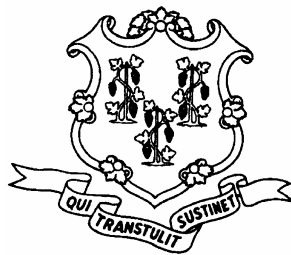


Guidelines
for
Training and Support of
Paraprofessionals
Working with Students,
Birth to 21

“Working Draft”

Developed by

The Connecticut State Department of Education
and
The Connecticut Birth to Three System



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INTRODUCTION

Paraprofessionals are essential workforce members of early intervention and school programs. Identified through a myriad of titles and job descriptions, paraprofessionals' roles and responsibilities have evolved along with the need for increased instructional supports for diverse learners. The number of students with disabilities in least restrictive environments has increased significantly; paraprofessionals often play key roles to ensure successful provision of services. Moreover, as the needs of the children and students are becoming more complex, the skills required of paraprofessionals are expanding. Traditionally, paraprofessionals have been undervalued in their roles as service providers. As paraprofessional roles and responsibilities continue to grow, systems must work diligently to ensure high quality personnel and services.

Paraprofessionals are a significant workforce in Connecticut. The total number of full time equivalent (FTE) instructional paraprofessionals working in Connecticut schools during 2002-2003 was 12,946. Non-instructional paraprofessionals numbered 23,766. There were 7,381 instructional paraprofessionals who were designated as special education paraprofessionals (CT State Department of Education, ED 162 Non-Certified Staff Report, 2002).

RATIONALE FOR PARAPROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES

In November 2000, the Connecticut State Advisory Council on Special Education (SAC), requested that the “State Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services, create a task force to develop standards for paraprofessionals who work with students with disabilities and that the task force should include representation from school administrators, regular and special education teachers, parents, private special education facilities and paraprofessionals” (B. Moran, personal communication, 2000).

The Commissioner of Education, Dr. Theodore Sergi, responded to this request by charging the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) Council to review the request and examine the issues identified. In March 2001, the CSPD Council decided to reconvene a CSPD Task Force Committee to review reports/recommendations regarding the training, responsibilities and standards for paraprofessionals. The goal was identified as “the development of guidelines for public school agencies, private providers and early intervention and support systems, including services to children and youth with disabilities” (T. Maida and M. Kirner, personal communication, 2001). The Paraprofessional Task Force, comprised of representatives from CSPD, SAC, the educational community and parents, convened in September 2001.

These Guidelines pertain to paraprofessionals who assist certified or licensed staff in the delivery of instructional and related services to children, students and their families. This document does not address training or supports for staff that primarily have non-instructional duties such as clerical support, recess or hallway monitoring, transportation or food service.

Although the Task Force that developed these Guidelines was charged with providing guidance for staff that have a primary responsibility for working with children with disabilities, this document may be helpful to a broader audience. The Task Force believes that most paraprofessionals interact with children/students with and without disabilities, regardless of their assignment.

The Guidelines do not address individuals with the job title of speech aide or assistant, occupational therapy assistant (OTR), or physical therapy assistant (PTA). Guidance or training, use and supervision of individuals with these job classifications are addressed in the following State of Connecticut, Department of Education documents: “A Guide for the Training, Use and Supervision of Speech-Language Pathology Aides and Assistants in Connecticut” (1999), “Guidelines for Occupational Therapy in Educational Settings” (1999) and “Guidelines for Physical Therapy in Educational Settings” (1999).

These Guidelines are intended to assist Connecticut Birth to Three programs and school districts in clarifying paraprofessionals’ instructional and support roles and responsibilities, and in identifying methods and resources for training, supervision and evaluation. The Guidelines should be used as a tool for local school districts and programs to define and execute a comprehensive support program for paraprofessionals and for staff who support paraprofessionals.

TERMINOLOGY AND JOB TITLES

The Task Force chose to retain the title of “paraprofessional” for this document despite much discussion that the term “paraeducator” might better represent the staff roles and responsibilities addressed in these Guidelines. The term “paraprofessional” continues to be used in both the *Individual with Disabilities Education Act Reauthorization of 1997* and *Elementary and Secondary Schools Act* legislation. Through earlier surveys, the 1989 Connecticut Committee to Study the Role of Paraprofessionals identified more than twenty-five job titles for paraprofessionals. Today, many schools and providers continue to use multiple terms as a means to define job roles, responsibilities, compensation and benefit packages, and career ladders. These delineations are often helpful and may be reflected in contract language and policy and procedures for the program or school. Nonetheless, a job title is not as important as the definition of the roles, responsibilities, qualifications and level of supervision required by the staff person. Confusion over job titles often stems from confusion over roles and responsibilities, not titles.

For the purpose of this document the following terminology is used throughout:

Paraprofessional: an instructional assistant, instructional associate, Infant Toddler Family Specialist, early intervention assistant, aide, teacher’s aide, special education aide, one-on-one aide, teacher assistant, paraeducator, instructor, tutor, job coach or educational support personnel.

Schools: school districts; public, private, magnet, charter schools; RESC programs; preschools; and community-based early childhood programs.

Programs: an agency or organization approved by the CT Birth to Three System to provide early intervention services to children with disabilities and their families.

Professional: a certified special or regular education teacher or licensed support staff such as a speech pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, school psychologist, school social worker or school nurse.

Student: infant, toddler, youth or adolescent involved in an educational or intervention program.

Task Force: the current Paraprofessional Task Force convened in September, 2001 by the Connecticut Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) Council and the Connecticut State Advisory Council on Special Education (SAC).

RECENT HISTORY OF PARAPROFESSIONALS IN CONNECTICUT

Prior to the convening of this Task Force, there had been two formalized efforts to address the issue of paraprofessional support for students with disabilities in Connecticut. The first initiative was a committee formed in 1989 to study the role of paraprofessionals and to provide advice to the Commissioner of Education regarding the preparation, qualifications, role, function and ongoing development of the state's paraprofessional workforce. This committee led to the development of a definition of a paraprofessional, a listing of recommended minimum qualifications for school paraprofessionals, a statement on career ladders for paraprofessionals and recommendations regarding the role of paraprofessionals from both state and local perspectives.

The second effort was a subcommittee established by the CSPD Council in 1995. The mission of this subcommittee was "to develop and disseminate a framework for training paraprofessionals in education, early intervention, related services and personal care that can be used at the state, regional and local levels" (CSPD Task Force on Paraprofessionals Report, 1996). The 1995 Task Force recommended the following to the Steering Committee of the CSPD:

- *Assemble a small group to draft guidelines for paraprofessional employment;*
- *Compile a biography of training materials and resources as well as a directory of agencies/organizations that provide training to paraprofessionals in Connecticut;*
- *Continue to offer training to paraprofessionals and those with whom they work through SERC and other agencies;*
- *Invite faculty from institutions of higher education to participate in a symposium devoted to the topic of preparing paraprofessional staff;*
- *Encourage the ConnCASE leadership group to focus their attention on the issues and needs of paraprofessionals; and*
- *Encourage the CSPD Steering Committee to continue to address the issues of preparing pre-service teachers to work with paraprofessionals and to investigate methods of recruiting and retaining paraprofessionals (CSPD, 1996).*

For the purpose of this document, the following is the definition of a paraprofessional in Connecticut schools or programs as described in the 1990 Committee report with minor revisions and an endorsement by the current Task Force:

A paraprofessional is an employee who assists teachers and/or other professional educators or therapists in the delivery of instructional and related services to students. The paraprofessional works under the direct supervision of the teacher or other certified or licensed professional. The ultimate responsibility for the design, implementation and evaluation of instructional programs, including assessment of student progress, is a collaborative effort of certified and licensed staff.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Paraprofessionals were formally identified in federal legislation with the *1997 Amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (P.L. 105-17).

Subpart B - State & Local Eligibility: Specific Conditions, Personnel Standards

34 C.F.R. Section 300.136 (f)

“A State may allow paraprofessionals and assistants who are appropriately trained and supervised, in accordance with State law, regulations, or written policy, in meeting the requirements of this part to be used to assist in the provision of special education and related services to children with disabilities under Part B of the Act”.

Part C - Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

34 C.F.R. Section 303.360 (b)

“The personnel development of this part must: (3) provide for the training of a variety of personnel needed to meet the requirements of this part, including public and private providers, primary referral source, paraprofessionals, and persons who will serve as case coordinators”.

From the IDEA 1997 Statute:

Part D Subpart 1 – State Program Improvement Grants for Children with Disabilities

34 C.F.R. Section 653 (C) (3) (D) (i).

(C) Each State improvement plan shall: (3) describe the strategies the State will use to address the needs identified under subsection (b) including:

(D) how the State will address the identified needs for in-service and pre-service preparation to ensure that all personnel who work with children with disabilities (including professional and paraprofessional personnel who provide special education, general education, related services, or early intervention services) have the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the needs of children with disabilities including a description of how:

(i) the State will prepare professionals and paraprofessionals in the area of early intervention with the content knowledge and collaborative skills needed to meet the needs of infants and toddlers with disabilities.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION FOR TITLE I PARAPROFESSIONALS H.R. 1: *NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT OF 2001*

Title I Paraprofessional Requirements:

This recently enacted legislation identifies specific qualifications for paraprofessionals with instructional duties in any program supported by Title I funds. The following information is outlined in Circular Letter C-15, Series 2002-2003 from Commissioner Sergi to Superintendents and Principals in Connecticut Public Schools. The following requirements only apply to paraprofessionals engaged in instructional support who are paid with Title I funds in a Title I targeted assistance school and to all paraprofessionals with instructional duties in a Title I school-wide program school (regardless of the funding source). Those paraprofessionals who do not provide instructional support to teachers, such as translators and parent liaisons, are exempt from these requirements.

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) Requirements:

“Title I” Paraprofessionals Providing Instructional Assistance (Title I Funded in Title I Targeted Assistance Schools and Paraprofessionals, Regardless of Funding Source, in Title I School-wide Program Schools):

1. Any “Title I” paraprofessional described above, providing instructional assistance, who is newly hired after January 8, 2002, must have the following:
 - A High School diploma or General Educational Development (GED) diploma,
AND
 - Two years of college credit;
OR
 - An Associate’s (or higher) degree.

2. For “Title I” paraprofessionals hired before January 2002 as described above, providing instructional assistance, each paraprofessional must have earned a high school diploma or GED to maintain current employment. By January 8, 2006, each Connecticut Title I funded paraprofessional in a Title I targeted assistance school or any paraprofessional providing instructional assistance in a Title I school-wide program must meet one of the following requirements:
 - Have two years of college credit;
OR
 - Hold an Associate’s (or higher) degree;
OR
 - Pass a State Board of Education adopted Paraprofessional Assessment, which assesses content knowledge in mathematics, reading and writing, and an understanding of how to assist in the instruction of these topics.

ParaPro Assessment:

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has worked collaboratively with 16 other states and the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in the development of a state assessment for paraprofessionals that meets the federal requirements. The resulting *ParaPro Assessment* was adopted by the State Board of Education in December 2002, and is effective as of January 2003.

The ParaPro Assessment measures skills and knowledge in reading, math and writing, and measures the ability to use these skills and knowledge to support instruction. The ParaPro Assessment is a 2 ½ hour multiple choice test with 90 questions. This test is available in two formats. The paper and pencil version is offered six times a year at select locations throughout the state; test results are available in four weeks. The assessment may also be completed through the Internet, with unofficial results immediately available upon completion. At the time of this publication, the cost of the assessment is \$40.00. A school district receiving Title I funds may use these funds to pay for the test and to support paraprofessionals in meeting the requirement through ongoing training and professional development. The ParaPro Assessment can be retaken if an individual does not pass. There are no limits on the number of times a paraprofessional can take the test. A paraprofessional must obtain a passing score of 457 to meet the Connecticut standard. The paper and pencil version of the test can be retaken after 60 days. The Internet version can be retaken after 30 days. Individuals planning to retake the test should participate in the same type of remedial intervention such as attending a workshop or use of the study guides prior to retaking the test.

Paraprofessionals employed prior to January 2002 should take the time needed to prepare for this assessment. The requirement for passing the test does not go into effect until January 2006. Several opportunities are available to support paraprofessionals in test preparation. ETS offers the *Test at a Glance*, which includes a sample test explanation, format, content and practice questions. This sample test and additional tutorial support is available on the ETS website at www.ets.org/parapro/index.html. There is also a study guide available for purchase from ETS. The study guide contains detailed descriptions of test content, tutorial assistance, and a complete practice test (with answers and explanation of answers). Preparation workshops are also available through the Regional Education Service Centers (RESCs). The CSDE highly recommends that paraprofessionals go through either of these preparation options or through options provided by local agencies/districts prior to taking the assessment.

In addition, NCLB regulations (200.60) require LEAs to use a portion of Title I funds for professional development to ensure that teachers and paraprofessionals meet the NCLB requirements for qualified personnel. Parents may request information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teacher, including whether the child is provided services by a paraprofessional and, if so, their qualifications. Additional information on Title I paraprofessionals is contained in Appendix C: "Draft on Non-Regulatory Guidance: Title One Paraprofessionals".

CONNECTICUT LEGISLATION FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Connecticut Regulations concerning children requiring Special Education [RSCA Section 10-76d-2 (g)] require the following for school-based paraprofessionals: Provision shall be made for the direct supervision of each aide in special education by a person certified or licensed in the area of specialization to which such aide is assigned.

The Connecticut Birth to Three System identifies Personnel Standards for qualified personnel working in the early intervention system [17a-248 (10)]. See Appendix A. The Personnel Standards identify two categories of paraprofessionals, an Early Intervention Assistant and an Early Intervention Associate. “These personnel can be valued team members and work successfully to support and extend the role of early intervention professionals; however, it is expected that the number of staff in these job categories will not exceed 25% of the total direct full-time equivalent early intervention staff” (CT Birth to Three System Procedures Manual, 2000). The standards identify the job responsibilities as well as level of supervision required for both assistants and associates. Additional guidance on use of paraprofessionals in the Birth to Three System is included in Appendix B.

NATIONAL AND CONNECTICUT DATA

Pickett, Litkins and Wallace (2002), in a study conducted by the National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals, found that there are approximately 550,000 paraprofessionals currently employed in full-time equivalent positions across the nation. Of these paraprofessionals, 290,000 work with students with disabilities. Their report identifies approximately 50,000 more paraprofessionals than were reported in a 1996 study conducted by Wallace and McNerney (Wallace and McNerney, 2002).

The 1989 Committee of the CSPD conducted a survey of paraprofessionals in public schools based on district size. In this study, “the number of paraprofessionals in CT varies from fewer than ten to over four hundred, depending primarily on the size of the district. Small rural districts reported employing an average of ten paraprofessionals; medium cities reported an average of sixty; fringe cities reported approximately seventy positions and the large cities reported two hundred to over four hundred positions” (Committee to Study the Role of Paraprofessionals Report, 1990).

The Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Information Management and Analysis, annually conducts a Fall Hiring Survey to determine areas of teacher and administrator shortage. The Hiring Survey for the 2002-2003 School Year for Special Education Paraprofessional Positions identified 176 full-time positions, and 57 unfilled part-time positions, available statewide. Of these positions, two full-time and one part-time position remained open as of October 1. The average rating of the applicant pool quality indicated that there were many acceptable applicants (ED-156 Fall Hiring Survey, October 2002).

