



MEMBER ALERT
POET and EMERGENCY PLACEMENT OF
CURRENT STAFF AS PARAEDUCATOR/IA SUBSTITUTES
December 1, 2021

This alert is in response to inquiries from several members about placement of existing district staff into classrooms to act as paraeducator substitutes due to staffing shortages. We understand that this is an extraordinary and urgent need, with potential exposure if adequate classroom staffing needs are not met.

Ordinarily, all persons employed in certain classifications of employment, including paraeducators and instructional assistants, are required to go through Post Offer Employment Testing (POET) to ensure that they are physically able to perform the essential functions of the job. Based on the current emergency, **NBSIA will support placement of current qualified district administrators and managers, including classified managers and senior administrators, as paraeducator or instructional assistant substitutes without going through the POET process.** We anticipate this will be a short-term situation, through the current school year.

Before placing the administrators/managers, please do the following:

- Have the substitute administrators/managers assuming these emergency roles review the appropriate physical job description and “self-certify” by email or in writing that they are familiar with the requirements and can perform the work. That way, the district is not knowingly putting somebody into a potentially harmful situation. The written statement should be placed in their personnel file. Suggested employee statement:

“I have read the Job Description and understand all physical requirements as described in the Job Description. I am familiar with the emergency role I will be temporarily assuming and its physical needs. I believe I can safely perform all the stated physical functions and requirements.”

- Maintain documentation of the emergency nature of this situation and reason for exception to the standardized policy on POET. Note that this is expected to be a short-term substitute position to fill current and urgent needs, with the sub appointment ending no later than the current school year.

We realize that this situation is fluid and subject to further review and consideration as circumstances change. If there is a continuing emergency need after the end of this school year, we will revisit this exception with the NBSIA Board of Directors for further guidance.

Lastly, this exception to POET applies only to existing staff acting as subs. New employees in these positions must continue to go through POET testing as usual. NBSIA has arranged for expanded testing days and hours to accommodate the increase in hiring.

If you have questions about this Alert, please contact Janet Selby, janets@nbsia.org, 707-399-4205.