

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES
65 COURT STREET
BROOKLYN, N.Y. 11201

PERSONNEL MEMORANDUM NO. 3, 2008-2009

September 22, 2008

TO: All Superintendents, Executive Directors, Heads of Offices, and Principals of All Day Schools, ISC HR Deputy Directors and CFN HR Directors

FROM: Gary Barton *Gary Barton*
Executive Director – Office of Field & Information Services

SUBJECT: Career Training Program Release Time for UFT Paraprofessionals and DC37 Family Paraprofessionals

I am writing to remind you that in accordance with the UFT and DC 37 contracts, paraprofessionals who meet the requirements indicated below are eligible for release time for non-classroom study or travel from work to their college. **Release time will be granted during the fall and spring semesters only to paraprofessionals who are attending an accredited college and cannot be used to attend classes during the school hours.** Paraprofessionals are encouraged to take courses during the late afternoon, evenings and/or weekends to avoid conflict with their work schedules. Paraprofessionals may not take classes during their regularly scheduled school day. Release time shall also be granted to paraprofessionals who do not participate in the Career Training Program. Please note: Release time does not apply to substitute paraprofessionals.

I. Eligibility of UFT Paraprofessionals and DC37 Family Paraprofessionals

UFT Paraprofessionals

During the fall and spring semesters, the Department of Education will grant 2 1/2 hours of release time, per week, with pay for study and/or travel to an accredited college. The paraprofessional must complete a total of at least five semester hours/credits during that same semester of undergraduate study only to be eligible for release time

DC 37 Family Paraprofessionals

During the fall and spring semesters release time will be granted based on the work schedule and enrollment in an accredited college. The below chart indicates the prescribed minimum semester hours/credits needed for eligibility:

| <u>HOURS WORKED PER WEEK</u> | <u>REQUIRED CREDITS PER SEMESTER</u> | <u>RELEASE TIME ENTITLEMENT</u> |
|---|---|--|
| 21 - 27 | 5 | 2 hours p/week |
| 27 1/2 - 29 | 5 | 2 1/2 hours p/week week |
| 30 | 6 | 3 hours per week |

- DC 37 paraprofessionals working 20 hours per week, enrolled in an accredited college and completes a minimum of four credits are not entitled to release time but will receive two hours of additional pay.
- DC 37 paraprofessionals working 21 and 30 hours per week are entitled to release time only; they are not entitled to additional pay.

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- DC 37 paraprofessionals working less than 20 hours per week are not eligible for any of the aforementioned benefits.

II. Verification

Verification of Enrollment

- At the beginning of each semester, any paraprofessional requesting release time must present a copy of the college bursar's receipt or other documentation of actual enrollment to the school principal or designee.

Verification of Course Completion

- Within one month following completion of the semester, it is the responsibility of each participating paraprofessional to submit to the principal or designee a copy of the transcript, grade report, or other substantiating documentation indicating completion of the course(s) for which release time was granted.

Failing Grade-Withdrawal/Incomplete

- A paraprofessional whose transcript indicates a failing grade during the semester for which release time was granted must submit to the principal written verification from the professor of actual attendance for the failed course. If this written verification is not submitted, the paraprofessional will be subject to the actions noted below in the Non-Compliance or Failure to meet requirements section.
- A grade indicating Withdrawal/Incomplete or any indication that courses were not attended will be considered as non-attendance and will be subject to the actions noted below in the Non-Compliance or Failure to meet requirements section.

III. ARRANGING A RELEASE TIME SCHEDULE

- Release time can only be used for non-classroom study or travel. Paraprofessionals are urged to arrange classes during the late afternoon, evening or weekends to avoid a conflict with their work schedule and to ensure that adequate classroom coverage is provided. Principals may authorize release time during the course of the regular school day. However, paraprofessionals may not schedule classes during regular school hours. Paraprofessionals submit a class schedule to their principal in advance of the commencement of classes. The principal will then have sufficient time to review the schedule, approve or request that it be modified, if necessary. Release time cannot be rescheduled if it falls on a holiday.

IV. NON-COMPLIANCE OR FAILURE TO MEET REQUIREMENTS

Termination of Release Time and Responsibility of Principals to Authorize a Payroll Deduction

- When release time must be terminated due to non-compliance or failure to meet requirements, the principal or designee must stop release time immediately and authorize a payroll deduction

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for any release time or pay that the paraprofessional received without appropriate documentation.

If you require additional information regarding the application process for the Career Training Program, you may contact the Office of Scholarship and Incentive Programs at (718) 935-2296 or email the following staff:

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Title</u> | <u>Email</u> |
|------------------|---------------------|--|
| Vanessa Sullivan | Assistant Director | VSulliv@schools.nyc.gov |
| Cecile Nugent | Program Coordinator | CNugent@schools.nyc.gov |
| Grace Finochiaro | Program Liaison | GFinoch@schools.nyc.gov |

Thank you for your cooperation.

C: Lawrence E. Becker
Peter Ianniello