

HCEA WORKLOAD TEMPLATES



RESPONSES & TEMPLATES

E-MAIL TEMPLATES

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Certificated staff who want approval for additional hours

- Here is a sample response you can use to communicate with supervisors if you don't have enough time in the day to complete all of your duties and assignments. Please use this template if you would like your supervisor to get approval for you to work the additional hours you need to complete the tasks (and to be compensated for those hours).

If the task that you can't complete during duty hours has a particular deadline, for example, an IEP document or notification, add to the template what that deadline is, and make it clear that you won't be able to meet that deadline without either being authorized to do after-hours work, or being provided sub time to do it.

If you are a non-school-based certificated staff member who does NOT get self-directed planning time, you can remove mention of planning time.

Dear **[Supervisor]**,

I am writing to inform you that there is not enough time in my duty day to complete all of my duties and assignments. Because I am required to be prepared for my duty day tomorrow, I did not have time to complete **[list lower-priority tasks assigned by your supervisor, such as Medicaid paperwork, etc.]**. The only time I could complete these tasks would be during my lunch time, my self-directed planning time, or after my duty day has ended. Am I authorized to work additional hours beyond my duty day to finish these assignments? I anticipate that it will take approximately **[XX hours/minutes]** for me to finish the work, so please let me know how you would like me to proceed.

Until or unless I receive a written reply stating otherwise, I will assume that I am not authorized to do the additional work, and that my priority order of tasks is appropriate. Therefore, **[insert lower-priority tasks assigned by your supervisor]** will not be completed.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Certificated staff who do not want approval for additional hours

Here is a sample response you can use to communicate with supervisors if you don't have enough time in the day to complete all of your duties and assignments. Please use this template if you do NOT want approval for additional compensated hours, or if you would like to stick to your contractual duty day (without working additional hours beyond that).

If the task that you can't complete during duty hours has a particular deadline, for example, an IEP document or notification, add to the template what that deadline is, and make it clear that you won't be able to meet that deadline without either being authorized to do after-hours work, or being provided sub time to do it.

If you are a non-school-based certificated staff member who does NOT get self-directed planning time, you can remove mention of planning time in the template above.

Dear **[Supervisor]**,

I am writing to inform you that there is not enough time in my duty day to complete all of my duties and assignments. Because I am required to be prepared for my duty day tomorrow, I did not have time to complete **[list lower-priority tasks assigned by admin, such as Medicaid paperwork, etc.]**.

The only time I could complete these tasks would be during my lunch time, my self-directed planning time, or after my duty day has ended. Since the HCEA contract protects my lunch time and self-directed planning time, and I am not authorized to work additional hours beyond my duty day, how would you like to proceed?

Until or unless I receive a written reply stating otherwise, I will assume that my priority order of tasks is appropriate. Therefore, **[insert lower-priority tasks assigned by your supervisor]** will not be completed, so that I can complete the higher priority tasks.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Non-Certificated “Non-Exempt” Staff who want approval for additional hours

Here is a sample response you can use to communicate with your supervisor if you don't have enough time in the day to complete all of your duties and assignments. Please use this template if you would like your supervisor to get approval for you to work the additional hours you need to complete the tasks (and to be compensated for those hours).

Dear **[Supervisor]**,

I am writing to inform you that I am approaching the end of my duty day, but there has not been enough time in the day for me to finish my duties and assignments. My day consisted of **[list priority task(s) here, such as student-centered work alongside my classroom teacher or non-school based administrative tasks]**, so I was unable to complete your requested task **[insert lower-priority tasks your supervisor asked you to complete]**. The only time I could complete these tasks would be during my lunch or break time, or after my duty day has ended. Am I authorized to work additional hours beyond my duty day to finish these assignments? I anticipate that it will take approximately **[XX hours/minutes]** for me finish the work. As a non-exempt employee, I must be paid for any additional hours worked under the Fair Labor Standards Act, so please let me know how you would like me to proceed.

Until or unless I receive a written reply stating otherwise, I will assume that I am not authorized to do the additional work, and that my priority order of tasks is appropriate. Therefore, **[insert lower-priority tasks assigned by your supervisor]** will not be completed.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Non-Certificated “Non-Exempt” staff who do not want approval for additional hours

Here is a sample response you can use to communicate with your supervisor if you don't have enough time in the day to complete all of your duties and assignments. Please use this template if you do NOT want approval for additional compensated hours, or if you would like to stick to your contractual duty day (without working additional hours beyond that).

