



February 2014 Update for District Contacts for Paraeducator Issues



The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), established the District Contacts for Paraeducator Issues to disseminate information of importance to paraeducators and their supervisors. The focus of this newsletter is to provide resources for more effective teacher and paraeducator collaboration.

Get Updates and Stay Informed

The CSDE and the School Paraprofessional Advisory Council are starting a Connecticut Paraeducator electronic mailing list to provide updates and help paraeducators across the state, stay informed.

To join this electronic mailing list, send an e-mail to:

Iris White, Education Consultant,
Turnaround Office,
Connecticut State Department
of Education, at:
iris.white@ct.gov

and, in the subject line, please type:
SUBSCRIBE CT PARA.

Please include the following information in the e-mail:

First and Last Name
School District
School

NOTE: This list is solely for the purpose of sharing information from the CSDE regarding Paraeducators. The list may be shared with other organizations that provide professional development opportunities for paraeducators. It is expected that the number of messages will be minimal over the course of a year. We ask that you post, forward and share this information as appropriate.

Training to Support Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders

The Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Council (ASDAC) was formed in the Fall of 2013 to provide guidance to the Commissioner of the Department of Developmental Services regarding implementation of a statewide service delivery model for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders and their families. Information regarding the work of ASDAC is available at: <http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2730&q=521856>. A subcommittee has been tasked with determining the training needs of professionals from various areas of service delivery, we are requesting your participation in a needs assessment regarding areas where you feel you may need training to better support individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder across the lifespan.

This survey is very brief and we ask that you please complete by Wednesday, February 12. Please complete the survey only once.

Thank you.

<https://www.snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=138996885604>

LEARN Offering Internet Based ParaPro Assessment

LEARN, a Regional Educational Service Center (RESA), located in Old Lyme, Connecticut, continues to offer the Internet-Based ParaPro Assessment. Each of the following dates are scheduled from 1-4 p.m.

February 14, 2014;
March 6, 2014;
April 9, 2014; and
May 7, 2014.

Registration Fee is \$75.00

For more information and to register, click:

http://www.escweb.net/ct_learn/catalog/event.aspx?mode=subject&order=asc&scheduled=1&id=349&eventId=45298&referrer=browse.aspx

For additional questions, please contact Irma Wilhelm, at iwilhelm@learn.k12.ct.us.



Basic Strategies for Clear Communication Between Teacher and Paraeducator

There are a number of elements that must be present in any situation to ensure clear channels of communication. Some are commonplace and generally well known. Others are things we take for granted, and if the members of the team are not careful and do not pay attention, positive communication can be inhibited. For example:

- * The attitude and feelings of both, the teacher and paraeducator need to be known, respected, and understood. Teachers and paraeducators need to deal openly with their attitudes and feelings toward their roles and duties, their attitudes toward the students they work with, their attitudes toward instructional styles and management and their attitudes toward the value of the other person's contributions. When feelings are not shared and openly communicated, the nature of the relationship will not grow and the team will not be effective.
- * An understanding of the similarities and differences between the people involved in the team must be recognized and understood ranging from different points of view about educational strategies to different values, different cultural and religious heritage, different levels of education and experience and other factors that affect the working relationship.
- * The teacher and paraeducator should actively seek to develop and share a common vocabulary and system of non-verbal cues.
- * The teacher must make sure that directions and expectations are clearly understood and that the paraeducator is able to perform the assigned task prior to implementing the activity in the classroom.
- * The paraeducator must be willing to ask for clarification of assistance if the assignment is not understood.
- * The teacher should determine what special interest, strengths and training the paraeducator has that will complement and enhance his/her own skills and improve the delivery of instructional programs to students.
- * The team must actively work to create a climate of cooperation, trust, respect, and loyalty by meeting regularly to discuss procedures and techniques that will establish and maintain open channels of communication. Administration can assist in this effort by providing time, and training for teacher-paraeducator teams.

Adapted from Pickett, A.L. (1986), *A Training Program to Prepare Teachers to Supervise and Work More Effectively with Paraprofessional Personnel*, New York: Center for Advanced Study in Education, City University of New York.