

ECSSA CEP 52-A invited the secretaries of Edmonton Catholic Schools to a session to discuss their issues and concerns with the workplace conditions at their sites and within the district. The participants were divided up into 5 groups. They were asked to put their thoughts about their workplace on flipchart papers. The groups circulated around the room. If their group agreed with a previous idea already on the paper they were asked to put a check mark next to the idea. A number next to an item below indicates the amount of check marks.

I want them to know...

- Need more trained help on the front line
- We need our financial support people back! (3)
- Training for new programs should be mandatory
- Very frustrated (3)
- Work at home and staying late is happening all the time (2)
- Working for free is expected
- How valuable we are; we troubleshoot for everyone (1)
- How much teachers lean on us for training i.e. class xy attendance, eliminate, financial, myecsd, photocopying, p-cards, AESOP
- Good and experienced people are being mistreated/disrespected
- Not all principals are following the rules
- Good experienced people are going to be lost to other businesses
- Some principals understand and some don't and don't care

The biggest problem is...

- Lack of training Lack of support (7)
- Lack of time. Too much work (5)
- Office needs more than one person (5)
- For an education business we are not trained or educated
- Unrealistic Deadlines
- Lack of Job description
- Lack of respect for our jobs (3)
- Sink or swim (2)
- The stress is affecting the people I work with. How I treat them and they treat me
- Clerk 2 should not exist should be 3 or higher
- Option to work on holidays (Spring break and July)
- Everyone give us work to see, teachers, parents, school newsletters – should be the principal's job and we should be called to edit only.
- Secretary 5 should be 6
- Paygrid for SNTAs and pay grid for Secretary should not be the same.
- I want to do the job and do it well but I need the time (with compensation) to do it.
- Not everyone is getting the same info at the same time or not at all
- The differences between what principals do, as to what we are told to do. i.e. financials, coding budget, purchasing
- Not the secretary/clerks job to take new students to classrooms, give school tours.

I need...

- Professional Development (3)
- Technology support for programs including Cayenta updated manuals (2)
- Cheat sheets – Foip/net, medical forms (2)
- All support staff should be paid for extra time (3)
- We should be allowed to work extra time with extra pay 1
- Respect, support and to be heard 1
- My needs to come first sometimes over the teachers and parents 1
- 11 months to do my job from start to finish 1
- To be asked “How are thing going ?” with genuine concern 1
- Show caring the Catholic way 1
- To be rated at a different level 1
- Workshops, training , practise prior to implementing new programs 1
- More time for school start-up in September 1
- Don’t just throw things over the e-mail and expect us to read e-mails all day and know what to do 1
- More FTE admin support for All
- Walk the talk with vision Statement to be treated fair and equal
- Time
- To back to Jasper 3
- Job descriptions need to be restructured and pay grid raised
- We need to be united together as a group
- We need our kickoff to be more participation by support
- PD day needs to be geared to Admin Support also

This is going well...

- Colleagues help and support 3
- Staff humour over the whole situation
- Bussing – very helpful downtown 4
- Sharon 3
- We really love our jobs
- Sharon Payne 5 and David Proft 2 SASI crew
- Ian Maclacik and powerschool crew answer their phones
- Networking amongst secretaries
- Powerschool program – great
- We want to do well
- Secretaries are very pleasant and understanding
- Helpdesk has been much better
- Our union supports us and listens.

If they would only...

- Be available in the school – the principal
- Properly train us before we get it
- Understand what is involved in our work
- Recognize the work we do 1
- Stop dumping on the schools from downtown 2
- Understand how stressed we are 1
- Communicate better
- Recognize the need for ongoing training
- Make programs work before sending out
- Answer their phones, recognize our needs for quick answers 4
- Take responsibility to be accountable for their wrong doings and not blame the secretaries
- Realize that we have two job requirements, what we do at the school level and what we do at the district level
- Plan before implementing new programs
- Train prior to being implemented
- Have guidelines regarding number of Admin support/#of students and staff

I need to know...

- Some of the “secrets” admin
- More admin communication and dept. Communication
- How can we help
- Current-updated information
- Standardized info
- Budget info only know to admin
- How to code
- How to do my job efficiently
- When we will be able to P-cards , cayenta etc
- Who can help me with procedures in the office/school
- Who to go to for help (financial)

Personal Concerns

- Getting Burned out
- Frustrated and it is starting to show in my attitude
- Don't let me get sick
- ... because our work will sit and nobody to help
- Not thinking proactively- ongoing training benefits the District
- Long term physical consequences to burn out
- Principals are not always around, teachers send students to the office for us to babysit

