

#1 DayTA



A Day in the Life of Dot Futrell

Shamrock Gardens Elementary School

Dedicated to all of North Carolina's hardworking teacher assistants,
and to the children whose lives they touch.

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In the summer of 2015, North Carolina Senate leaders threatened to eliminate most of the state's teacher assistants.

On August 27, Senator Jeff Jackson visited Charlotte's Shamrock Gardens Elementary to learn more about teacher assistants and their jobs. He spent the day with Dorothy Futrell. It was a great choice.

Dot Futrell has been a key part of the Shamrock staff for nearly two decades. She lives near the school, and knows students and their families better than anyone else. She teaches lessons. She does paperwork. She deals with discipline. She oversees school transportation. Outside of work, she spends countless hours designing and creating decorations for school events.

Jackson shared the day's experiences on Facebook and Twitter, at #1DayTA.

In the end, the General Assembly voted to keep most of the TA jobs.

Jeff Jackson - NC Senate District 37

8:27 AM

The Senate plan is to cut 8,500 teacher assistants. So I thought I would spend a day with one in Charlotte to see what her day is like. I'll keep you posted. #1DayTA



Ronisha Wood-Glover:

Oh, you're going to work today Jeff. Mrs. Dorothy Futrell does a lot.

Milly McLennan Cort:

Ms. Futrell wears a lot of hats. She is a vital part of what happens at SGE everyday. Good luck keeping up with her! Thank you for spending your time learning about the important role she plays in the lives of our children.

8:54 AM

Here she is greeting students, counting them off the bus, and listening to someone talk to her on the radio.



Duane Wilson: Great lady. Look out Jeff, you may get bus duty also. Our schools need the TAs.

Erika Funk: I love this! Thank you Mr. Jackson. Most of all thank you Ms. Futrell!!!

8:55 AM

Going to every class, resolving transportation issues.



9:03 AM

She hasn't stopped moving since 7:30 am. Maybe 3 dozen conversations with students, teachers, and parents so far.

9:08 AM

So far nothing she's done could be considered "optional." If she goes away, the workload will stay.

9:16 AM

Little girl just walked over and gave Ms. Futrell a hug. Speaks volumes about how established she is in the lives of these kids.

9:57 AM

Keeping kids in line, in more ways than one.



Mary Irene Douglas:

I worked with Ms. Futrell 10 years ago . . . she is kind, caring and a dynamo!

Susan Walker Raynor:

A grand lady!

Cheri Futrell-Crafton:

Awwwww look at my mommy!!!

10:42 AM

I committed to not sit down until she does, but I'm starting to glance at empty chairs. Feeling tempted . . . must stay strong . . .



11:02 AM

It's official: I wore the wrong shoes. Constant movement keeping up with Ms. Futrell.



Marian Watts: *Oops! You're forgiven, though. Rookie mistake!!*

Justin Good: *And I'd say the wrong pants too! From one guy in a school to another. . . beware of the cafeteria seats and dry erase markers. You'll rack up a pretty high dry cleaning bill!*

Susan Jones: *First rule of teaching, wear comfortable shoes.*

11:54 AM

Finally! Lunchtime.



Julie Summerell: *That actually looks delicious.*

11:56 AM

We meet again, spork.



12:54 PM

Our TA, Ms. Futrell, is leading a small group in a writing exercise about the Titanic. The other teacher can lead a separate lesson at the same time. That's the whole idea.



Danny Cameron: *Nothing brings home the situation with TAs, the NCGA, budget etc. like your introducing us to Mrs. Futrell. Thanks!*

Jenn Kirby: *Ms. Futrell you rock! (Jeff you aren't too bad either. Thank you for what you're doing.)*

12:57 PM

She has the time to talk to each student.



1:03 PM

"He listens to me because he knows I know his Dad, his Aunt, and his Grandfather."



