

To whom it may concern,

My name is Noël Chancery. I have been working as a Special Ed Asst. in the Dallas School Dist. for over 10 years. It is a stressful but rewarding job. I am dedicated to students and work hard to help them achieve things that often seem impossible.

For the first 4 years of working for the district I also worked as a respite caregiver for a Foster Home. In order to get the summer hours I needed to survive through my non-paid summer, I had to work every Sat through the school year. Working 6 days a week took it's toll after a while & when I got pregnant with my first child I couldn't continue with it any longer.

I was back to working for the School Dist only & not knowing how I was going to help get my family through the summer. I, unlike others who work for schools, am luck enough to have family who will offer me temporary work to get by. But even with such generosity I take a huge pay cut and barely squeak by.

After a long summer of barely squeaking by comes September where I have to survive the transition of not having pay while I work for the School Dist. until my first, partial, paycheck comes around.

Approaching the summer, getting through it & transitioning back to work each year has been a hugely stressful time for me & many others I know. Every year I have to wonder if I am going to have work through the summer or not & imagine myself interviewing for jobs along side college kids and high schoolers for low wage temp jobs.

When I have asked our Union president why we can't go to a 12 month pay instead of 9 month, she said aside from it being hard to calculate because we're paid hourly, it would give employees so little throughout the year that it wouldn't be a livable wage.

I was sad to hear that it didn't seem possible to be a Dist employee & only have 1 job. I work with 5 other assistants in my classroom & each of them also works at least one other job. Almost all of them, like I once did, work throughout the school year evenings &/or weekends to get by and to assure they will have summer employment. I am a hard worker & I think I deserve to be eligible for unemployment! And, so should every other school employee like me!

Thank you for your time,  
Sincerely,

Noël Chancery