Dear **[Supervisor]**,

I am writing to inform you that I am approaching the end of my duty day, but there has not been enough time in the day for me to finish my duties and assignments. My day consisted of **[list priority task(s) here, such as student-centered work alongside my classroom teacher or non-school based administrative tasks]**, so I was unable to complete your requested task **[insert lower-priority tasks your supervisor asked you to complete]**. Since I am not authorized to work overtime, I plan to leave at the end of my duty day. Please let me know if you would like me to prioritize my tasks differently going forward.

Until or unless I receive a written reply stating otherwise, I will assume that my priority order of tasks is appropriate. Therefore, **[insert lower-priority tasks assigned by your supervisor]** will not be completed, so that I can complete the higher priority tasks.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Non-Certificated “Exempt” staff who want approval for additional hours

Here is a sample response you can use to communicate with your supervisor if you don't have enough time in the day to complete all of your duties and assignments. Please use this template if you would like your supervisor to get approval for you to work the additional hours you need to complete the tasks (and to be compensated for those hours).

Dear **[Supervisor]**,

I am writing to inform you that I am approaching the end of my duty day, but there has not been enough time in the day for me to finish my duties and assignments. My day consisted of **[list priority task(s) here, such as student-centered work alongside my classroom teacher or non-school based administrative tasks]**, so I was unable to complete your requested task **[insert lower-priority tasks admin asked you to complete]**. The only time I could complete these tasks would be during my lunch or break time, or after my duty day has ended. Am I authorized to work additional hours beyond my duty day to finish these assignments? I anticipate that it will take approximately **[XX hours/minutes]** for me finish the work. Although I'm an exempt employee, I do fall under the ESP Negotiated Agreement for Central Office Technical work hours and must be paid for any additional hours worked, so please let me know how you would like me to proceed.

Until or unless I receive a written reply stating otherwise, I will assume that I am not authorized to do the additional work, and that my priority order of tasks is appropriate. Therefore, **[insert lower-priority tasks assigned by your supervisor]** will not be completed.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Non-Certificated “Exempt” staff who do not want approval for additional hours

Here is a sample response you can use to communicate with your supervisor if you don't have enough time in the day to complete all of your duties and assignments. Please use this template if you do NOT want approval for additional compensated hours, or if you would like to stick to your contractual duty day (without working additional hours beyond that).

Dear **[Supervisor]**,

I am writing to inform you that I am approaching the end of my duty day, but there has not been enough time in the day for me to finish my duties and assignments. My day consisted of **[list priority task(s) here, such as student-centered work alongside my classroom teacher or non-school based administrative tasks]**, so I was unable to complete your requested task **[insert lower-priority tasks admin asked you to complete]**. Although I'm an exempt employee, I do fall under the ESP Negotiated Agreement for Central Office Technical work hours and must be paid for any additional hours worked. Since I am not authorized to work overtime, I plan to leave at the end of my duty day. Please let me know if you would like me to prioritize my tasks differently going forward.

Until or unless I receive a written reply stating otherwise, I will assume that my priority order of tasks is appropriate. Therefore, **[insert lower-priority tasks assigned by your supervisor]** will not be completed, so that I can complete the higher priority tasks.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Certificated Staff - Lunch and self-directed planning time

Many staff are often asked to take on duties or tasks during their lunch or self-directed planning time. All certificated staff members, including teachers and related service providers, are covered under the certificated staff contract. The contract clearly states that you should not be assigned to any other duties during your self-directed planning time or your 30-minute duty-free lunch. If you are asked to complete work during these times, then please use the template below. If your supervisor insists that you must complete the task, get it in writing, comply with the task, and notify your [UniServ Director](#) immediately.

Sample Email
Dear [Supervisor] , The HCEA contract specifies that I should not be asked to complete other duties during my lunch or my self-directed planning period, so I respectfully decline [insert task you are being asked to do] . Respectfully, [Your Name]

****Again, if you are a non-school based certificated staff member, the language about self-directed planning time doesn't apply. However, it does apply to your lunch time.**

ESP Staff - Duty-Free Lunch

Many staff are often asked to take on duties or tasks during their lunch time. Depending on the length of your duty day, you should have either a 30-minute or 60-minute **duty-free** lunch. That means you should not be assigned to any duties during this time. If you are instructed or asked to complete work during your lunch break, then please use the template below. If your supervisor insists that you must complete the task, get it in writing, comply with the task, and notify your [UniServ Director](#) immediately.

Sample Email

Dear **[Supervisor]**,

The HCEA-ESP contract specifies that I should not be asked to complete other duties during my lunch, so I respectfully decline **[insert task you are being asked to do]**.

Respectfully,

[Your Name]

Lunch and Recess Duty Assignments for Elementary School Teachers:

As a reminder, elementary school teachers should not be assigned to lunch or recess duty, as per Article 11.I of the HCEA contract. This includes all school-based elementary certificated staff, not just classroom teachers. If you are asked to do lunch or recess duty, please decline using the language below. If your supervisor insists that you must do lunch or recess duty, then comply with the request, get it in writing, and contact your [Uniserv Director](#) immediately.

