



Update from the Superintendent

To: Parents and Guardians
From: Bill Husfelt, Superintendent
Date: February 7, 2021

When you think about a school support employee, you probably think of a classroom paraprofessional, a bus driver or a custodian. Those are all correct but did you know that there are 216 DIFFERENT employee classifications within the family of school support employees?

Our school support employees are mission critical to our ability to serve our children and that group includes everyone from maintenance employees to bus drivers to district police officers, clerical employees, office staff, bookkeepers, courier drivers, stadium crew members, classroom and behavior paraprofessionals, custodians, maids and substitute teachers and paras. More than 1,060 employees currently work for Bay District Schools as school support employees and we depend upon each of them, every day, to keep our schools open.

While much of the work done by our school support employees is very visible (who doesn't love walking into a pristine clean cafeteria), many of these employees work tirelessly behind the scenes to support our students. Did you know, for example, that we have dozens of employees who are paraprofessionals supporting the work of teachers, running remediation groups for students and assisting our special needs students with day-to-day tasks? Did you know that we have paraprofessionals riding some of our buses each day to help monitor behaviors and ensure the safety of our students and staff? Did you know that we have a cadre of extremely talented maintenance employees who do everything from building repairs to routine upkeep to improvements and enhancements that help us better serve our students?

Some of these employees have been with us for so long that it's hard to remember operating our schools without them. Barbara Kendrick, my former confidential secretary when I was the Principal of A. Crawford Mosley High School, currently "wins the prize" for having worked with BDS the longest. With 53 years with BDS "BK", as we all call her, continues to report to work at Mowat Middle School each day with a smile and she's definitely a valued member of their team. Other employees who have been with us for 40 years or more include Shirley Odom (a veteran bus driver with 42 years of district service), Susan McQuagge (a paraprofessional at Deer Point Elementary with 41 years of experience) and Jackie Rivers (Northside Elementary School's confidential secretary with more than 40 years of BDS experience). With experience and wisdom like that on our side, how can we go wrong?

Last month we recognized Adrianna Hill as our 2020-2021 Bay District Schools Ann F. Smith Support Employee of the Year. While competition was particularly tough this year, our committee of BDS stakeholders felt strongly that Adrianna is the epitome of a BDS support employee who continues to put others above herself. We wish her ALL the best in her journey to compete on the state level in the next few months.

It's no secret that BDS salaries are not always competitive with the private sector, we're funded 100 percent by the state when it comes to salaries and we're bound by a union-negotiated salary schedule, but we do offer some great benefits to our fulltime employees and there's the one benefit that no one else can compete with – **our ability to literally change lives.**

Our employees know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that they are truly changing the lives of our students throughout each work day. I could tell you story after story of these amazing employees, and the relationships they cultivate with our students, but I simply don't have the space to do that. What I can tell you is that countless students come to school each day as a result of the relationships they have cultivated with our BDS family and the fact that they know they are loved, supported and encouraged on our campuses.

We're always recruiting employees and some of our positions are perfect for retirees, parents with young children at home, and those who want to work but don't want to have to deal with after-school care. If you're interested in finding out more about working with us, I encourage you to reach out to our Human Resources Department at 850-767-4100 or check out our job listings at

https://ats3.atenterprise.powerschool.com/ats/job_board?APPLICANT_TYPE_ID=00000002&COMPANY_ID=00009961. At this time, we have more than 53 available positions at schools throughout the district.

As you move through the rest of this month, please take a minute to reach out to the school support employees who have made a difference in your life. You may never know the impact of a simple "thank you" but I guarantee you it will be incredibly meaningful to the recipient.

Stay safe and God Bless!