



TSTA NEWS

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TSTA: Support staffers need to be paid while schools are closed during the coronavirus outbreak

The Texas State Teachers Association today urged school districts that have closed schools or anticipate closing schools because of the coronavirus risk to take steps to ensure that non-professional support staffers, who are not on contracts, continue to get paid.

“We support and appreciate the precautions taken in closing these schools to protect the health and safety of all our students, school employees and community, which is a top priority of the Texas State Teachers Association,” said TSTA President Noel Candelaria. “We also want to ensure that bus drivers, cafeteria workers, custodians and other support staff will be paid while the schools are closed. Unlike teachers and other professional staff, who are under contracts with their districts, these hourly workers have no guarantees that they will be paid.”

“These support employees are an essential part of the school community and are on the frontlines, protecting the safety, health and well-being of students. They also are paid less than teachers and other professional staff and depend on their hourly income to provide for their own families and pay their bills like everyone else,” Candelaria added.

“TSTA urges school districts to pay them while the schools are shut down. Hourly employees who are healthy or at low risk of contracting the virus could be assigned maintenance tasks, including performing the deep cleaning of school buildings that the Texas Education Agency has recommended as a protection against the coronavirus. Some employees, including cafeteria workers and bus drivers, could help provide or deliver meals to low-income students, if the districts figure out a safe and effective way of doing this without risking a further spread of the virus,” he said.