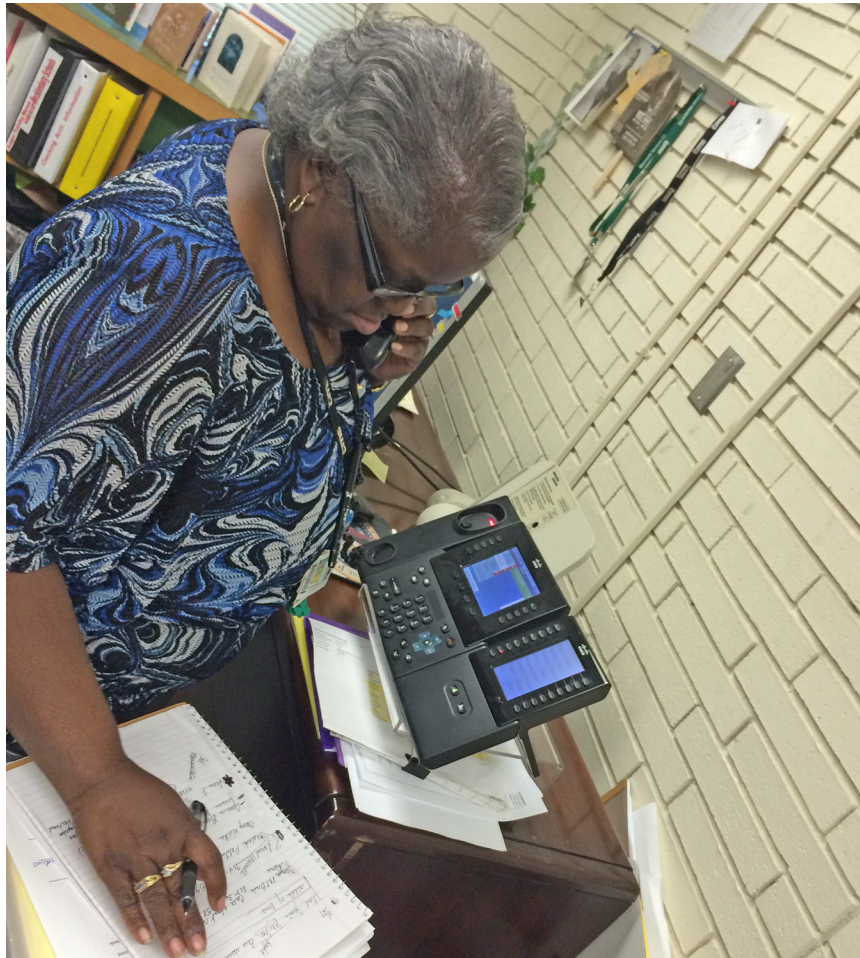
***Leigh Mayhew:** This dear lady needs a raise!*

1:23 PM

Ms. Futrell has endless patience. I served with the army in Afghanistan and these kids are stressing me out a little.

1:49 PM

Ms. Futrell was just able to spend 20 minutes resolving a discipline issue. The teacher would have had to stop class.



Now she's calling a parent about a "bus incident."
Could've been me at that age . . .

1:56 PM

As she is carrying supplies down the hall, a teacher spots Ms. Futrell, runs out and says, “Will you watch my class for a minute?” Ms. Futrell comes in and immediately picks up with the lesson.



Jessica Gibbs: Thank you for sharing Ms. Futrell's important work. She is tireless and you've shown what an essential role she plays in the lives of the students and teachers of her school.

2:00 PM

I just want to emphasize that, other than a quick lunch, she has not stopped working all day. Not for a minute.

3:55 PM

End of the day. Ms. Futrell gives a word of inspiration to a kid who had a tough day.



Me: "What do you do at the end of a long day?"

Ms. Futrell: "If it's real long, I'll have a Pepsi. Not a Diet Pepsi, a real Pepsi."

More comments

Marti Norwood Shope: Ms. Futrell and Jeff Jackson need to go home, put their feet up, enjoy a cold, bubbly Pepsi!

Cassandra Ballard Buchanan:Go on girl ! Shamrock Gardens still making news...DOT FUTRELL... CONGRATULATIONS. !!!

Jennifer Hegeman: And Dorothy Futrell's day does not end here. She works after school and at home where in her own unpaid time she does things like track the Compact Points earned by volunteer parents for a celebration at the end of the year and creates crafts for use and decorative display at school events. Her son once told me the house is full of paper, cardstock and other craft supplies.

Rebecca Cheatham: SGE without Mrs. Futrell won't be right, we will be off kilter. She has given such incredible, much-needed support to my family, both academically and emotionally. She is what every TA should aspire to be

Shannon Radley: I only had the privilege of working with Ms. Futrell for a summer, but life without her would have been awful!

Ginger Baity Ervin: Ms. Futrell rocks!

Delores Reid-Smith: Looking good Dot!!!!

Sheila Splann: Ms Dorothy Futrell is awesome!! We are so lucky to have her at Shamrock!

Mary Rodriguez: She is a wonderful TA.

Noreen Grimesey Hill: Maybe Ms. Futrell would consider a run for office?

Ynove Logan: Ms. Futrell is AWESOME!!!!

Alisha Nikki Bigby: I LOVE Ms. Futrell!

Charisse Workmen: We need her!!!

Melissa Embrey Jordan: Really loved following along with Ms. Futrell's busy day today. So very thankful for educators like her! She is a blessing to the children of North Carolina.

Deborah Coldren Murphy: Dot is one of a kind and a legend at Shamrock. She is awesome!!!

Robin Hankins: Ms. Futrell is fabulous!!

Teresa Mabry-Crawford: Definitely a legend!

Lisa Branch: What a wonderful person!

Martica Hartley: You are fantastic Mrs. Futrell.

Lisa H Carter: Dorothy Futrell you are truly one of a kind. We are blessed to have you at Shamrock.

