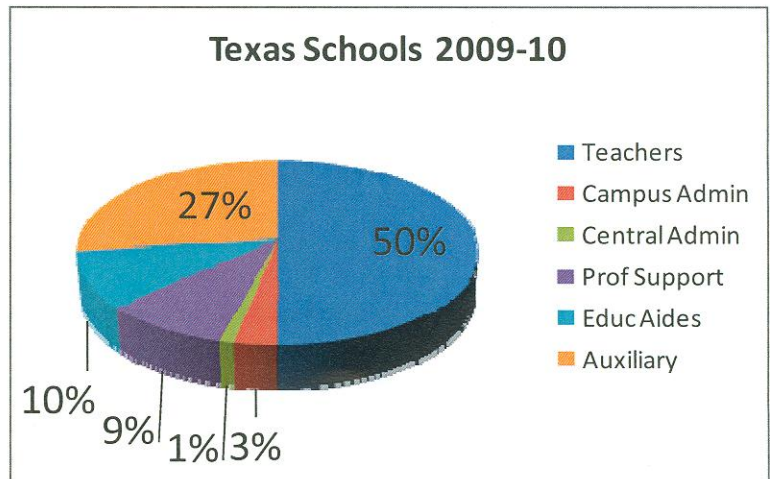


At a Glance: School District Staff

Texas School Districts employed approximately 660,000 full time-equivalents (FTEs)¹ during the 2009-10 school year. Of these FTEs, approximately 333,000 are classified as teaching staff (accounting for 64.3 percent of district salary expenses), while the remaining 328,000 (accounting for 35.7 percent of district salary expenses) might be considered non-teaching staff. Lately, these figures, without analysis, have been put forward as evidence that schools are not being run efficiently. However, a cursory examination of district non-teaching staff actually illuminates the crucial role these individuals have in supporting the delivery of rigorous education programs.

Central Administration

Central administration has overall responsibility for the safeguarding and proper usage of district physical, financial and human assets. Central administration also has ultimate responsibility for the educational performance of students. Every district has one superintendent, but other staff assigned to central administration have responsibility for curriculum and instruction, human resources, payroll, facilities maintenance, finances and budgeting, and legal services. Statewide, approximately 6,900 staff, or one percent of all district staff, are assigned to central administration. This figure would indicate that on average, a district superintendent has approximately six central administrative staff to help them perform all of these functions.



Campus Administration

Campus administration has leadership and general management responsibility for a campus. Primarily, campus administration consists of a principal with overall responsibility, assistant principals that are responsible for campus discipline and other campus operations, a registrar responsible for campus records, and staff responsible for reports mandated by the state for submission to the Texas Education Agency. Statewide, approximately 18,600 staff, or three percent of all district staff, are classified as campus administration. This figure would indicate that on average one person in campus administration supports eighteen teachers.

Professional Support

Professional support staff are responsible for supporting the educational mission of a school. These staff are responsible for student guidance (counselors), student health (school nurses), research guidance (school librarians), and needs assessments and service provisions (diagnosticians, speech pathologists, therapists and social workers), particularly for students with special needs. Statewide, approximately 59,000 school employees are categorized as professional support, or nine percent of all employees. This figure indicates that on average there is one professional support staff for every 83 students enrolled in public schools.

¹ A full-time equivalent is a human resource measurement equal to one staff person working full-time over the course of the year.

Education Aides

Education Aides provide non-administrative support to teachers and to professional support. These individuals are classroom teacher aides, computer lab aides, library assistants, licensed vocational nurses, and special education aides that help special education teachers manage the classroom environment and assist students with special needs with their learning and lessons. Statewide approximately 65,000 staff, or ten percent of all district staff, are classified as education aides. This figure would indicate that on average one education aide for every six district employees involved in teaching or providing professional support.

Auxiliary

Auxiliary staff account for the largest portion of staff not categorized as teachers. This category of staff include groundskeepers and custodians; print shop employees; bus drivers, monitors and mechanics; food service and cafeteria workers; security guards; and computer technicians. In other words, these are the people who:

- transport students between home and school and to school events;
- prepare meals for students (these staff members are largely paid through federal funds²);
- maintain and clean school facilities so they are suitable places in which to work and learn;
- ensure that only authorized individuals are on campus and maintain a safe environment; and
- repair and update computers and information systems used to deliver educational content, retrieve online resources, and facilitate communications to a district's students, parents, staff and community.

Statewide approximately 178,000 staff, or twenty-seven percent of all district staff, are classified as auxiliary staff. This figure would indicate that on average there is one auxiliary staff for every 27 students enrolled in public school.

Teachers

There are over 333,000 teachers in Texas public schools who serve as the primary conduit of knowledge for students in public schools. Teachers are hired and paid by the district, given teaching assignments by campus principals, provided with students who are transported to and from clean and safe schools to learn and whose work effort is supported by classroom aides, computer center staff, and other committed individuals who are involved with preparing the next generation to fully participate in our society.

Conclusion

Public schools are being cast as wasteful and inefficient because non-teacher staff is nearly half of all staff employed by schools districts. In particular, administration, which comprises 1 percent of all district staff, is taking the brunt of the blame. However, this is most likely the result of a misunderstanding of the critical role that non-teacher district staff play in a successful education system.

² Federal Funds, particularly the Federal School Lunch funds pay for the school lunch program. Reduction of cafeteria staff or elimination of school food service would not result in freeing up significant funding to support teaching or other school functions.