

NCATA Legislative News

August 5, 2009

Dear Members,

Below is a press release from Governor Perdue concerning the 2009-2011 budget. NCATA appreciates the support Governor Perdue has expressed for the important work teacher assistants do in helping to educate, supervise, and support North Carolina's children.

While the funding allotment was not reduced for teacher assistants from K-3 to K-2 as was proposed, cuts and changes to teacher assistant positions have been and continue to be made in school systems around our state. Instead of the budget *specifying* raising class size and reducing the teacher assistant funding allotment, each LEA (school system) will be given a specific amount of money they will be required to "send back to Raleigh" and so it is likely that teacher assistants can and will continue to face job losses in the year ahead. This is called LEA Discretionary Reduction. This allows each school system to choose where and how they will cut their state budget funds. We are hopeful that other ways will be found to do this rather than cutting teacher assistant positions. We are hopeful that teacher assistants who have lost their jobs will be called to return to work.

Some LEAs have chosen to cut back on their TAs' work hours, thus allowing for most or all to retain their employment at a reduced salary. Other LEAs have cut TA positions based on evaluations or contingent on possession of a bus driver's license. Still other LEAs have terminated teacher assistants based on longevity or by specific positions, such as media assistants. This is all very sad for those who have lost their jobs, for their families, for the schools they worked at, and the children they helped.

I will let you know when more specific information becomes available.

Sincerely,
Melinda

Melinda K. Zarate
NCATA Legislative Chair