

# School employees: give 12 months for school year?

**Those that don't: 10**

**Those that do: 22**

## The question:

Hello All,

A few years ago we set policy that school-year employees (cafeteria workers and secretaries, that work Sept. to June) would get the equivalent of a full year of cred service for working the 10 month school year - that way, someone working 20 school years would get the full 20 years service and not just 19 years, 10 months. Now, one of my board members wants to revisit the concept, and invariably the question is asked - What do other systems do? So, if you will please indulge me and tell me what you do and what your thoughts are on this issue . . . Thank you.

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[Click here to go to the webpage with our policy.](#)

Dale

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## Those that Don't

1 -In Lynn, we also will give a full year of credit for school employees that do not work during the summer. I'm not sure how you arrived at 19 years and 10 months unless you are saying that the person retires on June 30th of their 20th school year. If that were the case, we would stop service on their retirement date giving them the 19 years and 10 months. If they wanted to wait until September and retire--we would give them the full 20 years.

Gary Brenner - Lynn

2 -If a member returns in Sept. they get credit for summer, during course of career. In the year they retire, if they retire in June, that is the end of service.

**Gerard Arnaudet** - New Bedford

3 -We give them credit for the summer, though not if they don't come back. So one couldn't retire on 6/30 and get two more months of credit for that summer.

David Shipka, Northampton

4 -School employees are given 12 months of creditable service, if they return to work in the fall.

Otherwise, c/s is given for the month they left.

Ann (Wojcik) Romano, West Springfield

5 -In Berkshire County we credit 12 months of service IF the employee returns to work in September. If the employee leaves service at the end of the school year we terminate service on June 30th, so they would only get 10 months. (we have a supplementary regulation for this.)

Sheila LaBarbera, Berkshire County

6 -We will accept liability up to a full month's service or up to the first day in which the other system has accepted liability. We see this more often with the school employees.

They will leave our system on the last day of school in June and then begin with a new system as of September. In that case we would accept liability thru June 30, that would give them a full month for service for June. It is policy to give one full year creditable service for school year employees that have remained in service. If the employee left mid school year, we would only give them service based on the 12 month year. It certainly would be easier on the Teachers Retirement System if we all used a universal method in calculating creditable service for school members. I still receive request from the Teachers' asking if the service is based on a 10 month or 12 month year.

Karen Manchuso,

7 - Here are Braintree's regs dealing w/ 10 month employees

1. Credit will be granted on the basis of one (1) year, for a member in service who is employed in a full time capacity, as mandated for that position. (see addendum)

2. In the case of school employees whose position requires them to work from approximately September 01 to approximately June 30, said employees shall receive one (1) month of creditable service for each full month the employee is receiving regular compensation. Said employees shall be granted one (1) full year of service credit if they return to that position the following September. They shall be granted credit only for the months worked if they do not return after summer break.

Jeanne Martineau, Braintree

8 - Beverly gives a full year of creditable service for school employees if they return in Sept.

Barbara Wells, Beverly

9 - Southbridge gives a full year of credit for all school employees that work the full school year and return in September.

Charlene Laporte, Southbridge

10 - Gardner gives full year CS to school employees unless they retire with an effective date of the end of the school year (generally 6/30) or if they don't return for the following school year. Yes, there could be a two month shortfall.  
Clifton Melatti, Gardner

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## **Those that Do**

1 - Here in Shrewsbury we pro-rate creditable service for all members who work less than full time (35hs is the FT threshold) and we use a twelve month year for all as well, including school personnel (the majority of our PT people are School).

We pro-rate cred serv based on the number of hours the employee is hired to work per week. There are several break downs based on the number of hours. For example, a 30 hour a week member gets 10 months of cred service per year. Our regulation on this is posted on the PERAC website.

Gail Sokolowski, Shrewsbury

### **Shrewsbury Regs:**

**August 2, 2002: Service Liability** – No liability for service will be accepted for service with the Town of Shrewsbury which did not entitle the employee to membership in the Shrewsbury Retirement System (worked under 20 hours per week on a permanent basis) unless the employee subsequently becomes a member of the Shrewsbury Retirement System purchases said service while employed by the Town of Shrewsbury.

