

School Paraprofessional Advisory Council

Tuesday, January 24, 2012

In Attendance: Rhonda Kempton, SDE; Loyola Welsh, SDE; Iris White, SDE; Annie MacDonald, UE; Regina Birdsell, CAS; Marcia Cattanach, AFT Connecticut; Bill Walkauskas, CSEA;

CREC Update: CREC is hosting a train the trainer for the new School Climate/Bullying COMPASS Module on February 14th, from 9-12 at CREC Coltsville.

SERC Update: The paraprofessional briefs are in Publications and should be finalized soon. The plan is to post these briefs on the SDE and SERC websites and to also email to district contacts.

SDE Update: Iris attended last week's RESC-SERC CALI meeting with the staff developers regarding COMPASS training. There has not been as many district requests for training because it is hard to get paraprofessionals released and sometimes work rules interfere (paraprofessionals are not paid to stay the extra time). Rhonda suggested including paraprofessionals as a component of the improvement plan for monitoring. The memo to Superintendents requesting the names of the District Contacts for Paraprofessionals was emailed last week. Iris will be attending the National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals Conference February 29th-March 3rd in San Antonio. CSEA is sending three paraprofessionals, so far. They have had difficulty getting paraprofessionals released. The night before the conference, there will be a leadership session which is a networking opportunity for participants to hear what other states are doing around paraprofessional development.

The Commissioner's State Board of Ed approved reorganization chart is posted on the SDE website: www.ct.gov/sde. At his all staff meeting before the State Board of Education meeting, the commissioner did mention the importance of professional development for all staff, including paraprofessionals.

Recommendations and Report to Commissioner: Council made the following revisions to the report:

- Teacher and administrator preparation is a priority for both the Governor and the Commissioner. In particular, the need for teacher candidates to have more field experiences earlier in their program.
- Administrator preparation needs to include information on current legislative requirements for professional development of all educators, including paraprofessionals.
- We wanted to stay positive in the report, but also try to emphasize our desire to have paraprofessional resources distributed to a wider audience.

CT Paraprofessional of the Year Rubric: Iris will reference the National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals Model to explain the origin of the 6 criteria items. A seventh item was added (Other Supporting Information) to give paraprofessionals an opportunity to demonstrate other achievements.

Regina will develop a draft application form. Our goal is to have the information packet sent out to districts the beginning of March with a deadline date of early June for submission.

Next meeting: Tuesday, March 13th, 9-11 at CAS, Cheshire.