retirement. 48% have spent their own money to purchase food or school supplies for students.

**Well-trained and experienced.** Nearly a third (31%) have an associate's degree, 27% have a Bachelor's degree, and 9% a Master's, professional, or higher degree.

**Active in the school community.** A majority (63%) live in the communities where they work. 31% have supported a parent organization. 20% have volunteered to read books to students and 21% have coached or supported a sports program.

**Focused on safety.** Nearly half (45%) have responsibilities that involve promoting school safety. 93% believe bullying is a problem in their schools. 76% believe that it is their job to intervene when bullying occurs and 76% feel they have effective strategies for handling bullying situations.

For more information, visit nea.org/ESPtechnical





### Transportation Service ESP

We are the first people to greet students on their way to school and the last to say goodbye as they return home. We are often the first to recognize when a student is troubled or ill. We operate and maintain all of a school system's vehicles. And in addition to driving, often in bad weather or heavy traffic, we are responsible for first aid and emergency evacuation procedures, student conduct and discipline, and the safe transportation of students with special needs. All employees in a district's transportation department keep up with new safety require-

**Transportation services are one of the nine ESP career families.** NEA ESP make up nearly a half million of NEA's 3 million members. As a critical part of the education workforce, NEA transportation service members meet the needs of the whole student, ensuring students and schools succeed.

### Career Titles Include, But Are Not Limited to

✓ Bus Drivers

ments, regulations, and policies.

- ✓ Truck and Van Drivers
- ✓ Vehicle Mechanics
- ✓ Garage Workers
- ✓ Transportation Maintenance Workers
- ✓ Non-managerial Supervisors

- 81% work from a school district's central facility
- ⇒ 47% work with special education students
- **○** 69% work full-time

- 🗢 66% female
- Average age is 55
- ⇒ 11% of the total K-12 NEA ESP membership



### Transportation Service ESP Members are

**Committed to students and their career.** On average, NEA transportation service members have been working in the ESP field for 13 years. 92% plan to stay in the ESP field, and 83% plan to keep their present jobs until retirement. 48% have spent their own money to purchase food or school supplies for students.

**Well-trained and experienced.** Nearly all (89%) are required to have a commercial driver's license. 81% need coursework for their jobs and 68% are required to have a special certificate.

**Active in the school community.** A large majority (82%) live in the communities where they work. 24% have supported a local parent organization and 20% have volunteered to read books to students.

**Focused on safety.** Nearly all (93%) have responsibilities that involve promoting school safety. 94% believe bullying is a problem in their schools. 97% believe that it is their job to intervene when bullying occurs and 93% feel they have effective strategies for handling bullying situations.

For more information, visit nea.org/ESPtransportation







**Clerical Services** 



**Security Services** 



Custodial and Maintenance Services



Skilled Trade Services



**Food Services** 



**Technical Services** 



Health and Student Services



Transportation Services



**Paraeducators** 



**Higher Education** 



ESP EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Education Support Professional Quality 1201 16th Street, N.W. | Washington, D.C. 20036 esp.program@nea.org | www.nea.org/esp

### NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

The National Education Association is the nation's largest professional employee organization, representing 3 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, school administrators, retired educators, and students preparing to become teachers.

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