**November 29, 1994: Part-time Employees:** Members designated as part-time employees (those who work less than 37 1/2 hours per week) shall be granted creditable service according to the following:

Hours per week	Creditable Service
20 but not less than 22.5 -----	7 Months
22.5 but not less than 25.5-----	8 Months
25.5 but not less than 28.5-----	9 Months
28.5 but not less than 32-----	10 Months
32 but not less than 35-----	11 Months
35 + -----	12 Months

- Any member whose hours per week are reduced below 20 shall be granted creditable service at the 20 hour level.

**September 20, 1990: Buy-backs Buy Back of Prior Service:** The length of creditable service an individual will be eligible to buy back will be equal to actual time worked.

2 - We do give the full year for a completed school year for full-time permanent school employees whose positions do not require/permit them to work in the summer. We also base it on a ten-month rather than a twelve-month year when we calculate the benefits, so if the person works part of a school year they lose 1/10 of a year of service for every month they didn't work.

Carolyn Russo, Revere

3 - Amesbury has this policy as well. School personnel are given 12 months of CS.  
Sheryl Trezise, Amesbury

4 - Wellesley pro-rates creditable service of all part time and school year employees. Everyone is compared to full time full year. Yes, it is more work on my end but it does save the Board a lot of money. It takes members longer to become vested and keeps out 3(8)c liabilities down.  
Laurie Lizak, Wellesley

5 - We have the same policy, for individuals that continue to have that schedule, over their work history, their service will be considered to be full time. The rationale is that their benefit is also based upon a very low income, thereby, to offset them further would be unfair.  
However, if their employment changes to a full-time position, that part-time service is then adjusted against that of the full time service.  
Debra Sullivan, Plymouth

6 - Plymouth County grants a full year of credit for school years.  
Bill Farmer, Plymouth County

7 - In Salem, we give a full year of creditable service for working the 10 school months for cafeteria workers and secretaries.  
Marcia Pelletier, Salem

8 - Our policy is if the employee is in a 10 month position for then entire span of service, say 20 years, they would get the full 20 years. However, if they start in a 10 month position and switch to a 12 month, the 10 month service time would be pro-rated.  
Cheryl Dugre, Holyoke

9 - Haverhill also gives 12 months to 10 month school employees. I also know, as of last week, that the State changed their policy in 2001, I believe, and now gives any 10 month employees, after a certain date, 1 year credit for 10 month employees.  
Kathi Gallant, Haverhill

10 - We have a supplemental that allows a full year to cafeteria workers that are "full time school cafeteria workers". It is silent on secretaries who work only the school year. I believe this creditable service would fall under your "Supplemental Regulations". I find the schools have a lot of abnormalities.  
Patricia (Trycia) Ivas, Gloucester

11 - Hi Dale, below find MM's regulations:

**CREDITABLE SERVICE:**

March 7, 2001: The Minuteman Regional School District Retirement System will grant one full year of creditable service for retirement purposes to those employees of the Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District employed on a full-time basis, as defined in their specific category of work, for at least a full academic year provided that such annual employment period consists of at least one hundred and eighty days. These workers must work the entire contract year to be granted the full year of creditable service. Food Service Workers are excluded from this rule. This regulation shall apply to those clerical personnel, aides, and other employees eligible for membership in the Minuteman Regional School District Retirement System.

**Part Time School Year Employees:** Members designated as permanent part time employees (those who work 25 or more hours per week) who are to be granted a full year of creditable service [for working a full school year] shall be granted that service on a pro-rated basis calculated on the percent of the full-time hours/days as defined in the specific category of work that they actually work. Food Service Workers are excluded from this rule.

**Part Time Employees Full Year:** Members designated as permanent part time employees (those who work 25 or more hours per week) [for a full calendar year] shall be granted creditable service on a pro-rated basis calculated on the percentage of the twelve-month year that they actually work.

**Food Service Workers:** Food Service Workers (i.e. covered by the Food Service Workers Salary

Schedule) who work 25 or more hours per week and who are under contract with the Minuteman District for the entire school year shall receive one twelve-month year's credit for each full school year worked.

