



## **Education Support Personnel Vital Part of Ponca City Public School District**

The Ponca City Public School district celebrated Oklahoma Support Personnel Week November 12 through 16, 2018. Several PCPS support employees are pictured above doing whatever it takes to help provide the very best learning environment for students!

"Whether it is delivering mail to the sites, serving food to students, assisting students in the classroom or working at the administrative offices, our support employees get involved at every level," stated Ponca City School Public Information Coordinator Mary Ladd. "They are an integral part of making our schools great places to learn for students and staff. We are extremely fortunate in Ponca City to have outstanding support staff all across the district."

Superintendent Shelley Arrott stated, "Without the dedication of our 385 support professionals, it would be impossible for our district to function on a daily basis. Our support professionals wear many hats ranging from child nutrition workers, crossing guards, maintenance workers, secretaries, teacher assistants, transportation workers, and many others. These professionals impact our students and support our teachers in such positive ways. They are very flexible and do whatever it takes to support the learning process. Our support professionals are often the unsung heroes in our district, and it is a privilege to have these individuals as members of Team PCPS. We have had a wonderful week of honoring our highly valued support professionals for their dedicated service." #teampcps

Teacher assistants and para-professionals assist teachers in the classroom, help in the main office, tutor students and do whatever else is needed. School secretaries are the backbone of the schools taking care of teachers and principals as well as serving as mom away from home for students. They are responsible for state reporting, keeping attendance, maintaining records, administering medication, greeting the public, and much more every day.

District maintenance personnel are responsible for keeping over one million square feet of buildings and grounds maintained. They also have full-time, skilled craft employees who do electrical and plumbing work, build, paint and repair school furniture and buildings, repair heating and air conditioning units, install technology, and too many things to mention. The district employs both day and night custodians who are responsible for opening the buildings each morning, keeping them clean, and in the winter seeing that the snow and ice are removed from sidewalks. In the summer, maintenance and custodial personnel are responsible for mowing, moving classroom furniture, stripping and waxing floors, shampooing carpets, painting and maintaining buildings and so much more to ensure schools are ready to start in August.

Ponca City Schools' state and national award-winning Child Nutrition Program is one of the most progressive student lunch programs in the country. Cafeteria personnel arrive early in the morning to prepare well-balanced, nutritious meals, serving over 5,000 meals per day.

The Transportation Department drives over 200,000 miles per year carrying an average of 1714 students daily. Transportation employees not only pick-up and deliver students to and from school, but they also make additional trips for special activities – all with the safety and well-being of the students uppermost in their minds. Full-time mechanics are employed to keep buses in safe operating condition. Ponca City Schools has an excellent bus safety record.

Personnel in the Central Administration Building serve many different functions. With an annual budget of almost \$37 million, central office personnel stay busy taking care of the business end of the district processing purchase orders, paying bills, encumbering funds, and handling activity funds, etc. The district has 770 regular employees and approximately 100 substitutes employed, which requires processing a large payroll, coordinating employee records, benefits and much more. They coordinate school activities and compile reports from all buildings to meet state and federal guidelines and are responsible for maintaining records that are audited by state and federal auditors.

Technology staff members are responsible for keeping thousands of district computers, laptops, iPads, Smartboards, and other technology equipment operating as well as the critical district network infrastructure, student data base, and much more. It is easy to see why education support personnel are so valuable.

Over 25,000 support employees are working nation-wide as the helping hands in education. Public schools depend on these employees to make schools a better place for students to learn. If students attend a clean, well-maintained school; get there safely in the school bus driven by an expert; eat a tasty, nourishing lunch; and get assistance from a secretary or assistant; it helps the learning process.

Education Support Professionals (ESP) Day was first celebrated in 1987 after the National Education Association's Representative Assembly called for the creation of a way to honor contributions of school support staff. National ESP Day is a time to strengthen support and respect for these colleagues.

Pictured top left: Tina Hull, Secretary at Union Elementary

Pictured middle: Pam McEnany, Secretary at the Maintenance Department

Pictured top right: Rob Anderson & Justin Denke from Maintenance Department

*Mary Ladd*

Public Information Coordinator

Ponca City Public Schools

580-352-4188

[laddm@pcps.us](mailto:laddm@pcps.us)

