



GFT, AFT Local 1581
Together We Win!

Timothy Fedenko, President
Corazon Mucho, Secretary

Sanjay Sharma, Vice President
Mary Jean Vigilante, Treasurer

September 30, 2026

Members of the 38th Guam Legislature
Guam Congress Building, 163 Chalan Santo Papa
Hagatña, Guam 96910

Re: Bill No. 351-38 (COR), definition of covered personnel

Honorable Speaker and Members of I Mina' Trentai Ocho na Liheslaturan Guåhan:

The Guam Federation of Teachers supports Bill 351-38. We ask for one change to the amended version. Define "covered personnel" in §3137(a)(1) as all employees of the Guam Department of Education.

We asked this Legislature to begin with educators for a reason. The Department opened this school year with 105 teacher vacancies. The pipeline behind those vacancies is thin. The University of Guam is not graduating enough teacher candidates to fill them. I posit that the main reason is pay. A graduate who enters teaching in Guam starts at about twenty percent below what that same graduate earns entering another profession. Young people on this island are making a rational choice, and our classrooms are absorbing the result.

Beginning with educators was not meant to exclude anyone else. Our intent when this bill came forward was to cover everyone under the collective bargaining agreement and everyone on the Educator Pay Plan. The amended definition does not reach that far. It replaces a general description of the workforce with a list of position titles.

I began my career as a school librarian. Over the course of American education that title was merged with media specialist. The bill as introduced named librarians and media specialists. The amended list names neither.

Other titles came off the list as well. School nurses, school psychologists, preschool teachers, curriculum coordinators, and instructional consultants were named when the bill was introduced and are not named now. Substitute teachers became on-call substitute teachers. Instructors became vocational instructors. Program directors became Head Start program directors. Each of those edits narrows who is protected.

There is also the group that appeared on neither list. **School aides** sit beside the students with the greatest needs and often know them best. **Clerks** keep the front office running. **Custodians, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, and school safety staff** keep our buildings open and our children safe. They fall outside this bill because their pay is set under the general pay plan administered by the Department of Administration. The Department of Administration and the Superintendent of the Guam Department of Education asked this Legislature not to act for educators alone. We agree with that much. The way to honor it is to cover the Department.

Covering all employees is the simplest measure available to you. It leaves no current title behind. It covers every title this Department creates in the years ahead without a future Legislature having to amend the law again. It also matches what the amended bill already does elsewhere. Subsection (d) as amended measures every position other than classroom teacher against data published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, comparable Government of Guam positions, and comparable employers on Guam. The standard for the rest of the workforce is already written. Only the definition holds it back.

We respectfully ask that §3137(a)(1) be amended to read:

(1) "Covered personnel" means all persons employed by the Guam Department of Education, including, but not limited to, instructional, professional, administrative, technical, clerical, and support personnel.

We further ask that the sentence excluding personnel whose classification and compensation are established under a general pay plan administered by the Department of Administration be struck.

Cover the Department. Then no employee of our schools has to wait for a future Legislature to add a title.

In solidarity,



Timothy Fedenko

President

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