Food Service Workers: Any Food Service Worker whose hours per week are reduced below 25 by the District shall be granted creditable service at the 25 hour per week level.

Retroactive Creditable Service: The Minuteman Regional School District Retirement System will allow the full year credit for those employed on a full-time basis or permanent part-time basis as defined on this date retroactively to those years in which such persons were so employed. This change will reflect only those individuals who retire subsequent to this notice.

Sandor Zapolin, Minuteman Regional

12 - Wakefield gives its school year employees 12 months of creditable service for a calendar year.

Cathy Cheek, Wakefield

13 - If they always work 10 mos. during their membership they are given f/t credit. If they change to a 12 mos. position we prorate the 10 mos against the 12 mos. I've attached a copy of our recently approved supp. reg. re: creditable service that you might find helpful.

Kelly Byrne, Newton

14 - All our members receive 12 months per calendar year if they work 20 hours or more per week and earn \$5,000 or more per year.

Marianne Fiske, Greenfield

15 - Andover gives a full year creditable service for the 10 month school year.

Elena Kothman, Andover

16 - Marlborough gives a full year to school department employees who work 10 months.

Margaret Shea, Marlborough Retirement System

17 - In Lowell we give a full year of creditable service for working the 10 school months

Shannon Dowd, Lowell

18 - Lawrence gives our school employees a full year of service (12) months.

Diane Cockroft, Lawrence

19 - All of our 10 month employees receive full year (12 months) service.

Joseph Juppé, Waltham

20 - In Brookline we give a full year of service for the 10 months worked.

Frank Zecha, Brookline

21 - Pittsfield school employees receive a full year creditable service for each year worked.

Karen Lancto, Pittsfield

22 - Concord also gives one year of credit for school department employees working 25 hours per week or more, 180 days per year. We also pro-rate creditable service if that employee drops below 25 hours per week. The pro-ration is based on full-time employment (40 hours per week).

Linda Boucher, Concord

## **Not involved**

Hi Dale, we do not have this issue. I did notice that when you go PERAC's website under Boards and look at the regulations of other Boards, that there are a few that give full year credit although the employee may not work full time all year.

Joseph Petty, Mass Housing

I do not have school, fire or police.

Ruth E. O'Meara, Mass Water Resources

## **Deeper Discussion(s)**

Thanks Dale for compiling this, it was very informative to read, but you've probably been asked this by now(?) A lot of the systems, including ours, that you have as don'ts, DO give 12 months for the school year. The only time some of these system's (like ours) don't, is when the member doesn't return after the summer as a member of the same system. It was unclear to me if the do's on the list don't do that or do do that. I think I'm starting to sound like the lyrics to a song... : )

David Shipka, Northampton

Hi David,

Thought provoking, isn't it. It is very interesting reading all the different approaches and then simplifying a categorization. In my mind, when someone has to start a new school year (one day?) in order to get a full year of service for the prior school year, it went to the "don't " camp. Here's my thinking: It is somewhat disruptive to the school administration to have someone quit/retire after the first day of school, and, equally disruptive for the employee to not be able to start a new job until they go back to their old one for just one-more-day. It also seems odd to the employee that if they give the retirement system just one-more-day after two and a half months without working, the retirement system will give them the same 12 months they gave them for all the previous school years.

I was starting to hear the lyrics too . . . :)

Dale Kowacki, Franklin Regional

Yep, I agree. But I feel that the obvious intent of our regulation was to not penalize full-time school employees for the fact that they are not able to work summers (as some have mentioned, they're already getting a lower salary because they don't do summers,) not to give them two free months at the end of their careers. As I think back, I only recall once that somebody came back after the summer for just a short time and retired, but even in that case it was a couple of weeks if memory serves. And also IIRC that person had to come back to be vested but I don't remember the details. Not that any of that makes it less "strange" but I don't think they did it just to get two extra months just because they could. As we all know, there's no easy way to make all of the pieces fit perfectly in this business!

David Shipka, Northampton