Worth noting from the Fall Hiring Survey is the ongoing identification of personnel shortages in special education. Special Education Teachers and Speech Language Pathologists fell within the top 10 professional shortage areas (ED-156 Fall Hiring Survey, October, 2002). Job experience and training make paraprofessionals ideal candidates to pursue a professional career in education. Paraprofessionals have valuable experience in their schools and communities and have acquired interpersonal skills to work effectively with children. Paraprofessionals are highly motivated and interested in teaching in their home communities. Development of career ladders for paraprofessionals and opportunities to receive college level course credit for training may assist programs and districts with recruiting and retaining paraprofessionals and with addressing some of the identified professional shortages in Connecticut. The report of the Connecticut CSPD Recruitment Task Force (2002) identified a career ladder for paraprofessionals as a recommendation for addressing recruitment issues.

A survey conducted by the Task Force on the Use of Paraprofessionals in Connecticut’s Birth to Three System, Public Schools and Private Special Education Programs (2002) and the executive summary of the results of this survey is included in Appendix D. This survey shows wide variations in the numbers of paraprofessionals employed by schools and programs and their needs. Many of the differences are attributed to the different work environments. Over half of all respondents report having written job descriptions, health benefits, opportunities to attend workshops, and formal performance evaluations. The summary includes information on the highest and most pressing professional development needs. All three environments identified need for future training in positive behavior supports and implementation of behavior management plans, facilitating social interactions between children and their peers, and teaming skills such as conflict management and problem-solving.

CREDENTIALING AND PARAPROFESSIONALS

Many states have implemented a paraprofessional credentialing program or are studying the merits of such a program. A report compiled by the American Federation of Teachers on the status of state paraprofessional standards and certification regulations is included in Appendix E. This document demonstrates the wide variation in ways that states approach setting standards, issuing letters of approval or permits, setting entry requirements based on education or training, or requiring certification or licensure as defined in legislation. Of the 48 states included in the report, 22 had no specified standards or regulations (including CT) and 8 had certification or licensing requirements.

The 1989 Paraprofessional Task Force was charged by then Education Commissioner Tirozzi to study the issue of a certification requirement for paraprofessionals in Connecticut. “After careful consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of a state certification permit system for paraprofessionals, the committee decided by consensus not to recommend the establishment of a credentialing system at this time” (Report of the Committee to Study the Role of Paraprofessionals, 1990).

The committee recognized the positive aspects of a credentialing system to provide a career ladder and standardized quality for skills and training, but this was not outweighed by the concern for channeling state resources and energy into the establishment of the system. At that time, there were no national models for certification in other states. The 1995 Task Force reached this same conclusion and suggested, “rather than attempting to introduce credentialing or State statute at this point, guidelines for paraprofessionals would provide districts with suggestions for implementing more effective paraprofessional employment practices” (CSPD, 1996).

The current Task Force agrees with the recommendations to postpone any discussions on a credentialing system for schools in Connecticut, pending the impact of this document and future legislative changes such as the reauthorization of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*. The Task Force strongly recommends consideration of a credentialing system at that time. The Connecticut Birth to Three System is in the process of developing a credentialing system for all personnel who provide early intervention services in the Birth to Three System. This credentialing system would only apply to paraprofessionals in the Birth to Three System.

ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND TRAINING OF PARAPROFESSIONALS

The Task Force reviewed many state and national models for defining roles and responsibilities of paraprofessionals. The National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals Model (1999) was eventually selected and modified as a framework in articulating key competencies for Connecticut paraprofessionals.

The model described in the following pages is designed to assist districts and programs in identifying responsibilities of paraprofessionals and then delineates the knowledge and skills necessary for performing those duties. The model should serve as a guide and should be modified to meet the unique needs of a school district or program.

The model defines six primary areas of responsibilities for paraprofessionals:

1. Assisting professionals with building and maintaining effective instructional teams;
2. Assisting professionals with maintaining learner-centered supportive environments;
3. Supporting professionals with planning and organizing learning experiences;
4. Assisting professionals with engaging students in learning and assisting in instruction;
5. Assisting professionals with assessing learner needs, progress and achievement; and
6. Meeting standards of professional or ethical conduct.

For each of these responsibilities, the model describes the scope of responsibilities and the knowledge and skills needed by the paraprofessional to perform these responsibilities. The knowledge and skills lists are intended for use as a guide in training paraprofessionals.

The model is further organized to define three levels of responsibilities, which are based on paraprofessionals' training, experience and job requirements:

1. Level One: This individual is an entry-level paraprofessional, with a high school diploma or equivalent, but has little or no experience. This individual requires a high level of direct supervision.
2. Level Two: This individual has multiple years of experience and training, typically on the job, and has the knowledge and skills to work more independently in the same setting as the supervisor.
3. Level Three: This individual has participated in some type of post-secondary training, usually with a focus on a specialized set of skills. This person may work more independently, such as in the community or a student's home.

RESPONSIBILITY 1:

Paraprofessionals Assist Professionals With Building And Maintaining Effective Instructional Teams.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 1 paraprofessionals as team members includes:</i></p>	<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 2 paraprofessionals as team members includes all of the responsibilities of Level 1 paraprofessionals as team members plus:</i></p>	<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 3 paraprofessionals as team members includes all of the responsibilities of Level 1 and 2 paraprofessionals as team members plus:</i></p>
<p>1. Carrying out team decisions as assigned by the teacher/provider or related services personnel.</p>	<p>4. Participating in regularly scheduled meetings with teachers/providers.</p>	<p>6. Participating in meetings with teachers/providers to assist with planning and organizing learning experiences and environments.</p>
<p>2. Attending meetings and sharing relevant information with other team members to facilitate problem-solving, decision-making, program planning, and other team activities.</p>	<p>5. Assisting teachers/providers in activities that engage students in learning experiences.</p>	<p>7. Attending program planning team meetings, based on program/district/agency policies, to assist with developing individualized education, transition, and family service plans for students who have disabilities and other special needs.</p>
<p>3. Using ethical practices for confidential communication about students.</p>		

Responsibility 1

RESPONSIBILITY 1:

Paraprofessionals Assist Professionals With Building And Maintaining Effective Instructional Teams.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p><i>To assist professionals with building and maintaining effective instructional teams, Level 1 paraprofessionals demonstrate the following knowledge competencies:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding of the distinctions in teacher/provider and administrator roles in the employment, supervision, management, evaluation and preparation of paraprofessionals. 	<p><i>To assist teachers/providers with building and maintaining effective instructional teams, Level 2 paraprofessionals demonstrate all of Level 1 knowledge competencies plus:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Understanding of the distinctions in the roles and responsibilities of teachers/providers, families, paraprofessionals, and other team members in identifying learner needs, developing plans to meet learner needs and implementing programs to achieve learner goals. 	<p><i>To assist teachers/providers with building and maintaining effective instructional teams, Level 3 paraprofessionals demonstrate all of the Level 1 and 2 knowledge competencies plus:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Awareness of problem-solving and decision-making strategies that strengthen program planning teams and program implementation teams.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Understanding of the value of a team approach to the delivery of education and related services for learners and their families. 		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Awareness of Federal, State and district/agency policies, regulations, and practices connected with paraprofessional employment, roles, supervision, and preparation. 		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Awareness of communication styles that contribute to effective participation in program implementation teams. 		

Knowledge 1

RESPONSIBILITY 1:

Paraprofessionals Assist Professionals With Building And Maintaining Effective Instructional Teams.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p><i>To assist professionals with building and maintaining effective instructional teams, Level 1 paraprofessionals demonstrate the following skill competencies:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ability to follow teacher/provider instructions and carry out team decisions. 2. Ability to interact constructively with and demonstrate respect for learners, families and other school/agency personnel. 3. Ability to contribute relevant objective information to teachers/providers to facilitate planning, problem-solving and decision-making. 	<p><i>To assist teachers/providers with building and maintaining effective instructional teams, Level 2 paraprofessionals demonstrate all of the Level 1 skill competencies <u>plus</u> relevant skills in these areas:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Ability to participate in program planning team meetings, when required by program or district/agency policies and procedures. 5. Meets specialized competencies for CT Birth to Three System, Early Intervention Assistant. 6. Meets specialized competencies for Speech Aide. 	<p><i>To assist teachers/providers with building and maintaining effective instructional teams, Level 3 paraprofessionals demonstrate all relevant Level 1 and 2 skill competencies <u>plus</u> relevant skills in these areas of specialized need:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Meets specialized competencies for CT Birth to Three System, Early Intervention Associate. 8. Meets specialized competencies for Job Coach or community-based support. See Appendix F for a list of Job Coach Competencies. 9. Meets specialized competencies for Speech Assistant. 10. Meets specialized competencies for Applied Behavior Analysis Instructor. 11. Meets specialized competencies for Sign Language Interpreter.

Skill 1

RESPONSIBILITY 2:

Paraprofessionals Assist Professionals With Maintaining Learner-Centered, Supportive Environments.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 1 paraprofessionals as team members include:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assisting professionals with the implementation of district/agency policies and procedures for protecting the safety, health, and well-being of learners and staff. 2. Implementing strategies, developed by professionals, that maintain supportive and inclusive environments, respect individual differences among learners, their families, and school/agency staff, and protect the human and legal rights of all individuals. 	<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 2 paraprofessionals as team members includes all of the responsibilities of Level 1 paraprofessionals as team members.</i></p>	<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 3 paraprofessionals as team members includes all of the responsibilities of Level 1 and 2 paraprofessionals as team members <u>plus</u>:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Assisting professionals with involving families in their child's learning experiences. 4. Assisting teachers/providers with communicating with child/families through interpretation of native language.

Responsibility 2

RESPONSIBILITY 2:
Paraprofessionals Assist Professionals With Maintaining Learner-Centered, Supportive Environments.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p><i>To assist professionals in maintaining learner-centered, supportive environments, Level 1 paraprofessionals demonstrate the following knowledge competencies:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding of the value of serving all children and youth in the least restrictive and in supportive learning environments. 2. Understanding of the distinctions and similarities in teacher/provider and paraprofessional roles and responsibilities for creating and maintaining supportive learning environments. 3. Awareness of district/agency procedures for protecting the safety, health, and well-being of learners and staff. 4. Awareness of district/agency policies and procedures for managing and disciplining all children and youth. 5. Awareness of district policies, procedures and methods for managing learner behaviors that are disruptive and/or aggressive. 	<p><i>To assist professionals in maintaining learner-centered, supportive environments, Level 2 paraprofessionals demonstrate all of Level 1 knowledge competencies <u>plus</u>:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Understanding of strategies that support families to strengthen their ability to assist their child with learning activities and encourage participation in the learning environment. 	<p><i>To assist professionals in maintaining learner-centered, supportive environment, Level 3 paraprofessionals demonstrate all of the Level 1 and 2 knowledge competencies.</i></p>

Knowledge 2

RESPONSIBILITY 2:

Paraprofessionals Assist Professionals With Maintaining Learner-Centered, Supportive Environments.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p><i>To assist professionals in maintaining learner-centered, supportive environments, Level 1 paraprofessionals demonstrate the following skill competencies:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ability to implement proactive behavior and learning strategies developed by professionals that maintain supportive learning environments. 2. Ability to follow and use prescribed district/agency policies and procedures to ensure the safety, health, and well-being of learners and staff. 3. Ability to provide translation services for families with limited English proficiency and follow professional plans to support and encourage family participation in their child's learning environment. 4. Ability to use universal health precautions for preventing illnesses and infections and proper body mechanics for lifting learners and heavy objects. 	<p><i>To assist professionals in maintaining learner-centered, supportive environments, Level 2 paraprofessionals demonstrate all of the Level 1 skill competencies plus:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Ability to implement procedures or plans for managing individual student behavior. 	<p><i>To assist professionals in learner-centered, supportive environments, Level 3 paraprofessionals demonstrate all of the Level 1 and 2 skill competencies plus:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Ability to carry out professional plans to enhance family interactions with infants/young children that facilitate physical, social, language, and cognitive development, and share information about community support services and resources. 7. Ability to carry out professional plans to support and share information with families about community services and resources available to students making the transition to the work force, post-secondary education and adult world.

Skill 2

RESPONSIBILITY 3:

Paraprofessionals Support Professionals With Planning And Organizing Learning Experiences.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 1 paraprofessionals includes:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assisting professionals with the development/preparation of learning materials/instructional resources and the environment. 2. Providing support in data entry and record-keeping. 3. Inventorying supplies and ordering materials selected by the teacher/provider. 	<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 2 paraprofessionals includes all of the responsibilities of Level 1 paraprofessionals plus:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Gathering and sharing relevant information about the performance and behavior of individual learners that supports the planning process. 5. Ability to prepare and organize materials to support teaching and learning as directed. 6. Ability to use strategies that provide learner independence and positive self-esteem. 	<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 3 paraprofessionals includes all of the responsibilities for Level 1 and 2 paraprofessionals as team members plus:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Assisting professionals to modify learning strategies to accommodate different learning styles, ability levels, and other learning needs of individual students. 8. Assisting professionals with the development/preparation of resources and settings. 9. Ability to adapt instructional materials to the needs of the learner, under the direction of a certified professional.

Responsibility 3

RESPONSIBILITY 3:

Paraprofessionals Support Professionals With Planning And Organizing Learning Experiences.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p><i>To support professionals with planning and organizing learning experiences and environments, Level 1 paraprofessionals demonstrate the following knowledge competencies:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding of the value of organized environments to facilitate transitions and promote learning. 2. Awareness of resources, equipment and technology for preparing learning materials developed by professionals. 	<p><i>To support professionals with planning and organizing learning experiences and environments, Level 2 paraprofessionals demonstrate all of the Level 1 knowledge competencies.</i></p>	<p><i>To support professionals with planning and organizing learning experiences and environments, Level 3 paraprofessionals demonstrate all of the Level 1 and 2 knowledge competencies.</i></p>

Knowledge 3

RESPONSIBILITY 3:

Paraprofessionals Support Professionals With Planning And Organizing Learning Experiences.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p><i>To support professionals with planning and organizing learning experiences and environments, Level 1 paraprofessionals demonstrate the following skill competencies:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ability to use copy machines, computers and other equipment to prepare learning materials and resources. 2. Ability to follow instructions in creating modifications of learning materials. 	<p><i>To support professionals with planning and organizing learning experiences and environments, Level 2 paraprofessionals demonstrate all of the Level 1 skill competencies plus:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Ability to prepare and use adaptive equipment and assistive technology prescribed by professionals and other professional staff. 4. Ability to assist PTs, OTs, SLPs and nurses to maintain adaptive equipment. 5. Ability to objectively gather and report information about learner's performance and interactions to assist the teacher/provider in the planning process. 	<p><i>To support professionals with planning and organizing learning experiences and environments, Level 3 paraprofessionals demonstrate all of the Level 1 and 2 skill competencies plus:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Ability to assist professionals with modifying learning materials and activities to meet the needs of individuals with different ability levels, learning styles, or language backgrounds.

