



Mr. Alan Guidon  
Clerk to the Committee  
Joint Committee on Education and Skills  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

21/03/2019

Dear Mr. Guidon,

I am writing to you to offer clarification in relation to an aspect of the Fórsa submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills and its deliberations into matters affecting non-teaching staff in schools.

In relation to the section on SNAs and their requirement to work 72 hours, we felt it prudent to offer some additional clarification to ensure that there is no misunderstanding.

I am taking this opportunity to state, unequivocally, the Fórsa position in relation to the bank of 72 additional work hours for SNAs eluded to in our submission of 5th March. Previous pay agreements did create a requirement on SNAs to work an additional bank of 72 hours in a school year but only in circumstances where there was additional SEN work to be carried out. Where such additional, appropriate work exists, SNAs are required to do it. Where there is no such additional work, the requirement does not exist. The 72 hours are not and never have been a target. However, the difficulty for SNAs has been created in circumstances where there is a belief that the 72 hours are a target and work, including non-SNA work, must be found to ensure that the 72 hour target is met. It has become a particularly egregious problem that, in many cases, SNAs are being asked to carry out work that is not SEN-related work in order to complete these hours. It is however, very much a mistake to consider the 72 hour a target as it is not what the SNA sector signed up to. It is imperative that the Oireachtas Committee understands the difficulty that the existence of the bank of 72 hours has caused for members and the ill-will that is caused when they are used in circumstances where they need not be and in a manner that is not allowed for. As alluded to, Fórsa representatives are open to holding a discussion in relation to the 72 hours, whether their existence is necessary and, if they are, what clarity can be brought to their purpose. In the Fórsa submission, a reference was made to fundraising. This is a suggestion that we now wish to withdraw as, on reflection, it is not in keeping with the spirit of the purpose of the 72 hours. Ultimately, however, our members very unequivocally want them gone.

We look forward to the opportunity of discussing this further with the Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'S' and 'C' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

**Sean Carabini**  
**Assistant General Secretary**