Sample Email

Dear **[Supervisor]**,

Article 11.I of the HCEA contract stipulates that “elementary school teachers will not be assigned lunch or recess duty.” Therefore, I respectfully decline.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Adding lunch and self-directed planning periods to your schedule for School-Based Certificated Staff:

All school-based certificated staff members should have a schedule with designated blocks of time, on regular student days, for self-directed planning time and lunch. If you currently do not have a set schedule with designated lunch/self-directed periods, then please use the following templates to communicate with your supervisor about adding those to your schedule:

Sample Email for Elementary	Sample Email for Secondary
<p>Dear [Supervisor],</p> <p>I'm writing to remind you that I should have weekly self-directed time of three hundred twenty-five (325) minutes, with at least two hundred twenty (220) minutes of such time scheduled in blocks of not less than fifty-five (55) consecutive minutes, along with a 30-minute lunch period. I will schedule my daily self-directed planning time and 30-minute lunch period at times that are least disruptive to my students. Going forward, I will include those blocks of time on the master schedule so you will know when I am unavailable during the day. If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.</p> <p>Respectfully,</p> <p>[Your Name]</p>	<p>Dear [Supervisor],</p> <p>I'm writing to remind you that I should have weekly self-directed time of three hundred thirty (330) minutes with at least fifty consecutive minutes of self-directed time four days a week, along with a 30-minute lunch period. I will schedule my daily self-directed planning time and 30-minute lunch period at times that are least disruptive to my students. Going forward, I will include those blocks of time on the master schedule so you will know when I am unavailable during the day. If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.</p> <p>Respectfully,</p> <p>[Your Name]</p>

***This contract language applies to regular student days ONLY.**

“Other Duties as Assigned”:

Staff are often asked to take on “additional duties as assigned” that make it extremely difficult for you to fulfill all of your job requirements during the paid duty day. Please keep in mind that if your supervisor directs you to complete the task, you should not refuse. You can, however, push back gently. This is also important because it will help you track the kinds of tasks you are being asked to do and how often it is happening. Here is a sample email you can use to push back against those additional assignments:

Sample Email

Dear **[Supervisor]**,

Unfortunately, there is not enough time during my paid duty day to prioritize my essential job functions while also taking on additional duties, like **[insert tasks you are being asked to do]**. I will be unable to complete **[list priority tasks you were planning to work on]** if I take time out of my day to complete **[insert task you are being asked to do]**. Please let me know how you would like me to proceed.

Until or unless I receive a written reply stating otherwise, I will assume that my priority order of tasks is appropriate. Therefore, **[insert lower-priority tasks assigned by your supervisor]** will not be completed, so that I can complete the higher priority tasks.

Respectfully,

[Your Name]

IEP/504 Meetings or Testing/Make-ups occurring during Self-Directed Time or Lunch:

RSPs and other certificated staff will sometimes discover that an IEP/504 meeting is scheduled during their self-directed planning time or lunch, or that they will need to use their self-directed planning time or lunch to complete testing or student make-up sessions. You are free to schedule tasks like that during your self-directed planning time or lunch time, if that's what you want to do. But you don't have to give up your self-directed time if you don't want to.

Below are four separate email templates that you can use to communicate with your supervisor if you are interested in giving up your self-directed time or lunch break in exchange for compensation, or if you want to keep your time and request that the meeting/task be rescheduled.

Sample Email

Dear **[Supervisor]**,

I became aware that there is **[an IEP/504 meeting]** scheduled during my self-directed planning time on **[insert date and time]**. The HCEA contract specifies that I should not be asked to complete duties during my lunch or my self-directed planning period. Am I authorized to receive compensation for that time? If not, we will need to reschedule.

Please let me know how you would like to proceed.

Respectfully,

[Your Name]

Sample Email

Dear **[Supervisor]**,

I became aware that **[testing/make-up sessions]** for a student on **[insert date and time]** is unable to be completed outside my self-directed planning time. The HCEA contract specifies that I should not be asked to complete duties during my lunch or my self-directed planning period. Am I authorized to receive compensation for that time? If not, we will need to reschedule.

Please let me know how you would like to proceed.

Respectfully,

[Your Name]

Sample Email (if you want to reschedule)

Dear **[Supervisor]**,

I became aware that there is **[an IEP meeting]** scheduled during my self-directed planning time on **[insert date and time]**. The HCEA contract specifies that I should not be asked to complete duties during my lunch or my self-directed planning period. Therefore, we will need to reschedule this meeting and/or discuss how you would like me to prioritize my tasks differently going forward.