Skill 3

RESPONSIBILITY 4:

Paraprofessionals Assist Professionals With Engaging Students In Learning Experiences And Assisting In Instruction.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 1 paraprofessionals includes:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Using lesson plans and learning strategies developed by professionals. Reviewing and reinforcing learning activities initiated by the professional to help students master concepts and skills. Performing monitoring duties as assigned in other learning environments (e.g., lunchrooms, playgrounds, libraries, and buses). 	<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 2 paraprofessionals includes all of the responsibilities of Level 1 paraprofessionals <u>plus</u>:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing behavioral programs developed by professionals. Assisting students with individualized learning activities and/or independent study projects developed by teachers/providers. Assisting occupational and physical therapists, speech language pathologists, and nurses in the delivery of related services. 	<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 3 paraprofessionals includes all of the responsibilities for Level 1 and 2 paraprofessionals <u>plus</u>:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Carrying out learning activities for students and their families in homes, educational settings, work sites and other community-based settings.

Responsibility 4

RESPONSIBILITY 4:

Paraprofessionals Assist Professionals With Engaging Students In Learning Experiences And Assisting In Instruction.

<p>Level 1 (To be continued on next page.)</p>	<p>Level 2</p>	<p>Level 3</p>
<p><i>To assist professionals in engaging students in learning experiences, Level 1 paraprofessionals demonstrate the following knowledge competencies:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding of the rational, mission, philosophy, and goals of the program to which the paraprofessional is assigned. 2. Proficiency in basic reading, math, writing and speaking English. 3. Awareness of the distinctions in professional and paraprofessional roles in engaging students in learning experiences. 4. Awareness of different methods that are used by professionals to accommodate an individual's learning needs. 5. Understanding of the distinctions in the roles and responsibilities of professionals and paraprofessionals in the development and implementation of behavior management plans. 	<p><i>To assist professionals in engaging students in learning experiences, Level 2 paraprofessionals demonstrate all of the Level 1 knowledge competencies plus:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Understanding of different strategies used by teachers/providers to support learners who come from different ethnic, cultural and language minority backgrounds. 14. Understanding of how various assistive and adaptive devices and materials facilitate learning and inclusion of students with developmental, physical and sensory disabilities and those who are medically fragile. 15. Understanding academic/curriculum areas based on learner and program needs. 16. Awareness of patterns of cognitive, physical, social, emotional and language development typically achieved at different ages and factors that impede typical development. 17. Awareness of the impact of different learning styles/preferences on the performance of individual students. 	<p><i>To assist professionals in engaging students in learning experiences, Level 3 paraprofessionals demonstrate all of the Level 1 and 2 knowledge competencies plus:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Understanding of the purpose and need for learning and performance standards. 19. Understanding of the validated practices for working with individuals with severe and challenging behaviors.

Knowledge 4

RESPONSIBILITY 4:

Paraprofessionals Assist Professionals With Engaging Students In Learning Experiences And Assisting In Instruction.

Level 1 (Continued from previous page.)	Level 2	Level 3
6. Awareness of developmentally and age-appropriate techniques that reinforce the learning of students with different needs.		
7. Understanding of State and district rules and procedural safeguards regarding the management of behaviors of individual learners.		
8. Understanding of basic principles of proactive behavior management strategies that increase learner independence, motivation and self-esteem.		
9. Understanding of effective procedures for dealing with verbal aggression and other forms of resistance.		
10. Understanding of how the use of technology can promote learning.		
11. Awareness of different strategies used by professionals to support learners who come from different ethnic, cultural and language minority backgrounds.		
12. Awareness of how various assistive and adaptive devices and materials facilitate learning and inclusion of students with developmental, physical and sensory disabilities and those who are medically fragile.		Knowledge 4

RESPONSIBILITY 4:

Paraprofessionals Assist Professionals With Engaging Students In Learning Experiences And Assisting In Instruction.

Level 1	Level 2 (To be continued on next page.)	Level 3
<p><i>To assist professionals in engaging students in learning experiences, Level 1 paraprofessionals demonstrate the following skill competencies:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ability to develop and maintain effective interactions with all learners. 2. Ability to use developmentally- and age-appropriate reinforcement and other learning activities developed by professionals. 3. Ability to use professionally developed positive behavioral strategies and procedures that facilitate the learning of students with challenging behaviors. 4. Ability to monitor and assist students in other learning environments (e.g., libraries, computer labs, lunchrooms, playgrounds, and buses). 	<p><i>To assist professionals in engaging students in learning experiences, Level 2 paraprofessionals demonstrate all of the Level 1 skill competencies plus:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Ability to carry out professionally developed behavioral strategies that increase learner independence, motivation and self-esteem. 6. Ability to carryout professionally developed behavioral strategies and procedures that facilitate the learning of students with challenging behaviors. 7. Ability to follow and carry out professional plans for strengthening academic skills for school-age learners. 8. Ability to carry out professional plans for developmentally-appropriate learning activities for infants and children. 9. Ability to assist nurses (based on State and local policies) with procedures required by learners who have special health care needs. 	<p><i>To assist professionals in engaging students in learning experiences, Level 3 paraprofessionals demonstrate all of the Level 1 and 2 skill competencies plus:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Ability to assist professionals in implementing advanced behavioral strategies to facilitate learning of students with challenging behaviors and promote an orderly and safe learning environment for all. 13. Ability to carry out professional plans in community-based vocational and transitional programs for students entering the workforce. 14. Ability to assist students with activities as designed and identified by physical and occupational therapists and speech-language pathologists.
<h1 style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">Skill 4</h1>		

RESPONSIBILITY 4:

Paraprofessionals Assist Professionals With Engaging Students In Learning Experiences And Assisting In Instruction.

Level 1	Level 2 (Continued from previous page.)	Level 3
	<i>For Level 2 paraprofessionals who are providing language interpretation:</i>	
	10. Ability to use professionally developed learning strategies for English language learners.	
	11. Ability to preview lessons in native languages to ensure that English language learners understand instructions and concepts.	

Skill 4

RESPONSIBILITY 5:

Paraprofessionals Assist Professionals With Assessing Learner Needs, Progress And Achievement.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 1 paraprofessionals includes:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data collection on learner activity as designed by professional. 	<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 2 paraprofessionals includes all of the responsibilities for Level 1 paraprofessionals plus:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Carrying out functional (informal) assessment activities to assist teachers/providers in documenting information about learner strengths and needs. 	<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 3 paraprofessionals includes all of the responsibilities for Level 1 and 2 paraprofessionals plus:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Providing information and assisting in administering standardized tests based on the paraprofessional's qualifications to carry out assigned tasks (check on administration of CAPT and CMT rules). 4. Assisting teachers/providers and other team members with maintaining learner records required by the district/agency/State.

Responsibility 5

RESPONSIBILITY 5:

Paraprofessionals Assist Professionals With Assessing Learner Needs, Progress And Achievement.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p><i>To assist professionals with assessing learner needs, progress and achievements, Level 1 paraprofessionals demonstrate the following knowledge competencies:</i></p> <p>1. Awareness of the distinctions in the roles of professionals, other licensed district/agency professionals and paraprofessionals in the assessment process.</p>	<p><i>To assist professionals with assessing learner needs, progress and achievements, Level 2 paraprofessionals demonstrate Level 1 knowledge competencies plus:</i></p> <p>2. Awareness of the reasons for conducting different types of evaluations to assess learner strengths and needs.</p>	<p><i>To assist professionals with assessing learner needs, progress and achievements, Level 3 paraprofessionals demonstrate all of the Level 1 and 2 knowledge competencies plus:</i></p> <p>3. Understanding of the differences of standardized (formal) assessment instruments and professionally developed functional (informal) assessment tools.</p> <p>4. Awareness of district policies and procedures for maintaining learner records required by the district/agency/State.</p>

Knowledge 5

RESPONSIBILITY 5:

Paraprofessionals Assist Professionals With Assessing Learner Needs, Progress And Achievement.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p><i>To assist professionals with assessing learner needs, progress and achievements, Level 1 paraprofessionals demonstrate the following skill competencies:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist in data collection as designed by a certified professional. 	<p><i>To assist professionals with assessing learner needs, progress and achievements, Level 2 paraprofessionals demonstrate Level 1 skill competencies <u>plus</u>:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Ability to use functional (informal) assessment instruments developed by teachers/providers to document and maintain data on learner behaviors and performance and to objectively report the results. 	<p><i>To assist professionals with assessing learner needs, progress and achievements, Level 3 paraprofessionals demonstrate Level 1 and 2 skill competencies <u>plus</u>:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Ability to assist with student modifications for standardized tests based on State/district/agency policies (e.g., CT Mastery Test). 4. Ability to assist professionals in conducting functional behavioral analysis. 5. Ability to assist professionals in maintaining learner records as required by the district/agency/State.

Skill 5

RESPONSIBILITY 6:
Paraprofessionals Meet Standards Of Ethical Conduct.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 1 paraprofessionals includes:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assisting school/agency administrators and teacher/providers with protection of the civil, legal, and human rights of students and their families. 2. Practicing the standards of professional and ethical conduct approved by the school district/agency/State and Federal guidelines for education and/or human services personnel. 3. Following the chain of command established by the district/agency to address policy questions, systems issues, and personnel practices. 4. Following guidelines established by the district/agency to protect the health, safety and well-being of students. 5. Respecting individual differences among students, their families and school/agency personnel. 6. Providing administrators and other stakeholders input in creating professional development activities for paraprofessionals. 7. Participating in continuing professional development. 	<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 2 paraprofessionals plus:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Participating with administrators and other stakeholders in creating and implementing comprehensive systems of professional development for paraprofessionals. 	<p><i>The scope of responsibilities for Level 3 paraprofessionals is the same as for Level 1 and 2 paraprofessionals.</i></p>

Responsibility 6

RESPONSIBILITY 6:
Paraprofessionals Meet Standards Of Ethical Conduct.

<p align="center">Level 1</p> <p><i>In order to meet the standards of professional and ethical conduct, Level 1 paraprofessionals demonstrate the following knowledge competencies:</i></p>	<p align="center">Level 2</p> <p><i>In order to meet the standards of professional and ethical conduct, Level 2 paraprofessionals demonstrate Level 1 knowledge competencies.</i></p>	<p align="center">Level 3</p> <p><i>In order to meet the standards of professional and ethical conduct, Level 3 paraprofessionals demonstrate Level 1 knowledge competencies and any additional competences as required by their unique position.</i></p>
<p>1. Understanding of the civil, legal and human rights of students and their families.</p>		
<p>2. Understanding of district, agency and/or State and local laws, policies and procedures for identifying signs/characteristics of and reporting suspected physical, sexual and psychological child abuse.</p>		
<p>3. Understanding of district/agency standards for professional and ethical conduct for all personnel.</p>		
<p>4. Understanding of the district's/agency's chain of command for decision-making and addressing policy questions, systems issues, and personnel practices.</p>		
<p>5. Understanding of the district's /agency's guidelines for protecting the health, safety and well-being of students.</p>		
<p>6. Awareness of and sensitivity to diversity and individual differences among learners, their families, and school/agency personnel.</p>		
<p>7. Understanding of opportunities for professional growth and career advancement for paraprofessionals.</p>		

Knowledge 6

RESPONSIBILITY 6:
Paraprofessionals Meet Standards Of Ethical Conduct.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p><i>In order to meet the standards of professional and ethical conduct, Level 1 paraprofessionals demonstrate the following skill competencies:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ability to perform assigned tasks under the supervision of teachers/providers in a manner consistent with professional and ethical guidelines established by the State or district/agency. 2. Willingness to participate in professional and career development opportunities. 3. Ability to confer with principals/administrators and supervising professionals to identify strengths and professional development needs. 	<p><i>In order to meet the standards of professional and ethical conduct, Level 2 paraprofessionals demonstrate Level 1 skill competencies.</i></p>	<p><i>In order to meet the standards of professional and ethical conduct, Level 3 paraprofessionals demonstrate Level 1 skill competencies and any additional competences as required by their unique position.</i></p>

Skill 6

JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS

A job description for a paraprofessional is a critical tool in clarifying roles and responsibilities and identifying qualifications and training needs. It should be used as the foundation for hiring, training, supervising and evaluating staff.

On the Connecticut Comprehensive System of Personnel Development – State Advisory Council (CSPD-SAC) Task Force Survey on Paraprofessionals (2002), the following percentage of programs reported the use of paraprofessional job descriptions:

- 68% of Birth to Three programs;
- 66% of school districts;
- 94% of private schools.

All paraprofessionals should have a written job description that includes the following components:

- Specific Position/Title;
- Department/Location;
- Assignment Length – days per year/hours per day;
- Qualifications/Requirements for Given Assignment;
- Roles and Responsibilities – duties may include percent of time spent in each activity;
- Range of Possible Duties Beyond Current Assignment (such as lifting, toileting, behavior management techniques);
- Person Responsible as Daily Supervisor;
- Person Responsible for Evaluation;
- Any Physical Requirements (such as lifting);
- Entry Level Requirements for Education and Skills (such as those mandated under *No Child Left Behind Act* qualifications for paraprofessionals in Title I programs).

Appendix G contains a sample Job Description for a paraprofessional.

SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

“There is a difference between the person responsible for hiring and evaluation of performance (an administrator), and the person directing day-to-day work with students (an educator or other licensed person)” (Wallace & McNerny, 2001). Just as it is important to identify the roles and responsibilities of the paraprofessional, it is equally important to identify the roles and responsibilities of those who supervise and evaluate their performance. Often the professional staff provides the day-to-day supervision of the paraprofessional, while an administrator, such as a principal, program manager or special education director, completes the evaluation. “Teachers should have supervisory functions as to program implementation, including planning, assigning duties and checking with paraeducators as to their comprehension of their assigned duties. Teachers must not be expected to have administrative management duties such as the hiring or firing of paraeducators. Those duties belong to the administration” (Wallace & McNerny, 2001).

“Although the law requires adequate supervision of paraeducators, it fails to address the question of who is to provide such supervision. One key to adequate supervision of paraeducators is that those who have been assigned such supervisory responsibilities have been prepared for those responsibilities” (Paraeducator Task Force, NEA). Montana’s paraprofessional guidelines suggest the following training for certified staff members prior to their being designated as supervisors:

- time management;
- goal setting and feedback technique;
- effective communication and collaboration;
- delegation;
- role clarification;
- professionalism and ethics;
- problem-solving; and
- knowledge of orientation information given to paraprofessionals (Special Education Paraprofessionals in Montana Schools, 1999).

Paraprofessionals need supervision on a daily or regularly scheduled basis. The type and level of supervision should be based on the skills and experience of the paraprofessional, the needs of the students, the instructional setting, and the task assigned (NJCLD, 1998). Newly hired paraprofessionals will require more supervision as will a paraprofessional who is involved with a new student or child.

“The supervision plan developed by the supervising teacher/provider and the paraprofessional must ensure that the supervisor will have direct contact time with the paraprofessional as well as with the individuals served by the paraprofessional” (NJCLD, 1998). The supervision plan may contain both direct and indirect methods of supervision. “Direct supervision means on-site, in-view observations and guidance while an activity is performed. Indirect supervision may include demonstrations, record review, review and evaluation of audio or videotaped sessions, interactive television and/or supervisory conferences that may be conducted by telephone. At no time may a paraprofessional perform tasks when a supervising teacher/service provider cannot be reached by personal contact, phone, pager or other immediate means” (NJCLD, 1998).

