UniServ Update

(Pt.1)

Pushing Back on Special Education Workload

Take Action Yourself to Get Your Full Planning Time & Meet Compliance Deadlines

Use the following steps to assess your workload, speak with your admin, and get support!

1. Use a workload tracker (scan the QR code) to keep track of how much planning time you are getting each day. Include notes about how this planning time has been used. Make sure you are getting your contractual individual planning time and total planning time for the week *(Article 11C).*
2. Even if you are getting your contractual planning time, you may still not be able to meet the compliance deadlines in a particular week. If you are in danger of missing a deadline, advocate to your supervisor that something be taken off your plate in order to meet the required deadline. If you are not getting your contractual planning time, advocate to ensure that you do. If you have IEP meetings or other required meetings encroaching into this time, advocate that the meetings be moved or that you be excused from them to ensure your contractual planning time is protected.
3. If you are unsuccessful in this advocacy, use these templates to email your supervisor:

FOR PLANNING TIME:

Based on the attached tracking of my work time this week, I am in danger of not getting my contractual planning time. As a result, I am asking that [include a specific request about being excused from a meeting, duty, etc] in order to still get my guaranteed contractual planning time this week. If that is not possible, please suggest another way to ensure I can receive my full contractual planning time within my 37.5 hour work week. If no options are provided, I will be completing a bluesheet in order to be compensated for this lost planning time since I will still be working these hours to complete my required work outside of my contractual hours. Please advise and thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

FOR COMPLIANCE DEADLINES:

Based on the attached tracking of my work time this week, I am in danger of not meeting a compliance deadline [explain the specifics of deadline including how much time it will take to complete]. Please advise on which of the following options you want me to take in order to meet this deadline:

1. ***Adjust/reduce my duties this week to ensure I can complete this required paperwork within my 37.5 hour work week. [Give specific suggestions.]***
2. ***Reschedule certain duties to next week. [Give specific suggestions.]***
3. ***If that is not possible, please suggest another way to ensure I can meet this compliance deadline within my 37.5 hour work week.***

If no options are provided, I will be completing a bluesheet in order to be compensated for the [specify a number] hours it will take to work beyond my work week to complete this deadline. Please advise and thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

4. The best outcome is that your supervisor addresses the issue, so you are able to work/meet your deadline within your work week. Continue to work with your supervisor to make sure you get your planning time and meet deadlines moving forward. If your supervisor does not address the issue, then submit a bluesheet for the work you have to do after hours due to loss of planning time or for the hours you need to work beyond your contractual time to meet your compliance deadline.

UniServ Update

(Pt.2)

Pushing Back on Special Education Workload

Take Action as a Team

As a member of your union, you and you colleagues can advocate together for improvements to your working conditions and student learning conditions. Use this guide to take action:

1. Bring your entire special education team together at your worksite. Have everyone assess their weekly workload. Use a workload tracker to keep track of how much planning time each person is getting each day. Make sure everyone is getting their contractual individual planning time and total planning time for the week *(Article 11C)*.

Planning Time

Elementary teachers should have 225 TOTAL minutes of individual planning time per week, 210 of which must be scheduled during the student day. Planning time blocks cannot be shorter than 30 minutes. Also, you should have 470 total minutes in the work week including collaborative planning time.

Secondary teachers should have 210 minutes of individual planning per week scheduled during the student day. Planning time blocks in secondary cannot be shorter than 40 minutes. Secondary teachers should receive 410 minutes per week including collaborative planning time.

2. Develop a list of concerns the team has about special educator working conditions at your particular worksite, such as high caseload numbers, consistent loss of planning time, difficulties meeting compliance deadlines, etc., so administration understands the scope of the issues that need to be addressed.

NOTE: Class coverage can unfortunately encroach upon individual planning time since the time taken is paid by a stipend. However, that doesn't mean that you can't still advocate to have coverage be done by another staff member if it is cutting into your minimum number of individual planning minutes.

3. Next, review together the school's meeting schedule, duty roster, advisory assignments, etc., and how they are impacting your team's contractual planning time as well as overall workload and ability to meet compliance deadlines.
4. Develop a list of recommendations in order of impact/importance that the entire team wants to bring to admin together.
5. Record the concerns as well as the list of recommendations and put every special educator's name on the document so it is clear that everyone is in support of these recommendations. Include a request for a time to meet to discuss.
6. If there are challenges with getting a meeting scheduled or with having your concerns addressed in a meaningful way, reach out to your building rep for support. If necessary, you can also reach out to your UniServ Director as well.

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Questions:
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