

**School Paraprofessional Advisory Council**  
**Tuesday, November 13, 2012**  
**CAS, Cheshire**

**In Attendance:** Stefanie Carbone, Region 10; Donna Morelli, CREC; Annie MacDonald, CILU; Loyola Welsh, MEUI; Marcia Cattanach, AFT Connecticut; Stacey Cronk, CES; Regina Birdsell, CAS; Rhonda Kempton, CSDE; Bill Walkauskas, CSEA; Tenisha Baker, East Hartford; Janet Scialdone, CREC; Iris White, CSDE

Welcome to Tenisha Baker, Connecticut's First Paraprofessional of the Year!

**CREC Update:**

- CREC's online courses for SLPAs and paraprofessionals are moving forward
- A COMPASS Module on Common Core State Standards is in development. Once Donna receives the draft she will check to see that it addresses IEPs.
- CREC is receiving more requests for in district professional development, which is a good sign.

**SERC Update:**

- SERC is not present today because they are preparing for tomorrow's conference. Iris did meet with Wendy Simmons, one of SERC's Assistant Directors, to discuss how SERC can support our work. SERC has the capability to develop on line narrated presentations, using the software, ARTICULATE. One presentation that might be valuable to paraprofessionals is "What Every Paraprofessional Should Know About IEPs." In light of the work that both CREC and SERC are doing around professional development for paraprofessionals, it might be helpful to have both groups sit down and discuss how they can coordinate efforts.

## **CSDE Update:**

- CSDE just hired two new Chiefs. Debra Kurshan will be the Chief Turnaround Officer and Dianna Roberge-Wentzell will be the Chief Academic Officer.
- Rhonda will share a PowerPoint that Pat Anderson, consultant in the Bureau of Special Education, developed on the alignment between Student Success Plans, Health plans, and IEPs.
- The Common Core of Teaching uses the language: Guiding and Coaching instead of teacher supervision to avoid. The Connecticut Guidelines and professional development modules uses the term “supervision” so we need to be clear that we clarify that distinction between supervision in terms of guiding and coaching and a supervisory role, i.e. those with 092 certification.
- April 3<sup>rd</sup> is national Paraprofessional and Interpreter Day. We should begin to think about how we want to acknowledge the day and provide guidance for districts on how they can recognize the staff in their schools.

## **Iris asked the paraprofessionals on the council if there were other areas of concern expressed by paras in their schools and unions:**

- Paraprofessional access to IEPs continues to be an issue. The Council recommends that an attorney with a background in Special Education write a short summary on the legalities of the IEP, so paraprofessionals have backing when they are denied access. We also need to provide examples-best practices of how districts share the IEP information with their paraprofessionals.
- Rhonda will share a PowerPoint that Pat Anderson, consultant in the Bureau of Special Education, developed on the alignment between Student Success Plans, Health plans, and IEPs.
- Paras being moved from classroom to classroom
- Paras asked to modify materials. Council recommends that CSDE provide a legal brief on the appropriateness (or not) of paraprofessionals modifying assignments.
- Assignment of new paraprofessionals to most volatile/neediest students with no training.

- Paraprofessionals providing interventions without training and ongoing coaching and support

**Recommendations for annual report to Commissioner and General Assembly:**

- **Reinforce our recommendations for appropriate support and evaluation of paraprofessionals should be integrated into both pre-service teacher preparation and administrator preparation programs.**
- **Reinforce our recommendation that the TEAM Module 5 incorporate effective collaboration with paraprofessionals.**
- **Provide districts with specific examples/methods that can use to help support the role of the paraprofessional. How districts can help them be successful-provide scenarios and best practices.**
- **How paraprofessionals contribute to student success and academic achievement should be the overarching rationale/framework for all of our recommendations. Iris will work on the wording for these recommendations and email to the council before our next meeting on Tuesday, January 8<sup>th</sup>.**