“Supervision should provide information about the quality of the paraprofessional’s performance of assigned tasks and should verify that instructional/clinical activity is limited to tasks specified in the paraprofessional’s scope of responsibilities. Information obtained during direct supervision may include data relative to (a) agreement (reliability) between the paraprofessional and the supervisor on correct/incorrect recording of target behavior, (b) accuracy of implementation of screening and instructional procedures, (c) accuracy in recording data, and (d) ability to interact effectively with the student” (NJCLD, 1998). Each program and district should identify the standard of direct and indirect supervision required for staff. All supervision should be documented to verify that it has occurred as required. It is essential that supervisors of paraprofessionals have this responsibility noted in their job description and time allocated in their schedule to provide ongoing and regular supervision.

The National Research Council on Paraprofessionals has identified standards for teacher/provider supervisory competencies (1999). These are included in Appendix I.

Evaluation should be completed for paraprofessionals at a minimum of once per year. The evaluation process and tool should be developed in conjunction with the job description and be based on the competencies required for the position. In addition, the evaluation should be conducted with input from the day-to-day supervisor of the paraprofessional. Many districts also incorporate a self-assessment that is completed by the paraprofessional as part of the evaluation process. Some national models give paraprofessionals the opportunity to provide feedback to the administrator on the effectiveness of the professional as a supervisor, as part of the evaluation process. Some sample evaluation tools from Connecticut are included in Appendix J.

In addition, administrators can advocate for their paraprofessional workforce by supporting the use of substitutes for paraprofessionals, career ladders, reimbursement for training at institutes of higher education and improved wage and benefit packages.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff development is a critical and federally mandated aspect of paraprofessional support. Training programs and job-embedded processes provide the knowledge and skills needed by the paraprofessionals and by those persons who oversee the use of paraprofessional services.

“Paraeducator training programs should be long-range, comprehensive, and systematic. Often the impact of training is lessened because it is based on available speakers or the current “hot topic” rather than on progressive development of an identified set of knowledge and skills” (Pickett and Gerlach, 1997). Every program or district should have an annual staff development plan for paraprofessionals, and for those who support paraprofessionals, which is based on a set of competencies such as those described in these Guidelines.

Sound professional development decisions are determined through ongoing assessment of current practices, needs and intended outcomes. It is often helpful to initiate a comprehensive paraprofessional training program by conducting a needs assessment.

There are a variety of staff development approaches that can be used to enhance paraprofessional services. Teaming paraprofessionals with certified or licensed staff in ongoing professional development may ensure the acquisition of some competencies; other needs of paraprofessionals and support staff will not be met in these broader formats. To assure the development of skills, training can also occur within the instructional setting where professionals might model or coach the paraprofessional while working directly with students. Some of the most effective training takes place in daily or weekly team meetings, where the team can problem-solve and collaborate on strategies. It is helpful for administrators to develop opportunities for ongoing training and communication. Although there is often limited time for meeting, programs and districts have tried a variety of creative ways to develop regularly scheduled meeting times, such as:

- *adding time to the paraprofessional work day one day a week;*
- *scheduling meeting time during professional planning time one time a week, including paraprofessional in regularly scheduled team meetings;*
- *hiring a substitute paraprofessional one day a month to free up different paraprofessionals throughout the day for meeting and training;*
- *offering stipends for veteran paraprofessionals to mentor new paraprofessionals;*
- *offering early release time one day a week to allow paraprofessionals to stay after work on another day;*
- *scheduling time in the early evening for all paraprofessionals to attend training a few times a year;*
- *sponsoring a summer institute or supporting attendance at a statewide summer institute;*
- *offering online training sessions that can be completed on personal time for either course credit or as part of a career ladder; and*
- *supporting release time to attend state conferences and training.*

HIRING AND ORIENTATION OF PARAPROFESSIONALS

There are many factors associated with the hiring and retention of paraprofessionals. Mueller (2002) found attrition of paraprofessionals to be related to inadequate training, undefined roles, poor salaries, lack of career advancement, lack of recognition, isolation, stagnation, lack of support from authority, lack of communication, lack of evaluation and guidelines, and engagement in roles that paraprofessionals do not feel they should assume. These issues need to be addressed in order to develop a stable and skilled paraprofessional workforce.

Although previous experience or training is an important aspect of hiring a paraprofessional, research shows that interpersonal skills and attitudes of applicants and an interest in self-improvement may be better indicators of how well a candidate will fit into a team (Pickett, 1997). It is helpful to include the supervising professional as part of the interview team to help clarify the roles and responsibilities of the position and to assess interpersonal styles for compatibility. The hiring and orientation process can be a valuable time for initial training.

Once the paraprofessional is hired, the next step in the employment processes is the orientation. This should take place prior to the individual having any contact with students or families and should be viewed as part of the initial training program. The orientation to the program or district should include the philosophy or mission of the school or program, roles and job duties, including the responsibility to maintain confidentiality, schedules and expectations for performance. Policies or procedures should be discussed, including contracts, evaluation, vacation and emergency or sick leave, calendars, dress codes, complaint procedures, fire drill procedures, smoking regulations, use of phones, and parking. The orientation to the building or work setting should include safety and emergency procedures, a review of district or employee handbook, building/grounds map, lunch and recess procedures, use of building equipment, and essential phone numbers/contact information. Once this information is covered, the next phase of orientation should include specific family, child, student or classroom orientation.

PARTICIPATION IN INDIVIDUALIZED FAMILY SERVICE PLAN (IFSP) MEETINGS OR PLANNING AND PLACEMENT TEAM MEETINGS (PPT)

Paraprofessionals who work as service coordinators in the Birth to Three System attend and conduct IFSP meetings for their assigned families. However, this paraprofessional cannot be listed as the sole individual on the IFSP to deliver service. There must always be a certified or licensed professional who works collaboratively with the paraprofessional identified on the IFSP.

Paraprofessional attendance at Planning and Placement Team meetings is an individual district and school-based decision. If a paraprofessional spends an extensive amount of time with a student, and he/she is not attending the PPT, it is important that the supervising teacher obtain input from the paraprofessional prior to the PPT.

If a paraprofessional provides specially designed instruction or a related service to a student as designed and introduced by, and under the supervision of certified or licensed staff, this service should be recorded on the “Summary: Special Education, Related Services, and Regular Education” (Page 5) of the IEP. When paraprofessional support is listed, the individual paraprofessional should not be listed by name. The person identified as responsible for implementation should be the certified or licensed professional, with the paraprofessional listed as a support. The IEP should specify whether the student is in need of one-on-one assistance, and if so, during which activities. If the paraprofessional needs to be available to the student, but is part of the general classroom support, the use of the paraprofessional should be noted under “Modifications/Adaptations” (Page 8) of the IEP.

ONE-ON-ONE PARAPROFESSIONALS

“There is no question that paraprofessionals play an increasingly prominent role in educating students with disabilities in the general education classroom. Their role in the classroom has expanded, based on the belief that they are a key support mechanism to operationalize inclusive education efforts particularly for students with severe disabilities” (Giangreco, Broer and Edelman, 2001). Giangreco voices the concern that paraprofessionals in some instances have replaced the use of the most qualified teachers for students with the most intensive needs. In addition, his research has documented that students with disabilities who were placed in a general education setting with a one-on-one paraprofessional had less general education teacher engagement than when the paraprofessional was program- or classroom-based (Giangreco, 2001). In a different study, Giangreco, Edelman, Lusielli and MacFarland (1997) observed that “teaching assistants providing one-to-one support who hovered alongside the student with severe disabilities in the regular education classroom interfered with the social and academic inclusion process. In the instances where a one-on-one paraprofessional is required, it is important that the team provide supervision and training to inhibit the student’s reliance on the paraprofessional.” In addition, Planning and Placement Teams should consider a wide range of supplementary aids and services as supports for students with disabilities in regular classrooms to limit the need for students to have one-on-one staff support at all times.

If a school district is interested in evaluating their use of one-on-one paraprofessionals, they should utilize the “Guidelines For Selecting Alternatives To Over-Reliance On Paraprofessionals” noted on the resource list (Giangreco, 2003).

INAPPROPRIATE ROLES FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS

While it is important to identify the roles and responsibilities of paraprofessionals, it is equally helpful to identify the activities that are outside the scope of the responsibility for anyone in a paraprofessional role.

The following list, which was created by the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD, 1998), has been modified to reflect paraprofessionals in Connecticut.

Paraprofessionals used in programs serving individuals with disabilities *shall not*:

- a. Be solely responsible for instruction or provision of professional services;
- b. Perform or interpret standardized or non-standardized assessments, formally or informally, unless specifically trained to provide such tests and evaluations and supervised by a qualified teacher/service provider;
- c. Participate in parent conferences, student conferences or any interdisciplinary teams in place of the supervising teacher/service provider;
- d. Communicate with the individual with disabilities, family, or others regarding any aspect of the student's service without the specific consent of the supervising teacher/service provider; or, provide student or family counseling;
- e. Assist with instruction/intervention without following the individual plan prepared under the direction of the teacher/service provider or without access to supervision;
- f. Sign any formal documents (e.g., service reimbursement forms or reports) as a substitute for the qualified professional. Paraprofessionals should sign or initial informal progress notes for review and have a co-signature by the supervising teacher/service provider;
- g. Select individuals for services, assign grades, or discharge an individual from service;
- h. Disclose educational, clinical, or confidential information either orally or in writing to anyone not designated by the supervising teacher/service provider;
- i. Represent himself or herself as a qualified teacher/service provider or be used as a substitute for a qualified teacher/service provider unless he/she possesses the appropriate certification/licensure to function as a substitute and is hired as a substitute.

(NJCLD, 1998)

Katsiyannis, Hodge, & Lanford (2000) reviewed summaries of national due-process hearings, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) rulings, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) memos, and court rulings from 1990-1999 regarding the legal parameters associated with the use of paraeducators in special education and found the following:

1. Public schools must supply services provided by paraeducators if these services are necessary for a student to receive FAPE (free appropriate public education).
2. Paraeducators must be qualified to perform assigned services as indicated in the IEP.
3. Paraeducators who lack appropriate training may not directly provide special education services.
4. Appropriately trained paraeducators may assist in the provision of special education services only if certified special education personnel supervise them. (Wallace and McNerney, 2002).

TEN TIPS FOR ADMINISTRATORS FROM CONNECTICUT

A comprehensive paraprofessional support program requires leadership by the building administrator. Cathryn Riggs (2002) has developed ten tips for administrators to provide support for paraprofessionals.

They include:

1. Know the paraprofessionals by name and by position.
2. Ensure that paraprofessional job descriptions are relevant to current duties and responsibilities.
3. Provide an introduction to agency, district or school policies for all paraprofessionals assigned to the school or agency, including information about sick leave, personal time, vacation, salary agreements, works hours, and so forth.
4. Assign responsibilities to paraprofessionals carefully, respecting job descriptions and individual strengths.
5. Ensure that all paraprofessionals are clear about the “chain of command” for their supervision and evaluation. Assist professionals in developing their supervisory skills.
6. Provide relevant training opportunities.
7. Assist paraprofessionals in developing career goals.
8. Provide time in the schedule for paraprofessionals and teachers/providers to plan together.
9. Provide opportunities for paraprofessionals to meet with you as a group.
10. Create a community where paraprofessionals are respected and where their contributions are valued and acknowledged.

In addition, administration can advocate for their paraprofessional workforce by supporting the use of substitutes for paraprofessionals, career ladders, reimbursement for training at institutes of higher education, and improved wage and benefit packages.

APPENDIX A

Appendix A: Connecticut Birth to Three System Personnel Standards					
PERSONNEL CATEGORIES	ENTRY DEGREE	LICENSURE / CERTIFICATION	ADDITIONAL SUPERVISION REQUIRED	JOB RESPONSIBILITIES	CAN ACT AS A SERVICE COORDINATOR?
Early Intervention Assistant	High School Diploma or GED	Documentation of training specific to child, the child's disability or delays, and the specific techniques being used with the child	At least one hour per week of direct supervision and availability of direct contact with supervisor during work hours All progress notes must be countersigned by supervisor who is licensed or certified	Provides direct services to children and families by performing routine tasks assigned by professionally licensed or certified personnel. Takes no independent action. Carries out written programs and service plans designed by licensed or certified personnel. Does not perform initial evaluations or annual assessments but provides data and input.	No
Early Intervention Associate	a. BA degree in a human services field (or) b. CDA (or) c. AA degree in a human services field (or) d. High School Diploma or GED and 3 years experience as an early intervention assistant	For those without a BA degree: a. Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition as CDA (or) b. AA degree from institution of higher education in education or human services field (or) c. Documentation of 3 years successful experience as an early intervention assistant by employing agency and completion of Parents As Trainers or equivalent training as approved by the lead agency	At least one hour per month of supervision and at least one team meeting per month All progress notes countersigned by a supervisor who is licensed or supervised	Participates in IFSP development and implementation, monitors outcomes as part of a multidisciplinary team, provides direct and/or consultative services to children and families. Under regular supervision by professionally licensed or certified personnel, may function independently. Does not perform initial evaluations or annual assessments, but provides data and input.	Yes, after successful completion of service coordination training

Appendix A: Connecticut Birth to Three System Personnel Standards (Continued)

PERSONNEL CATEGORIES	ENTRY DEGREE	LICENSURE / CERTIFICATION	ADDITIONAL SUPERVISION REQUIRED	JOB RESPONSIBILITIES	CAN ACT AS A SERVICE COORDINATOR?
Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA)	Associate Degree from accredited AOTA program	Department of Public Health license under §20-74c C.G.S.	Supervised by a licensed occupational therapist.	<p>Participates in IFSP development and implementation; monitors outcomes as part of a transdisciplinary team; provides direct services to children and families under direct or indirect supervision of the OT; may function independently.</p> <p>Does not perform initial evaluations or annual assessments but provides data and input.</p>	Yes, after successful completion of service coordination training
Physical Therapy Assistant	Associate Degree from an approved PTA program	<p>Graduation from an accredited PTA program</p> <p>Registered with the Department of Public Health under §20-73(b) C.G.S.</p>	Supervised by a licensed physical therapist.	Under direct or indirect supervision of the PT, assists in providing intervention.	Yes, after successful completion of service coordination training

APPENDIX B

GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF PARAPROFESSIONALS IN THE CONNECTICUT BIRTH TO THREE SYSTEM

Included in the Connecticut Birth to Three System's Personnel Standards are two categories of paraprofessional generalists called *Early Intervention Assistants* and *Early Intervention Associates*. Educational requirements for both are listed in Appendix A. These personnel can be valued team members and work successfully to support and extend the role of early intervention professionals; however, it is expected that the number of staff in these job categories will not exceed 25% of the total direct full-time equivalent (FTE) early intervention staff. The following are more in-depth descriptions of the use of these personnel.

Early Intervention Assistants

Early Intervention Assistants must receive at least one hour per week of direct supervision by a licensed or certified early intervention professional who is qualified to conduct initial evaluations. They must also have the availability of contact with a supervisor during work hours. They provide direct services to children and families by performing routine tasks assigned by professionally licensed or certified personnel. They take no independent action, but carry out written programs and service plans designed by licensed or certified personnel.

Some examples of their duties may be:

- Observing and/or assisting with evaluation and assessment sessions;
- Participating in IFSP development;
- Assisting families and early intervention personnel in the delivery of services;
- Assisting in maintaining data and records;
- Participating in periodic conferences, team meetings with early intervention professionals;
- Developing a rapport with the child and family.

Early Intervention Assistants are not responsible for conducting evaluations, assessments, or planning interventions. They may not function as service coordinators.

