Inquiry into referred 2017-18 Annual and Financial Reports

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked by Mrs Kikkert MLA:

[Ref: Annual Report, Education, 88 Human Resources Management]

In relation to: Requests for assistant teachers

1. How many requests for assistant teachers were made in the following years:
   a. 2016-17
   b. 2017-18
   c. 2018-19 (to date)

2. How many requests for assistant teachers were denied in the following years, and what was the reason for the denial?
   a. 2016-17
   b. 2017-18
   c. 2018-19 (to date)

3. How many requests for assistant teachers were granted in the following years?
   a. 2016-17
   b. 2017-18
   c. 2018-19 (to date)

Yvette Berry MLA: The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:

For the purposes of this response, I have defined an ‘assistant teacher’ as a Learning Support Assistant (LSA).

The role of an LSA is to provide personal, physical and educational support to students including students with additional needs and/or intellectual and/or physical disabilities.

On identifying a permanent LSA position, schools follow the ACTPS merit selection process to recruit staff. If identifying a short term LSA need, schools are able to access the list of staff registered on the Directorate’s School Staffing Integrated Management System for LSA roles to quickly fill a short term need supporting students.

1. In every ACT public school, principals are responsible for operational decisions regarding employment of staff and for ensuring the needs of students with disabilities enrolled at their schools are met. The number of LSAs employed in each school is a school level operational decision and is dependent on a number of factors (eg, number of students with disability; the level of support required or student level of disability).
Resourcing for students with disability

- Schools who have students who meet the ACT Student Disability Criteria attract additional resourcing to their school to support their needs. Schools can use this funding flexibly to make the necessary adjustments to meet the support needs of students with disability in their schools. This can include utilisation of LSAs to provide support to one or more students.

**Healthcare Assistance at School (HAAS)**

- Schools who have students with complex healthcare needs who participate in the Healthcare Access at School Program (HAAS) are supported by LSAs who have been identified and trained by a HAAS nurse to undertake healthcare tasks outlined in an Individual HAAS Careplan for a student.
- Individual Healthcare Plans can require continuous one-to-one care by an LSA or intermittent care throughout the school day depending on each student’s specific needs.
- Schools are recommended to train three HAAS Workers for each HAAS student to ensure there is sufficient backup and to account for staff leave and absences (e.g. excursions). Where this is not feasible (e.g. for smaller schools) it may be more appropriate to train just two staff members. This is at the discretion of each school.
- In identifying suitable staff to take on the HAAS role schools are encouraged to consider suitability, interest and willingness of staff to undertake the HAAS role, availability of staff and the broader support requirements of the school.
- LSAs trained to deliver HAAS care are entitled to an annual allowance and must be classified at School Assistant 3 level.

**Personal Care in Schools (PCIS)**

- PCIS is one to one personal support provided by school staff to students with disabilities ranging from low level supports provided to all students (e.g. tying shoelaces) to more intensive specialised interventions (e.g. PEG feeding). It can include assistance for students with toileting, mobility, eating and healthcare support (including but not limited to healthcare support provided through the HAAS program).
- PCIS is not provided as a discrete program or by a discrete workforce but is one of a range of intrinsically linked teaching and personal supports provided by school staff. In ACT public schools, this care is provided primarily by LSAs.

2. Refer to Question 1 response.

3. The table below details the headcount of LSAs for each year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Year</th>
<th>Local Designation</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
<th>Temporary</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANT</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-18</td>
<td>LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANT</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-19</td>
<td>LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANT</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>915</td>
<td>724</td>
<td>1639</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs

[Signature]

Date: 21/12/18

By the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development, Yvette Berry MLA