Please let me know how you would like to proceed.

Respectfully,

[Your Name]

Sample Email (if you want to reschedule)

Dear **[Supervisor]**,

I became aware that **[testing/make-up sessions]** for a student on **[insert date and time]** is unable to be completed outside my self-directed planning time. The HCEA contract specifies that I should not be asked to complete duties during my lunch or my self-directed planning period. Therefore, we will need to reschedule and/or discuss how you would like me to prioritize my tasks differently going forward.

Please let me know how you would like to proceed.

Respectfully,

[Your Name]

School-Based Certificated Staff - New self-directed planning time amounts

Weekly self-directed planning time was increased for both elementary and secondary school teachers at the start of the 2022-2023 school year. Some teachers have reported that their schedules do not include the correct amount of self-directed planning blocks. To figure out if you are getting the correct amount of time each week, please reference HCEA's [Planning Time Worksheet](#).

If you discover that you are not getting the appropriate amount, please use the templates below to communicate with your supervisor. If they refuse to adjust or accept your schedule, please notify your [UniServ Director](#) immediately.

Sample Email (Secondary Level)

Dear **[Supervisor]**,

I'm writing to remind you that, under the updated HCEA contract, secondary school teachers are entitled to three hundred and thirty (330) minutes of self-directed planning time each week. This includes four daily periods of at least 50 consecutive minutes, plus a block of at least 40 consecutive minutes on the regular student day with shortened class periods. That leaves an additional 90 minutes that must be scheduled in blocks of 25 minutes or more.

HCEA created a helpful worksheet outlining the new planning time requirements which you can access [here](#). I've adjusted my schedule accordingly and have attached a copy to this email. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Respectfully,

[Your Name]

Sample Email (Elementary Level)

Dear **[Supervisor]**,

I'm writing to remind you that, under the updated HCEA contract, elementary school teachers are entitled to three hundred and twenty-five (325) minutes of self-directed planning time each week. At least two hundred twenty (220) minutes must be scheduled in blocks of at least fifty-five (55) consecutive minutes, and there cannot be any blocks less than 25 minutes. Additionally, at least three hundred (300) of the total minutes must occur during the student day and we must have at least thirty (30) consecutive minutes of time during each regular student day.

HCEA created a helpful worksheet outlining the new planning time requirements which you can access [here](#). I've adjusted my schedule accordingly and have attached a copy to this email. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Respectfully,

[Your Name]

Loss of Device/Technology for School-Based ESP:

Many school-based ESP staff members were forced to surrender their laptops/devices because the school system did not adequately prepare for the amount of devices that were lost or damaged during COVID. As a result, many of our school-based ESP staff are struggling to complete all of their daily assignments without proper technology. If you find that you cannot finish all of your duties because you no longer have an HCPSS-issued device, please use the templates below to communicate with your supervisor. There are two options: one for staff members who are looking to work extra hours for additional compensation, and those who do not want to work additional hours.

Sample Email (Not Seeking Additional Hours)
<p>Dear [Supervisor],</p> <p>I'm writing to inform you that I was unable to complete [insert task(s) you were unable to do] because I no longer have access to an HCPSS-issued device. With all of the other duties assigned to me today [list out job responsibilities and tasks that you prioritized], there simply wasn't enough time to complete everything without the appropriate technology. Since I am not authorized to work overtime, I plan to leave at the end of my duty day.</p> <p>Please let me know if you would like me to prioritize my tasks differently going forward or when you can assign me access during my duty day to a specific HCPSS-issued device to complete the task(s). I estimate I would need approximately [XX hours/minutes] to do the task(s) on the appropriate HCPSS device.</p> <p>Until or unless I receive a written reply stating otherwise, I will assume that my priority order of tasks is appropriate. Therefore, [insert lower-priority tasks assigned by your supervisor] will not be completed, so that I can complete the higher priority tasks.</p> <p>Respectfully,</p> <p>[Your Name]</p>

Sample Email (Seeking Compensation/Additional Hours)

Dear **[Supervisor]**,

I'm writing to inform you that I was unable to complete **[insert task(s) you were unable to do]** because I no longer have access to an HCPSS-issued device. With all of the other duties assigned to me today **[list out job responsibilities and tasks that you prioritized]**, there simply wasn't enough time to complete everything without the appropriate technology.

Am I authorized to work additional hours beyond my duty day, with access to the appropriate HCPSS technology, to finish this assignment? I anticipate that it will take approximately **[XX hours/minutes]** for me to finish the work, if I am provided access to the appropriate technology.. As a non-exempt employee, I must be paid for any additional hours worked under the Fair Labor Standards Act, so please let me know how you would like me to proceed.

Respectfully,

[Your Name]