Early Intervention Associates

Early Intervention Associates must receive at least one hour per month of direct supervision by professionally licensed or certified early intervention personnel and must attend at least one team meeting per month. They may function independently, providing direct services to children and families in home or community-based settings; however, their supervisor must countersign all progress notes. They may perform all of the functions of the Early Intervention Assistant as well as serve as a service coordinator.



Title I Paraprofessionals

Draft Non-Regulatory Guidance



November 15, 2002
DRAFT GUIDANCE

TITLE I PARAPROFESSIONAL
NON-REGULATORY GUIDANCE

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A-1. Title I, as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act*, has new requirements for paraprofessionals. Why is this important?
- A-2. What is a paraprofessional?

B. REQUIREMENTS FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS

- B-1. What are the requirements for Title I paraprofessionals?
- B-2. The statutory language refers to “two years of study at an institution of higher education”. What does “two years of study” mean?
- B-3. The statutory language refers to “two years of study at an institution of higher education”. What does the term “institution of higher education” mean?
- B-4. What course(s) of study must have been pursued in the two years of study?
- B-5. Do existing paraprofessionals have four years to meet the requirement that paraprofessionals have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent?
- B-6. Does the new requirement for paraprofessionals (explained in B-1) apply to LEAs or schools that do not receive Title I funds?
- B-7. Would a paraprofessional, hired before January 8, 2002 and currently working in an LEA in a non-Title I program, be considered a “new paraprofessional” (and subject to the paraprofessional requirements for new paraprofessionals) if that individual is re-assigned to a program supported with Title I funds?
- B-8. Do the Title I paraprofessional qualification requirements for new paraprofessionals in Title I (explained in B-1) apply to paraprofessionals who are laid off and then recalled? In other words, are these individuals “new” or “existing” paraprofessionals?
- B-9. How do the new paraprofessional qualification requirements apply to paraprofessionals in a school-wide program?
- B-10. How do the new paraprofessional qualification requirements apply to paraprofessionals in a targeted assistance program?
- B-11. What if a paraprofessional has both instructional and non-instructional duties?
- B-12. What is required if a non-instructional paraprofessional becomes an instructional paraprofessional?
- B-13. What are the requirements for paraprofessionals who work solely as translators or bilingual aides?
- B-14. What are the requirements for paraprofessionals, such as home-school liaisons, whose duties consist solely of parental involvement activities?
- B-15. What are the requirements for paraprofessionals who deal with special education students?
- B-16. Do the paraprofessional requirements apply to paraprofessionals working in Title I, Part B, Part C, or Part D, Subparts 1 and 2, programs?
- B-17. Once an instructional paraprofessional has met the requirements in B-1, is the status of being qualified “portable”? That is, can the paraprofessional be deemed qualified in other LEAs within a State?
- B-18. What does it mean to “work under the direct supervision of a teacher”?
- B-19. What are the allowable duties for paraprofessionals?

- B-20. Must a paraprofessional, who provides services to eligible private school students and is employed by an LEA with Title I funds, meet the new requirements?
- B-21. Must a paraprofessional who provides services to eligible private school students and is employed by an LEA with Title I funds, be under the direct supervision of a public school teacher?

C. PARAPROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT

- C-1. One option for meeting the new educational requirements for paraprofessionals is to test their knowledge and ability through a formal State or local academic assessment. What is the purpose of this assessment?
- C-2. What are the academic content areas in which Title I paraprofessionals must demonstrate the ability to assist in instructing?
- C-3. Does “assessment” mean a “paper and pencil test” only, or could the assessment be a performance assessment evaluating demonstrable skills?
- C-4. When must the assessment be administered for newly hired paraprofessionals?
- C-5. Will the U.S. Department of Education approve proposed State or local paraprofessional assessments?

D. RELATED ISSUES

- D-1. Do the paraprofessional requirements apply to people working in schools as part of the AmeriCorps program?
- D-2. How do the requirements apply to volunteers?
- D-3. Sometimes early childhood programs, such as birth-to-3 and Head Start programs, or State-funded early childhood programs, are located in buildings housing Title I school-wide programs. Do the paraprofessional requirements apply to paraprofessionals working in such early childhood programs?
- D-4. Some paraprofessionals work in programs for children ranging in age from birth to age 20 that are supported by Title I, Part A funds. Are they required to meet the Title I requirements?

E. FUNDING ISSUES

- E-1. What funds are available for helping paraprofessionals in Title I schools meet the new requirements?
- E-2. May an LEA use the “Title II Improving Teacher Quality State Grant” funds to provide training for paraprofessionals?

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

A-1. Title I, as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB), has new requirements for paraprofessionals. Why is this important?

Properly trained paraprofessionals can play important roles in Title I schools where they can magnify and reinforce a teacher's effect in the classroom. Unfortunately, studies (Chambers, et al, 2000) indicate that paraprofessionals are used in many Title I schools for teaching and assisting in teaching when their educational backgrounds do not qualify them for such responsibilities.¹ NCLB includes higher standards that educators must meet in order to ensure that highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals teach students, who need the most help.

A-2. What is a paraprofessional?

For the purposes of Title I, Part A, a paraprofessional is an employee who provides instructional support in a program supported with Title I, Part A funds.

This includes paraprofessionals who:

- (1) provide one-on-one tutoring if such tutoring is scheduled at a time when a student would not otherwise receive instruction from a teacher;
- (2) assist with classroom management, such as organizing instructional and other materials;
- (3) provide instructional assistance in a computer laboratory;
- (4) conduct parental involvement activities;
- (5) provide support in a library or media center;
- (6) act as a translator; or
- (7) provide instructional support services under the direct supervision of a teacher [Title I, section 1119(g)(2)]. (Also see items B-11 through B-16.)

Individuals who work in food services, cafeteria or playground supervision, personal care services, non-instructional computer assistance, and similar positions are not considered paraprofessionals under Title I.

B. REQUIREMENTS FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS

B-1. What are the requirements for Title I paraprofessionals?

All Title I paraprofessionals must have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent. This includes paraprofessionals who serve as translators or who conduct parental involvement activities.

¹ See Chambers et al., *Study of Education Resources and Federal Funding: Final Report*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 2000.

Additionally, Title I paraprofessionals, whose duties include instructional support and who were hired after January 8, 2002, must have (1) completed two years of study at an institution of higher education; (2) obtained an Associate's (or higher) degree; or (3) met a rigorous standard of quality and be able to demonstrate, through a formal State or local academic assessment, knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing reading, writing, and mathematics (or, as appropriate, reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness) [section 1119(c) and (d)].

Paraprofessionals hired on or before January 8, 2002, and working in a program supported with Title I funds, must meet these requirements by January 8, 2006.

B-2. The statutory language refers to “two years of study at an institution of higher education” [section 1119(c)(1)(a)]. What does “two years of study” mean?

“Two years of study” means the equivalent of two years of full-time study, according to the State definition of “full-time study”. In some states, that may mean 12 credit hours per semester (requiring a total of 48 credit hours), while in others it may mean 15 credit hours a semester (requiring a total of 60 credit hours).

B-3. The statutory language refers to “two years of study at an institution of higher education” [section 1119(c)(1)(a)]. What does the term “institution of higher education” mean?

Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) defines an “institution of higher education” as an educational institution in any State that:

- 1) admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate;
- 2) is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education;
- 3) provides an educational program for which the institution awards a Bachelor's degree or provides not less than a two-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree;
- 4) is a public or other non-profit institution; and,
- 5) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association, or if not so accredited, is an institution that has been granted pre-accreditation by such an agency or association that has been recognized by the Secretary for the granting of pre-accreditation status, and the Secretary has determined that there is a satisfactory assurance that the institution will meet the accreditation standards of such an agency or association within a reasonable time.

This definition applies to the statutory language on the educational preparation of Title I paraprofessionals.

B-4. What course(s) of study must have been pursued in the two years of study?

Paraprofessionals should be able to demonstrate knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing in the areas of reading, writing, and math, or in “school readiness” [section 1119 (c) (1) (C)]. Paraprofessionals are expected to have a working knowledge of these academic areas. (Also, see item C-2.)

Given that understanding, the State may determine what requirements, if any, it may choose to place on the coursework taken during the two years of study.

B-5. Do existing paraprofessionals have four years to meet the requirement that paraprofessionals have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent?

No. Section 1119(e) requires that all paraprofessionals have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent without regard to the date they were hired. This requirement took effect on the date of enactment of NCLB (January 8, 2002) and was, for the most part, already in effect because the prior law required most paraprofessionals to hold a secondary diploma or its equivalent.

B-6. Does the new requirement for paraprofessionals (explained in B-1) apply to LEAs or schools that do not receive Title I funds?

No. If an LEA does not receive Title I funds, the requirements do not apply. Similarly, if an LEA receives Title I funds, but a school does not receive Title I funds, the requirements do not apply to paraprofessionals working in that school.

B-7. Would a paraprofessional, hired on or before January 8, 2002 and currently working in an LEA in a non-Title I program, be considered a “new” paraprofessional (and subject to the paraprofessional requirements for new paraprofessionals) if that individual is re-assigned to a program supported with Title I funds?

A new paraprofessional is one who is newly hired by an LEA. If a person is working as a paraprofessional in another school – either a Title I or non-Title I school in the same district - he or she is not considered to be a new paraprofessional, even if he or she transfers to a new school within that district.

B-8. Do the Title I paraprofessional requirements for new paraprofessionals (explained in B-1) apply to paraprofessionals who are laid off and then recalled? In other words, are these individuals “new” or “existing” paraprofessionals?

Paraprofessionals who are regularly “pink-slipped” at the end of one school year and then rehired at the beginning of the next school year, with the result that they have continuous years of employment, are considered “existing paraprofessionals,” as their initial hiring date is on or before January 8, 2002. However, an individual who has a break in service and is re-hired at some later point would be considered a new paraprofessional.

B-9. How do the new paraprofessional qualification requirements apply to paraprofessionals in a school-wide program?

The requirements in B-1 apply to all paraprofessionals with instructional duties in a school-wide program, without regard to whether the position is funded with Federal, State, or local funds. In a school-wide program, Title I funds support all teachers and paraprofessionals.

B-10. How do the new paraprofessional qualification requirements apply to paraprofessionals in a targeted assistance program?

In a Title I targeted assistance program, the requirements in B-1 apply to all paraprofessionals with instructional duties who are paid with Title I funds.

B-11. What if a person has both instructional and non-instructional duties?

In this case, the person falls under the definition of a “paraprofessional” and must meet the requirements as stated in B-1, because he or she carries out instructional support duties.

B-12. What is required if a person performing non-instructional duties becomes an instructional paraprofessional?

In this case, the person is a “paraprofessional” as defined for Title I purposes and must meet the requirements in B-1. In other words, the individual would have to hold a secondary diploma or its equivalent and meet the new qualification requirements. However, as an existing employee of the LEA, the individual would have until January 8, 2006 to demonstrate competency through post-secondary education or a formal State or local assessment.

B-13. What are the requirements for paraprofessionals who work solely as translators or bilingual aides?

A paraprofessional who is proficient in English and a language other than English and acts as a translator to enhance the participation of limited English proficient children under Subpart A of Title I must have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent but does not have to meet the other requirements in B-1.

B-14. What are the requirements for paraprofessionals, such as home-school liaisons, whose duties consist solely of parental involvement activities?

A paraprofessional with duties that consist solely of conducting parental involvement activities must have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent but does not have to meet the other requirements in B-1.

B-15. What are the requirements for persons who deal with special education students?

The requirements for persons who deal with special education students differ depending upon the situation.

If a person working with special education students does NOT provide any instructional support (such as a person who solely provides personal care services), the person is not considered a paraprofessional under Title I, and the B-1 requirements do not apply.

If a person works in a Title I targeted assistance program and has instructional support duties and is paid with Title I funds, the B-1 requirements do apply.

If a person works in a Title I school-wide program school and has instructional support duties, the B-1 requirements apply without regard to the source of funding that supports the position.

B-16. Do the paraprofessional requirements apply to persons paid with funds under Title I, Part B (Student Reading Skills Improvement Grants), Part C (Education of Migratory Children) or Part D (Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk)?

The paraprofessional qualification requirements in B-1 do not apply to individuals paid with funds under Title I, Part B (Student Reading Skills Improvement Grants), Part C (Education of Migratory Children) or Part D (Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk), unless these individuals are working in a school-wide program school. (See item B-9 for additional information.)

B-17. Once a paraprofessional has met the requirements in B-1, is the status of being qualified “portable”? That is, can the paraprofessional be deemed qualified in other LEAs within a State?

A State may, at its discretion, establish a policy whereby qualified paraprofessionals can have reciprocity in the LEAs within the State.

B-18. What does it mean to “work under the direct supervision of a teacher”?

Paraprofessionals providing instructional support must work under the direct supervision of a teacher [sections 1119(g)(2)(G) and 1119(g)(3)(A)]. A paraprofessional works under the direct supervision of a teacher if (1) the teacher prepares the lessons and plans the instructional support activities the paraprofessional carries out, and evaluates the achievement of the students with whom the paraprofessional is working, and (2) if the paraprofessional works in close and frequent proximity with the teacher. As a result, a program staffed entirely by paraprofessionals is not permitted.

B-19. What are the allowable duties for paraprofessionals?

Paraprofessionals may be assigned to: (1) provide one-on-one tutoring for eligible students, if the tutoring is scheduled at a time when a student would not otherwise receive instruction from a teacher; (2) assist in classroom management; (3) assist in computer instruction; (4) conduct parental involvement activities, (5) provide instructional support in a library or media center; (6) act as a translator; and (7) provide instructional support services [section 1119(g)(2)].

B-20. Must a paraprofessional, who provides services to eligible private school students and is employed by an LEA with Title I funds, meet the new requirements?

Yes, such a paraprofessional must meet the requirements outlined in B-1.

B-21. Must a paraprofessional, who provides services to eligible private school students and is employed by an LEA with Title I funds, be under the direct supervision of a public school teacher?

Yes, a paraprofessional, who provides services to eligible private school students and is employed by an LEA, must be under the direct supervision of a public school teacher throughout the duration of the services/program being offered [section 1120(d)(2)]. (Also see item B-18.)

C. PARAPROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT

C-1. One option for meeting the new educational requirements for paraprofessionals is to test their knowledge and ability through a formal State or local academic assessment. What is the purpose of this assessment?

The purpose of the academic assessment is to demonstrate that Title I paraprofessionals have the appropriate knowledge and ability to assist in instructing students and are competent in required instructional techniques and academic content areas.

C-2. What are the academic content areas in which Title I paraprofessionals must demonstrate the ability to assist in instructing?

Title I paraprofessionals must demonstrate the ability to assist in instructing in the academic content areas of reading/language arts, writing, and mathematics; or, in reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness.

C-3. Does “assessment” mean a “paper and pencil test” only, or could the assessment be a performance assessment evaluating demonstrable skills?

The law does not require a paper and pencil test. However, there must be evidence that the assessment is valid and reliable. Also, the assessment results must be documented, i.e., there needs to be a record of the assessment and the individual’s performance on that assessment.

C-4. When must the assessment be administered for newly hired paraprofessionals?

For a paraprofessional hired after January 8, 2002, the assessment must be administered and passed before an individual is hired to work as a Title I paraprofessional.

C-5. Will the U.S. Department of Education approve proposed State or local paraprofessional assessments?

