W.R.D.S.B. EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS ASSOCIATION

eUpdate

The Latest Information to Keep YOU Informed



Changes are coming. Be prepared.

EAA Members,

With recent Government changes to Education and funding for the Ontario Autism Program, we are left wondering how these changes will impact our jobs as Educational Assistants.

On April 1st, thousands of students who received specialized therapies outside of school, will be back in the classroom full time.

Together with the Coalition of Educational Assistants of Ontario(CEAO), the EAA continues to lobby government for more school-based supports, increased funding and additional training for EAs.

At this time, while we wait to find out exactly how the changes will be implemented into the school system, it's safe to assume EAA members can anticipate changes in scheduling and work load.

Often with sudden changes in the workplace, important information can get missed. Here is a review of Canada's three basic worker rights for your health and safety protection.

healthy and safe by taking part in the selection of a joint health and safety committee member to represent them. Workers can also volunteer to be a member of their Workplace Inspection Team (WIT). With this Right comes a worker's responsibility to report ALL hazards to their Administrator, without fear of reprimand, reprisal, or punishment.

•The Right to Know

Workers have a right to know about all hazards present in their workplace, and how those hazards may hurt them. Without access to OSRs, EAs rely on Administrators to provide the information, training, PPE and supervision they need to protect themselves. Training and information about student behaviours causing risk of injury should be provided before an EA is exposed to the hazard so they know how to protect themselves. Supply EAs need to see safety plans before they are in front of a student. There is no law that supersedes a worker's right to know about hazards in the workplace.

•The Right to Refuse

The Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) gives workers in Ontario the right to refuse work they believe is unsafe to themselves or their coworkers. (Teachers have a limited right to refuse: Reg 857 "Duty of Care", under the Education Act. It implies that a teacher acts in a manner equal to that of a prudent parent. Meaning if the parent is not present, the teacher assumes the wellbeing of the student under his or her care.)

A worker cannot be punished for refusing to do work that they believe will hurt themselves or others – it's the law. If an EA is in a situation where they feel unsafe they report this to their Administrator immediately and this would start the work refusal process. For more info on work refusals contact me directly.

Click the link below for a better understanding of how the OHSA translates in a school setting. https://www.ontario.ca/document/workplace-violence-school-boards-guide-law

Continue to practice clear, concise and collaborative communication as it is essential to maintain a healthy and safe environment for all staff and students.

Always report your concerns to your Administrator, record daily in behaviour logs and on tracking sheets, follow individual behaviour plans and programs designed for students, update/create safety plans for onsite and offsite activities, debrief incidents with your supervisor as needed, read your site-based risk assessment and re-assessment and complete employee incident reports for injuries and near misses.

For those who want to raise their voice in support of public education and against privatization of public services and cuts to social services, consider attending the Waterloo Region Labour Council's "Power of Many: Regional Activation Meeting" on March 20th.
https://www.facebook.com/events/2441339499231831/?ti=icl

Stay safe everyone.

In Solidarity,

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Dates to Remember:

- Town Hall Meeting - March 19
- EAA PD Day - April 12
- Spring Dinner - April 25

Stay up to date with our calendar

Find all the info you need!

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