No. Ensuring that all paraprofessionals have the qualifications required in section 1119 is the responsibility of each LEA, working in tandem with the State, to ensure that those paraprofessionals who would demonstrate their competence by passing a State or local assessment are assessed in ways that meet the requirements of that section.

Paraprofessionals may meet these requirements by:

- (1) holding the minimum of an Associate's degree;
- (2) completing two years of study at an institution of higher education; or
- (3) passing a State or local assessment that will demonstrate their:
 - a. *knowledge of, and the ability to, assist in instructing, reading, writing and mathematics; or*
 - b. *knowledge of, and the ability to, assist in instructing, reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness, as appropriate [Title I, section 1119(c)(1)(C)].*

Note that the State or local assessment must ensure that more than just basic skills are being assessed. The law requires that it be a test of subject knowledge and the ability to assist in instructing.

Each SEA may use the following guidelines in approving assessments and then communicate this information to the LEAs:

- SEAs and LEAs have flexibility to determine the content and format of any assessment of paraprofessionals. For example, while an appropriate assessment might be entirely a written test, it alternatively could be a combination of a written test on content (reading, writing, and math) and a demonstration of competence in instruction (assessed through observations via a series of rubrics).
- The content of the assessment should reflect both the State academic standards and skills expected for a child at a given school level (elementary, middle, or high school), as well as the ability of the candidate to assist in instructing students in the content. Clearly, the assessment should be rigorous and objective. Furthermore, each evaluation should have a standard that the candidate is expected to meet or exceed. These standards for evaluation must be applied to each candidate in the same way.

- The results of the assessment should establish the candidate’s competence as a paraprofessional relative to the standards in section 1119(c)(1)(C), or target the areas where additional training and staff development may be needed to help the candidate succeed at meeting the standard before they are hired. The results should be documented and the LEA should retain that documentation.

Moreover, an SEA may wish to go on record establishing which assessments it has determined meet the statutory requirements; to what extent State policies permit LEAs to develop, select or implement their own assessments for paraprofessionals; and what requirements, if any, the State places on any local assessment. Keeping such formal approvals on file, along with an explanation as to how the State (or local) assessments meet these requirements, would be one way of making sure that the State (or local) assessments, on which LEAs rely, comply with the law. The SEA could then communicate this information to LEAs, so that each LEA is clear as to what the options are when it comes to assessing paraprofessionals.

C-6. What level of rigor should the paraprofessional assessment have?

The paraprofessional assessment is expected to evaluate paraprofessional candidates at a level equivalent to the second year of college. Having skills at the level of the second year of college is the intent of the law. [See section 1119(c) and (d).]

D. RELATED ISSUES

D-1. Do the paraprofessional requirements apply to people working in schools as part of the AmeriCorps program?

The National Community Service Act states that AmeriCorps volunteers are not considered employees of the entities where they are placed [42 U.S.C. 12511 (17B)]. Unless AmeriCorps volunteers are considered employees under State law, the paraprofessional requirements in section 1119 (see items B-1 and B-5) do not apply. However, even though the requirements do not apply, districts should make every effort to ensure that AmeriCorps volunteers, who provide instructional support in a Title I program, have the skills necessary to assist effectively in instructing reading, writing, and mathematics or reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness, as appropriate.

D-2. Do the new requirements apply to volunteers?

No. Private individuals frequently volunteer to assist teachers in the classroom and support local schools by performing a variety of tasks for limited periods of time. Since they are not paid employees of a school district, they are not covered by the requirements for Title I paraprofessionals in section 1119 (see items B-1 and B-5).

D-3. Sometimes early childhood programs, such as birth-to-3 and Head Start programs, or State-funded early childhood programs, are located in buildings housing Title I school-wide programs. Do the paraprofessional requirements apply to paraprofessionals working in such early childhood programs?

The paraprofessional requirements do not apply to individuals working in early childhood programs that are physically located in a Title I school, but are not part of the school-wide program and are not funded with Title I funds, such as a Head Start program.

However, these requirements do apply to paraprofessionals with instructional duties in Title I-funded early childhood programs. In a targeted assistance school, this means that paraprofessionals with instructional duties paid with Title I funds in an early childhood program would have to meet the requirements.

In a school-wide program school, all paraprofessionals with instructional duties, working in the early childhood program, must meet the requirements, regardless of how their salary is funded.

D-4. Some paraprofessionals work in programs for children ranging in age from birth to age 20 that are supported by Title I, Part A funds. Are they required to meet the Title I requirements?

Paraprofessionals in a targeted assistance program paid for by Title I funds or paraprofessionals with instructional duties in a school-wide school program must meet the qualification requirements without regard to the age of the children being served. See response above regarding early childhood services funded solely with non-Title I funds.

E. FUNDING ISSUES

E-1. What funds are available for helping paraprofessionals in Title I schools meet the new requirements?

A number of key ESEA programs authorize funds that can be used to improve teacher quality:

- Under section 1119 of Title I, an LEA must use not less than five percent or more than ten percent of its Title I allocation in the school years 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 (and not less than five percent in subsequent years) for professional development activities to ensure that teachers and paraprofessionals meet the qualification requirements in section 1119 [section 1119(l)].
- LEAs also may use their general Title I funds “to support ongoing training and professional development to assist teachers and paraprofessionals” [section 1114(b)(1)(D) and section 1115(c)(1)(F) and (d)].

- Schools and LEAs, identified as needing improvement, must also reserve funds for professional development and these funds may be used for paraprofessionals [sections 1116(b)(3)(A)(iii) and 1116(c)(7)(A)(iii)].
- Title III, Part A, the English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act, authorizes LEAs to use formula grant funds for professional development of teachers and other instructional personnel providing instruction to students needing English language acquisition and language enhancement [section 3111(a)(2)(A)].
- Title V, Part A, Innovative Programs, authorizes LEAs to use funds innovatively in certain areas for teachers and other school personnel [section 5131(a)].
- Title VII, Part A, the Indian Education Program, requires a comprehensive program for meeting the needs of Indian children that, among other things, calls for professional development opportunities to ensure that teachers and other school professionals have been properly trained [section 7114(b)(5)].

E-2. May an LEA use the Title II, Part A, Improving Teacher Quality State Grants funds, to provide training for paraprofessionals?

Yes. The law allows LEAs to use these funds to provide professional development activities “that improve the knowledge of teachers and principals, and, in appropriate cases, paraprofessionals” concerning:

- One or more core academic subjects that teachers teach; or
- Effective instructional strategies, methods, and skills, and use of challenging content and academic achievement standards and State assessments to improve teaching practices and student academic achievement [section 2123(a)(3)(A)].

Note that, provided that an LEA maintains records of the amount of Title I and Title II, Part A funds used for these professional development activities, and the Title I funds are used as permitted in the Title I statute and regulations, Title I and Title II, Part A funds may be used jointly for this purpose.

In addition, Title IX, section 91(1)(34) states that professional development programs can be created that enable paraprofessionals to obtain the education necessary to become certified and *licensed teachers*.

APPENDIX D EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE USE OF PARAPROFESSIONALS IN CONNECTICUT'S BIRTH TO THREE SYSTEM, PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AND PRIVATE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS:

A Survey

Background and Methods:

As an important segment of the workforce in Connecticut, the paraprofessional has experienced an increasingly significant role in both early intervention and education. This was underscored by a specific reference in both the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) and the recent *Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA). Therefore, the Connecticut Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) Council, in collaboration with the State Advisory Council on Special Education (SAC), conducted a study focusing on CT paraprofessionals.

The research design consisted of a descriptive survey. The sample unit for the research consisted of the professional who was considered knowledgeable about the paraprofessional workforce. They were stratified into three separate environments that employ paraprofessionals:

- *Birth to Three programs;*
- *Public School Special Education programs;*
- *Private School Special Education programs.*

One hundred (100) questionnaires were returned. This yielded a participation rate of about 38%, very satisfactory.

Findings:

Census Data

The census data on the CT paraprofessional workforce reflected wide ranges and should be used judiciously, as preliminary planning data. A follow-up study on the paraprofessional as a sampling unit is recommended. The census data included information on the number of paraprofessionals per site, part-time and full-time status, their wages/salaries, the student populations served, and their educational levels at first hire. All of the findings can be referred to in the full report.

With that caveat, these results were obtained:

- *Public schools employ the largest number of both general and special education paraprofessionals who work full-time and part-time.*
- *The average hourly rate for paraprofessionals is between \$10 and \$12 dollars per hour, whether they work full-time or part-time.*

- *Birth to Three programs employ paraprofessionals mostly to serve their birth to three populations. In the public school programs, over half of all paraprofessionals work with elementary school students. Parallel findings were reported in the data from private school programs. Middle and secondary school students are also served by paraprofessionals in both the private and public school programs. There is significantly a fewer number of paraprofessionals (10%) providing services at the preschool level. In terms of transition or post-secondary program clientele, few public or private school paraprofessionals serve this student population.*
- *The level of education for paraprofessionals is quite diverse. A few reportedly have high school preparation, but lack a high school diploma or GED. Many have a high school diploma or GED. Others have graduated from college, and some even have graduate degrees or coursework under their belt.*

Services Provided

There is great variation regarding the services provided in the three different environments, with more similarities existing between the public and private school programs.

Respondents (at least 50%) Reporting Services Delivered by Paraprofessionals: Birth To Three

1. Assisting families with meeting child's needs in daily routines
2. Facilitating inclusion in community-based settings
3. Facilitating interaction with student/child's peers
4. Attending the PPT/IFSP meetings
5. Providing service coordination
6. Conducting IFSP meetings
7. Designing or assisting in the design of IEPs or IFSPs
8. Conducting parental involvement activities

Respondents (at least 50%) Reporting Services Delivered by Paraprofessionals: Public Schools

1. Facilitating inclusion in general education classroom
2. Facilitating interaction with student/child's peers
3. Assisting or preparing student instructional activities
4. Classroom management / organizing instructional materials
5. Modifying or adapting classroom curriculum
6. Computer laboratory assistance
7. Library or media support
8. One-on-one tutoring
9. Speech and language assistance

10. Facilitating inclusion in community-based settings
11. Providing health-related support
12. Occupational Therapy assistance

Respondents (at least 50%) Reporting Services Delivered by Paraprofessionals: Private Schools

1. Assisting or preparing student instructional activities
2. Classroom management / organizing instructional materials
3. One-on-one tutoring
4. Facilitating interaction with student/child's peers
5. Computer laboratory assistance
6. Modifying or adapting classroom curriculum
7. Providing input into assessment and evaluations
8. Facilitating inclusion in community-based settings
9. Job Coaching

Supervision and Evaluation:

The primary supervisors and evaluators of the paraprofessionals vary. For Birth to Three programs, it is the director who performs both tasks. In public schools, the supervisory responsibility is shared between the special and general educators. However, the principal and the special educator evaluate performance. In private programs, it is the special educator who supervises the paraprofessional, but the principal shares in the evaluation process.

When asked if teachers generally possess the skill to direct the paraprofessional, the consensus was positive. This perception was colored by the comment that it varied among teachers depending on their experience, years on the job, and other factors.

The Current State of Affairs:

Respondents were asked about the status of what currently exists regarding paraprofessionals. Again, there were differences that can be attributed to the different environments.

Over half of the respondents in each of the three environments report having:

- Written job descriptions for paraprofessionals;
- Health benefits for paraprofessionals;
- Permission and opportunities to attend off-site workshops for paraprofessionals;
- Formal performance evaluation/reviews by a supervisor.

Over half of the respondents in the Birth to Three and private school programs report having:

- Formal orientation when paraprofessionals are hired;
- Ongoing career development (PD) for paraprofessionals after they are hired;
- A paraprofessional handbook (employee handbook);
- Inclusion of paraprofessionals on committees, task forces, or program evaluation.

Over half of the respondents in the public and private school programs report having:

- Substitutes for paraprofessionals.

Over half of the respondents in the Birth to Three programs report having:

- Attendance at PPT/IFSP meetings by paraprofessionals;
- Inclusion of paraprofessionals as a member of the team (IFSP, EIP, etc.).

Over half of the respondents in the private school programs report having:

- Reimbursement for college coursework taken by paraprofessionals;
- Opportunities for career advancement, upward mobility.

Over half of the respondents in the public school programs report having:

- A collective bargaining unit (union) for paraprofessionals;
- Written contracts for paraprofessionals.

Professional Development Needs:

An important question asked respondents to rate the need for professional development among their paraprofessional workforce. There were 27 areas and each reflected a degree of need. The highest and most pressing needs are as follows and are categorized by environment where the paraprofessional works.

All Three Environments:

- Positive behavioral supports and implementation of behavior management plans;
- Facilitating social interactions between children and their peers;
- Teaming skills, i.e., conflict management, problem-solving, etc.

Public and Private Schools:

- Knowledge of and skills to assist in the instruction of reading / reading readiness;
- Knowledge of and skills to assist in the instruction of writing / writing readiness;
- Knowledge of and skills to assist in the instruction math / mathematics readiness.

Public Schools:

- Curriculum modifications and instructional strategies.

Birth to Three Paraprofessionals:

- Human development and milestones for identified age groups;
- Cultural diversity;
- Facilitating play;
- Family support;
- Coaching/modeling intervention strategies for families;
- Knowledge of Federal, State, and district program regulations;
- Safety precautions;
- Data collection.

Birth to Three Paraprofessionals and Private School Programs:

- Knowledge of specific disabilities;
- State mandates (abuse/neglect reporting, universal precautions, etc.);
- Communication skills.

Private School Programs:

- Time management.

In addition, the following areas were expressed as moderate needs for paraprofessionals in these environments.

All Three Groups:

- Ethical standards of conduct (confidentiality, etc.);
- Assistive technology.

Birth to Three and Private School Paraprofessionals:

- Supporting independence and self-advocacy in children and families.

Public School Paraprofessionals:

- Roles and responsibilities of paraprofessionals.

Birth to Three Paraprofessionals:

- Supporting students in community-based or extracurricular activities;
- Selecting appropriate materials and equipment;
- IFSP process;
- Preparing and implementing transition activities.

Summary:

The importance of the paraprofessional in Connecticut educational environments cannot be understated. They provide many services in Birth to Three and public and private special education programs, as documented by the survey findings.

Previously, not much was known about this important segment of the workforce - how many were employed part-time and full-time, the wage and salary scales, the educational background, the processes of supervision and evaluation, their employment status, and their professional development needs. Some of these data have been uncovered in this research study. Substantial information on the paraprofessionals' work environments, their professional development needs, and their valuable contribution in service delivery have been quantified by hard data. Softer data were produced on the demographic or census side. A follow-up strategy may consider an actual census of the paraprofessionals. In the meantime, the need for professional development is firmly established. The investment in the training of this key workforce participant will benefit schools, the classroom teacher and the students themselves.

Respectfully submitted:
Susan Carroll, Ph.D.
David Carroll, M.S.W.
July 16, 2002

APPENDIX D

THE USE OF PARAPROFESSIONALS IN CONNECTICUT'S BIRTH TO THREE SYSTEM, PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AND PRIVATE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS:

A Survey

1. Please estimate the **number of staff** in the following positions in your program, private school, or school district.

Birth to Three Providers:

TITLES	Number - FULL-TIME	Full-time, Hours per Week (est.)	Number - PART-TIME	Part-time, Hours per Week (est.)
<i>Early Intervention Assistants</i>				
<i>Early Intervention Associates</i>				

Public Schools or Private Schools:

TITLES	Number - FULL-TIME	Full-time, Hours per Week (est.)	Number - PART-TIME	Part-time, Hours per Week (est.)
<i>Special Education Paraprofessionals</i>				
<i>General Education Paraprofessionals</i>				

2. Please estimate the typical **salary/wage range** for each of the positions below.

Birth to Three Providers:

Positions	Full-time Salary	Full-time Hourly Rate	Part-time Salary	Part-time Hourly Rate
<i>Early Intervention Assistants</i>				
<i>Early Intervention Associates</i>				

Public Schools or Private Schools:

Positions	Full-time Salary	Full-time Hourly Rate	Part-time Salary	Part-time Hourly Rate
<i>Special Education Paraprofessionals</i>				
<i>General Education Paraprofessionals</i>				

NOTE: For the remainder of this survey, the term *paraprofessional* refers to school-based paraprofessionals, aides, tutors, paraeducators, and Birth to Three System Early Intervention Assistants and Associates.

As of April 25, 2002, please estimate the number of paraprofessionals at each **level**.

- Birth to Three (if different from the total number listed in Item #1)
- Preschool
- Elementary
- Middle / Jr. High
- Secondary
- Transition / Post-Secondary

3. For each level of education, please estimate the number of paraprofessionals at that **education level**.

Level of Education of Paraprofessionals at Hire	Number
1. Some high school, but no diploma or GED	
2. High school diploma or GED	
3. Coursework from community college or trade school	
4. Associate's degree or two years of study	
5. Bachelor's degree	
6. Post 4-year college, graduate or certificate courses	

Comments on the above:

4. Please check all **service areas** that paraprofessionals currently provide to you.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom management / organizing instructional materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Modifying or adapting classroom curriculum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assisting or preparing student instructional activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Translating or interpreting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Designing or assisting in the design of IEPs or IFSPs | <input type="checkbox"/> Providing service coordination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attending the PPT / IFSP meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Job coaching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conducting IFSP meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> Providing input into assessment and evaluations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conducting parental involvement activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Providing health-related support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitating interaction with student / child's peers | <input type="checkbox"/> Speech and language assistance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer laboratory assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> One-on-one tutoring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library or media support | <input type="checkbox"/> Occupational Therapy assistance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assisting families with meeting child's needs in daily routines | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Therapy assistance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitating inclusion in community-based settings | <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitating inclusion in general education classroom |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify.) _____ | |

5. Who is the paraprofessional's **immediate supervisor** (the person the paraprofessional reports to on a daily basis)? Check all that apply. Please leave blank if you are unsure.

General Educator

Special Educator

Birth to Three Program Director

Service Coordinator

Director of Special Education / Pupil Personnel

Title I, ELL or ESL Teacher

Principal or Assistant Principal

Licensed Related Services Personnel (Nurse, Psychologist, SLP, PT, OT, etc.)

Other (Please specify.): _____

6. Who is responsible for **evaluating** the job performance of paraprofessionals in your program or district? Check all that apply. Please leave blank if you are unsure.

General Educator

Special Educator

Birth to Three Program Director

Service Coordinator

Director of Special Education / Pupil Personnel

Title I, ELL or ESL Teacher

Principal or Assistant Principal

Licensed Related Services Personnel (Nurse, Psychologist, SLP, PT, OT, etc.)

Other (Please specify.): _____

If possible, please attach a copy of the evaluation tool presently used to evaluate paraprofessionals.
--

7. Please indicate whether each of the following is **present in your program or district**.
Comment below, if necessary.

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>To Some Degree</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>1. Written job descriptions for paraprofessionals</i>			
<i>2. Attendance at PPT / IFSP meetings by paraprofessionals</i>			
<i>3. Reimbursement for college coursework taken by paraprofessionals</i>			
<i>4. Mentoring 1st year paraprofessionals</i>			
<i>5. Difficulty recruiting qualified paraprofessionals</i>			
<i>6. Formal orientation when paraprofessionals are hired</i>			
<i>7. Ongoing career development (PD) for paraprofessionals after they are hired</i>			
<i>8. Inclusion of paraprofessionals as a member of the team (IFSP, EIP, etc.)</i>			
<i>9. High turnover / low retention rate of paraprofessionals</i>			
<i>10. Health benefits for paraprofessionals</i>			
<i>11. Permission and opportunities to attend off-site workshops designed for paraprofessionals</i>			
<i>12. Formal performance evaluation / reviews by a supervisor</i>			
<i>13. Opportunities for career advancement, upward mobility</i>			
<i>14. A paraprofessional handbook (employee handbook)</i>			
<i>15. A collective bargaining unit (union) for paraprofessionals</i>			
<i>16. Substitutes for paraprofessionals</i>			
<i>17. Inclusion of paraprofessionals on committees, task forces, or program evaluation activities</i>			
<i>18. Written contracts for paraprofessionals</i>			

Comments on the above:

8. Please rate the **need for current professional development** for paraprofessionals in the following content areas.

(Circle a rating.)

Content and Skill Areas	Extreme Need	High Need	Moderate Need	Low Need	No need
1. <i>Knowledge of and skills to assist in the instruction of reading / reading readiness</i>	5	4	3	2	1
2. <i>Knowledge of and skills to assist in the instruction of writing / writing readiness</i>	5	4	3	2	1
3. <i>Knowledge of and skills to assist in the instruction mathematics / mathematics readiness</i>	5	4	3	2	1
4. <i>Roles and responsibilities of paraprofessionals</i>	5	4	3	2	1
5. <i>Human development and milestones for identified age groups</i>	5	4	3	2	1
6. <i>Ethical standards of conduct (confidentiality, etc.)</i>	5	4	3	2	1
7. <i>Supporting independence and self-advocacy in children and families</i>	5	4	3	2	1
8. <i>Positive behavioral supports and implementation of behavior management plans</i>	5	4	3	2	1
9. <i>Facilitating social interactions between children and their peers</i>	5	4	3	2	1
10. <i>Curriculum modifications and instructional strategies</i>	5	4	3	2	1
11. <i>Supporting students in community-based or extracurricular activities</i>	5	4	3	2	1
12. <i>Knowledge of specific disabilities</i>	5	4	3	2	1
13. <i>Cultural diversity</i>	5	4	3	2	1
14. <i>Facilitating play</i>	5	4	3	2	1
15. <i>Family support</i>	5	4	3	2	1
16. <i>Coaching / modeling intervention strategies for families</i>	5	4	3	2	1
17. <i>Selecting appropriate materials and equipment</i>	5	4	3	2	1
18. <i>Knowledge of Federal, State, and district program regulations</i>	5	4	3	2	1
19. <i>State mandates (abuse/neglect reporting, universal precautions, etc.)</i>	5	4	3	2	1
20. <i>Safety precautions</i>	5	4	3	2	1
21. <i>Data collection</i>	5	4	3	2	1
22. <i>IFSP process</i>	5	4	3	2	1
23. <i>Preparing and implementing transition activities</i>	5	4	3	2	1
24. <i>Assistive technology</i>	5	4	3	2	1
25. <i>Communication skills</i>	5	4	3	2	1
26. <i>Teaming skills (conflict management, problem-solving, etc.)</i>	5	4	3	2	1
27. <i>Time management</i>	5	4	3	2	1

Comments on the above:

9. To what degree are teachers / related services personnel / Birth to Three providers skillful in **directing and supervising** the tasks of a paraprofessional?

Very Moderately Somewhat Not Very Not At All

Comments on the above:

10. What **RES**C (regional education service center) is your program/school district nearest to?

ACES CES CREC EASTCONN Education Connection LEARN

11. Which Connecticut **community-technical college** is your program/school district nearest to?

Asnuntuck Capital Gateway Housatonic Manchester Middlesex
 Naugatuck Northwestern Norwalk Quinebaug Three Rivers Tunxis

12. Please add comments or suggestions related to any areas covered in this survey.

Name of Person Completing Survey: _____

District or Birth to Three Program Name: _____

Position/Title: _____

Phone Number: _____

Thank you for helping the CT CSPD Council and State Advisory Council to collect this important information.

If you have any questions about this questionnaire, do not hesitate to contact
Words & Numbers Research, Inc. at (860) 489-5639, or email wordsnum@snet.net.

APPENDIX E

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS: STATUS OF STATE PARAPROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

ALABAMA LETTER OF APPROVAL	Required. 30 hours of formal training; permanent.
ALASKA	NONE
ARIZONA	NONE
ARKANSAS	Training standards established for paraprofessionals in special education programs.
CALIFORNIA	NONE
COLORADO	NONE
CONNECTICUT	NONE
DELAWARE STATE PERMIT	Requirements not specified. Must have "evaluated experience and training" and "skills relevant to the position"; permanent.
FLORIDA	Legislation outlining career ladder with LEA option (not mandatory) passed in 1998. Current regulations specify standards and procedures that apply to teacher aides, including health, age, knowledge of policies and instructional practices. 2 years of college or 50 hours required. Renewable every 2 years, requires additional 50 hours of instruction or inservice.
GEORGIA STATE LICENSE	Three-tier training program for special education. State in the process of expanding to accommodate Title I positions. Level 1 and 2 training provided by state. Level 3 training provided by community colleges.
HAWAII	Special education and Title 1 positions, state standards for knowledge and performance. Recommendations for orientation and training in first year of employment.
IDAHO	Completion of a teacher aide training program approved by the superintendent or 30 semester hours required; permanent. Legislation pending for revision and creation of task force to study issue.
ILLINOIS STATE CERTIFICATE	Special education, appropriately trained paraprofessionals may work under the direction of a teacher or related services personnel. Public agencies must provide preservice and inservice training.
INDIANA	New hires must complete inservice in first year of employment. LEAs must have staff development plan that includes paraprofessionals. Special education, preservice and inservice requirements. Level 1 Certificate granted to those who complete a recognized paraprofessional preparation program with 90 clock hours of training.
IOWA	Level 2 Certificate granted to those who complete AA degree or 62 hours of college education and two semester hours of coursework with 100 hours of supervised practicum.

KANSAS STATE PERMIT	Special education only. Effective May 2000. No longer in state regulations, but districts must follow these standards in order to receive state reimbursement of approximately \$8,000 per special education paraprofessional. Level 1 - - 20 hours, renewable every year. Level 2 - - 20 to 30 semester hours, 450 hours of inservice and 2 years experience at Level 1; renewed every 3 years. Level 3 - - 60 semester hours or AA degree, 900 hours of inservice and 3 years at Level 2; renewed every 3 years.
KENTUCKY	NONE
LOUISIANA	NONE
MAINE STATE CERTIFICATE	Education Technician / Level 1 - - high school diploma, orientation and ongoing inservice. Education Technician / Level II - - 2 years of college and inservice. Education Technician / Level III - - 3 years of college and inservice. All are renewed yearly.
MARYLAND	State task force report recommending licensure standards presented to State Legislature in 1998. 2002 - - State standards establish high school diploma as baseline for employment. Paraprofessional certificate requires 15 hours of training and 750 hours of employment. Renewable every 5 years with completion of additional training. Certificate is not required for employment.
MASSACHUSETTS	NONE
MICHIGAN	NONE
MINNESOTA	Knowledge and skill standards for special education established in 1997. State law requires LEAs to ensure paraprofessionals in special education have sufficient skills and also requires LEAs to provide training opportunities.
MISSISSIPPI	Assistant teacher - - Complete the reading, language arts and math portions of a current nationally-normed eighth grade standardized achievement test (exempt are those holding a teaching certificate); HS diploma or GED; participation in annual training provided by the district.
MISSOURI STATE REQUIREMENT	Instructional aides only; 60 hours college study required; renewed yearly.
MONTANA	Training standards established for special education paraprofessionals.
NEBRASKA	NONE
NEVADA	NONE
NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE CERTIFICATE	HS diploma, 1 year experience, and completion of a 2-week orientation session on special education. Tier 1 certified paraprofessionals must complete 50 hours in areas determined by the professional development master plan for their district. Tier 2 and 3 paraprofessionals must complete additional training.

NEW JERSEY	Paraprofessional positions are approved by the county superintendent of schools, who must develop job descriptions and standards for appointment.
NEW MEXICO STATE REQUIREMENT	A paraprofessional must complete a training program designed by the local school district to meet competencies defined by the state. Training varies according to district and how it uses paraprofessionals.
NEW YORK STATE CERTIFIED	Teacher Aide - - Must fulfill civil service requirements; responsibilities are non-teaching. Teaching Assistant - - Temporary license: HS diploma; responsibilities are instructional in nature. Teaching Assistant - - Continuing certificate: 6 hours of collegiate study; one year of experience; responsibilities are instructional in nature. Teaching Assistant - - Level 1: HS diploma; satisfactory level of performance on the New York State Teacher Certification Examination Test. Teaching Assistant - - Level 2: all requirements of Level 1, plus 6 hours of collegiate study. Teaching Assistant - - Preprofessional Certificate: all requirements of Level III, plus must be matriculated in a program registered as leading to teacher certification.
NORTH CAROLINA	Department of Labor Teacher Assistant Certificate requires completion of inservice training, 2 years employment, and completion of related training (six core courses in an early childhood program or a teacher assistant program offered by a community college).
NORTH DAKOTA	NONE
OHIO STATE PERMIT	Education Aide - - "Skills sufficient to do the job", 1-year permit. Education Assistant - - HS diploma and participation in unspecified inservice training under a 1-year permit; renewed every 4 years.
OKLAHOMA	Legislation passed 1999; in process at State Department of Education.
OREGON	Under discussion at State Department of Education.
PENNSYLVANIA STATE CERTIFIED	Private schools only.
RHODE ISLAND STATE REQUIREMENT	HS diploma; training at discretion of district. Knowledge and skill standards established for special education and bilingual paraprofessionals.
SOUTH CAROLINA	HS diploma; participation in preservice and inservice training programs for aides.
SOUTH DAKOTA	NONE
TENNESSEE	NONE
TEXAS STATE CERTIFIED	Education Aide - - HS diploma and experience working with children. Education Aide II - - 15 hours of college study or "demonstrated proficiency". Education Aide III - - 30 hours of college study and 3 years as aide at Level I or II. Legislation introduced for revision, 1999.
UTAH	Standards for special education paraprofessionals' roles and preparation. Work is currently underway to revise for Title I paraprofessionals.
VERMONT STATE CERTIFIED	Personnel standards for paraprofessionals will be included in special education rules in 2002.
VIRGINIA	NONE
WASHINGTON	Current system defined but not mandatory. Core knowledge and skill competencies established for all paraprofessionals.

WEST VIRGINIA	Teacher Aides and Teacher Assistants have no standards for employment. Paraprofessional license applies to employees working at a higher level of independence, and license sets standards for training.
WISCONSIN STATE LICENSE	Standards for special education paraprofessionals are developed (Summer, 2002) and awaiting approval.
WYOMING	NONE

Source: AFT Website
 Status of State Paraprofessionals and School Related Personnel
www.aft.org/psrp/certification/status.html
 revised 09/03/02

APPENDIX F

JOB COACH COMPETENCIES FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS IN SCHOOL SYSTEMS

Students with disabilities who receive training and support at a variety of job sites during high school are better prepared for a successful transition to the working world. The job coach is the key person who is responsible for knowing the student, and the supports and modifications needed to be successful in the workplace. The job coach must create a safe environment in which the student can explore and learn work, interpersonal and self-advocacy skills.

The job coach represents the school and serves as the liaison between the employment site, the school, the student and parents. A diverse but critical array of competencies is required of the job coach, including good judgment and the ability to maintain professional behavior at all times.

Job coaches will demonstrate the knowledge to accomplish the following:

- 1) Ability to work effectively and maintain relationships with families, students, school personnel and employers and co-workers:
 - a) Gathers and maintains data about the performance and behavior of individual students and confer with special and general education teachers about student schedules, instructional goals, progress and performance;
 - b) Participates as a member of the team responsible for transition planning and vocational assessment for individual students;
 - c) Provides relevant employment information for inclusion in each student's vocational portfolio;
 - d) Consults with teachers or vocational coordinators to assist with the design of individualized transition and supported employment or other vocational training programs;
 - e) Demonstrates an understanding regarding the roles and responsibilities of professional and paraprofessional personnel;
 - f) Communicates effectively with employers and co-workers to ensure students are integrated and accepted into the work environment;
 - g) Familiarizes employers and co-workers with the special needs of students and models appropriate interactions; and
 - h) Identifies cultural norms of the workplace.
- 2) Knowledge of the professional, ethical and legal standards of conduct in relationships with students, parents, school personnel, adult service providers, employers and co-workers:
 - a) Has knowledge of the legal and human rights of students with disabilities and their families;
 - b) Is sensitive to the diversity in cultural heritage, lifestyles, and value systems among students and families they serve;
 - c) Demonstrates the ability to practice the ethical and professional standards of conduct established by the local school district where they work;
 - d) Understands the value of serving students in integrated settings; and
 - e) Maintains professional appearance and attitude.

3) Skills necessary to assist in the assessment, planning, provision, and evaluation of instruction in the cognitive and affective domains:

- a) Communicates with colleagues, follows instructions and uses problem-solving and other skills that will enable them to work as effective members of an instructional team;
- b) Motivates and assists students to build self-esteem and develop interpersonal skills that will help avoid isolation in the workplace;
- c) Demonstrates the ability to use computers, assistive technology, and adaptive equipment that will enable students to participate more fully in school and at the workplace;
- d) Demonstrates the ability to participate in pre-employment, vocational, or transition training in classrooms or at the workplace;
- e) Analyzes job requirements, sequences daily tasks, observes and records data, and provides training at job sites using appropriate instructional interventions;
- f) Encourages student participation in decision-making/self-advocacy regarding future career plans;
- g) Observes, understands, and monitors the student's preferred learning style, work skills and tolerances, and preferred modes of communication;
- h) Identifies needed environmental or job modifications for the student to succeed in the workplace;
- i) Utilizes appropriate instructional techniques, including reinforcement, cueing, prompting, modeling and fading;
- j) Assists in on-site observations to evaluate job performance;
- k) Records progress in a consistent manner and shares information with appropriate supervisory personnel; and
- l) Assists students to learn good work habits and performs jobs as specified.

4) Recognizes and maintains a safe and healthy environment at the workplace:

- a) Follows health, safety and emergency procedures developed by the local school district and the workplace; and
- b) Ensures students understand and abide by the health, safety and emergency procedures developed by the local school district and the workplace.

5) Demonstrates the skills in communication, conflict resolution and negotiation that facilitates a positive and effective work environment:

- a) Assists students in strengthening their skills to become more independent by monitoring and supporting positive behavior at the workplace;
- b) Describes behavior in measurable and observable terms;
- c) Recognizes environmental factors that may precipitate behaviors and intervenes with appropriate behavior management techniques;
- d) Develops strategies to support students to acquire positive social behaviors and work habits;
- e) Identifies strategies that may eliminate interfering behaviors; and
- f) Motivates students to work in a productive and competitive manner.

APPENDIX G

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

The job description is useful in clarifying the roles of the paraprofessional and can serve as a reference point in conducting an evaluation of paraprofessional performance. The job description should specifically delineate the paraprofessional's duties in writing and may change from time to time, depending on the needs of students and staff. Often included are the duties that paraprofessionals are to perform and the duties that paraprofessionals are not to perform, as dictated by school district policy, ethical and legal constraints, and school protocol. Administrative concerns, such as working conditions, supervision, and evaluation procedures, may also appear in a written job description. Job descriptions will vary depending on the needs of staff and students and the duties expected to be performed by a paraprofessional.

Sample Job Description:

Job Description for Paraprofessional, Lincoln Public Schools

Position / Title:	Paraprofessional
Department:	Variable
Assignment:	General Instruction
Assignment Length:	180 days
Essential Functions:	

Note: This is a generalized job description. Specific duties and responsibilities vary, depending on the assigned department or school. Applicants should be made aware of the specific functions of the position prior to employment.

Frequent:

- ◆ Performs office duties such as attendance reports, typing, filing, and handling routine interruptions such as notes, messages and deliveries.
- ◆ Performs routine supervisory duties such as lunchroom, playground, halls and classroom.
- ◆ Types, draws, writes and duplicates instructional materials.
- ◆ Researches and assembles materials to be used in a particular unit (per instructions from the respective teacher).
- ◆ Prepares bulletin boards, graphs and charts.
- ◆ Reserves films.
- ◆ Checks papers, workbooks, homework and tests (if object answers have been supplied by the teachers).
- ◆ Helps in the care of the classroom.
- ◆ Writes plans on chalkboard, overhead projector.
- ◆ Reads to students; listens to students read.
- ◆ Helps students with make-up work.
- ◆ Assists in individual or group activities, games, flash cards, etc.
- ◆ Assists students in interpreting and following directions of the teachers.
- ◆ Drills to reinforce any skill the teacher has taught.
- ◆ Alerts teacher to needs of students.
- ◆ Assists teacher in checking progress of individualized study projects.

Occasional:

- ◆ Fills out attendance cards and cumulative records.
- ◆ Checks emergency sheets, class lists, etc.
- ◆ Collects moneys for books, lab fees, etc.
- ◆ Assists with inventory of supplies and equipment.
- ◆ Assists with field trips.
- ◆ Contacts community resource people.
- ◆ Makes educational games and aids.
- ◆ Assists when emergencies arise.
- ◆ Performs any other delegated non-instructional responsibility assigned by teacher or administrator.

Requirements:

- a) High school diploma or equivalent. Good work attendance record.
- b) Ability to follow teacher direction and written plans.
- c) Ability to maintain student confidentiality.
- d) Appropriate communication skills.
- e) Ability to work in a team setting.
- f) Ability to work with and meet individual needs of children as directed by teachers and other professional staff.
- g) Ability to work or learn to work various office machines.
- h) For paraprofessionals hired in Title I position, see requirements on page 9.

Reports to (Evaluator):

Building Administrator

Receives Guidance from (Supervisor):

Teacher, Building Administrator

Full Time / Part Time:

Full Time, Part Time

D.O.T. No.:

249.367.074 Elementary
099.327.010 Secondary

Physical Requirements:

Standing - Frequent

Walking - Frequent

Sitting - Occasional

Bending / Stooping - Occasional

Reaching / Pulling - Occasional

Climbing - Never

Driving - Occasional

Lifting 40 lb. Maximum* - Occasional

Carrying 25 ft. - Occasional

Manual Dexterity Tasks - Frequent

*Specify: *AV Equipment, TV / VCR, Recorders, Telephone, Typewriter / Word Processor, Copier.*

Other Requirements:

Effective oral and written communication skills.

Skills in human relations, leadership, and conflict management.

Working Conditions:

- a. Both inside and outside.
- b. Climatic environment: Most district classrooms and other work areas are not air-conditioned and are subject to extremes of temperature and humidity.
- c. Hazards: Stairs, dust, drafts, communicable diseases, and others, depending on assignment.

***Range of Possible Duties:**

Job duties may vary depending on assignment. Individuals may be re-assigned, as necessary.

Job duties may include:

- a. self-care activities;
- b. behavior management;
- c. supervision of children outdoors and on transportation;
- d. lifting of individuals.

* Modified by Task Force

APPENDIX H

ROLES OF PROGRAM AND BUILDING ADMINISTRATORS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PARAEDUCATORS

- Ensure that teachers and paraeducators understand the distinctions in their roles and are aware of school and district policies.
- Inform parents about the roles of paraeducators in implementing their child's program.
- Involve teachers in the selection of paraeducators.
- Schedule opportunities for teachers and paraeducators to meet regularly for on-the-job training and planning.
- Provide support that will help team members to resolve interpersonal or other problems that may occur in classrooms or other learning environments.
- Ensure that paraeducators are appropriately prepared to carry out assigned tasks.
- Provide clear guidelines for the supervision of paraeducators.
- Provide leadership in the evaluation and systematic improvement of teacher supervision and monitoring of paraeducators.
- Develop, in collaboration with teachers, performance indicators and instruments for assessing the performance of paraeducators and guidelines for involving teachers in annual performance reviews of paraeducators.
- Assess emerging training needs for teachers and paraeducators as educational program team members.
- Provide teachers and paraeducators with information about career development opportunities and support services available through district or institutions of higher education.

Note: Adapted from *Guide for Effective Paraeducator Practices in Iowa*, by Iowa Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education, 1998, Des Moines, IA: Author; and *Using Paraeducators Effectively in the Classroom* [Fastback 358], by A.L. Pickett, S.F. Vasa, and A.L. Steckelberg, 1993, Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.

APPENDIX I

STANDARDS FOR TEACHER / PROVIDER SUPERVISORY COMPETENCIES

STANDARD 1:

To Serve As Leaders Of Program Implementation Teams And To Supervise Paraprofessionals,
Teachers / Providers Demonstrate The Following Knowledge And Skill Competencies:

I. Knowledge competencies include an:

1. Understanding of the value of a team approach in the delivery of services.
2. Understanding of the distinctions in teacher / provider and administrator roles in the employment, management, supervision, evaluation, and preparation of paraprofessionals.
3. Understanding of distinctions in the roles and responsibilities of teachers / providers and paraprofessionals.
4. Awareness of the contributions that paraprofessionals make to increasing the availability of individualized learning experiences and services.
5. Awareness of Federal and State laws and regulations and district / agency policies and practices that influence the employment, roles and responsibilities, supervision, and preparation of paraprofessionals.
6. Understanding of the responsibilities of teachers / providers for supervising paraprofessionals in program implementation teams.
7. Awareness of district / agency policies that may require paraprofessionals to participate in program planning teams.
8. Awareness of interactive, problem-solving, and decision-making techniques that build and maintain effective program planning and program implementation teams.

STANDARD 1 (Continued):

To Serve As Leaders Of Program Implementation Teams And To Supervise Paraprofessionals, Teachers / Providers Demonstrate The Following Knowledge And Skill Competencies:

II Skill competencies include an:

1. Ability to plan work assignments for paraprofessionals based on program requirements and learning objectives for individuals and groups.
2. Ability to appropriately delegate tasks to paraprofessionals based on their qualifications to carry out an assignment.
3. Ability to share information with paraprofessionals about their roles as members of program planning teams, if required by district / agency policies, as well as the roles of other team members, including families, in the development of learner goals.
4. Ability to monitor the day-to-day performance of paraprofessionals and to provide principals / agency administrators with relevant information about the strengths and professional development needs of paraprofessionals.
5. Ability to provide systematic on-the-job training and mentoring to paraprofessionals.

STANDARD 2:

To Ensure That Paraprofessionals Contribute To Learner-Centered, Supportive Environments,
Teachers / Providers Demonstrate The Following Knowledge And Skills:

I. Knowledge competencies include an:

1. Understanding of the contributions that paraprofessionals make to serving children and youth in supportive, learner-centered environments.
2. Awareness of district / agency and/or State / local government policies and procedures for reporting suspected physical, sexual, and psychological child abuse.
3. Awareness of effective strategies for involving families in all aspects of their child's learning experiences.
4. Awareness of distinctions in teacher / provider and paraprofessional responsibilities for sharing information with families about learner performance, and/or engaging families in their child's learning experiences.

II. Skill competencies include an:

1. Ability to share and/or reinforce information with paraprofessionals about Federal, State, and local policies and procedures that ensure the safety, health, and well-being of children, youth, and staff.
2. Ability to plan paraprofessional activities that help to maintain supportive learner-centered environments and protect the safety, health, and well-being of children, youth, and staff.
3. Ability to appropriately involve paraprofessionals in activities that engage families in their child's learning experiences.
4. Ability to model skills that demonstrate respect for the views, rights, and contributions of children and youth, families, and school / agency personnel.

STANDARD 3:

To Appropriately Involve Paraprofessionals In Assisting With Planning And Organizing Learning Experiences, Teachers / Providers Demonstrate The Following Knowledge And Skills:

I. Knowledge competencies include an:

1. Understanding of the distinctions in teacher / provider and paraprofessional roles in diagnosing learning needs, modifying learning activities for individuals, and identifying appropriate materials, equipment, and technology systems.
2. Understanding of how the life experiences of paraprofessionals who come from diverse cultural, ethnic, and language minority heritages may contribute to planning and organizing learning experiences and environments.
3. Understanding of how paraprofessional familiarity with the needs and circumstances of families whose children have disabilities or other special needs may contribute to planning and organizing learning experiences and environments.

II. Skill competencies include an:

1. Ability to appropriately involve paraprofessionals in the planning of individualized learning experiences and organizing environments to promote learning.

STANDARD 4:

To Appropriately Involve Paraprofessionals In Learning Experiences,
Teachers / Providers Demonstrate The Following Knowledge And Skills:

I. Knowledge competencies include an:

1. Understanding of differences and similarities in teacher / provider and paraprofessional roles and responsibilities in facilitating the learning process.
2. Understanding of how different cultural heritages, ability / developmental levels, and other characteristics of children and youth impact their learning styles / preferences.
3. Awareness of various learning strategies, materials, adaptive equipment, and assistive technologies that are required to meet the needs of individual children and youth.

II. Skill competencies include an:

1. Ability to share information with paraprofessionals about characteristics and learning objectives for individual children and youth.
2. Ability to provide on-the-job training to prepare paraprofessionals to follow learning plans developed by the teacher / provider and to use methods, materials, adaptive equipment, and assistive technology selected or developed by the teacher / provider.

STANDARD 5:

To Appropriately Involve Paraprofessionals In Assessing The Strengths And Learning Needs Of Children And Youth,
Teachers / Providers Demonstrate The Following Knowledge And Skills:

I. Knowledge competencies include an:

1. Awareness of the distinctions among teacher / provider, other licensed district / agency professionals, and paraprofessional roles and responsibilities in the assessment process.
2. Understanding of the skills required by paraprofessionals to objectively gather information and report on the performance and achievements of individual children and youth.
3. Awareness of district / agency policies and procedures for preparing and maintaining all learner records.

II. Skill competencies include an:

1. Ability to appropriately involve paraprofessionals in administering standardized achievement tests based on State / district / agency policies, the protocol for conducting the tests, and the paraprofessional's qualifications to carry out the task.
2. Ability to provide on-the-job training to prepare paraprofessionals to use functional (informal) assessment tools and to objectively share relevant information about learner strengths and needs.
3. Ability to prepare paraprofessionals to assist with record-keeping activities based on district / agency policies and procedures.

STANDARD 6:

To Ensure That Professional And Ethical Standards Connected With The Supervision Of Paraprofessionals Are Met,
Teachers / Providers Demonstrate The Following Knowledge And Skills:

I. Knowledge competencies include an:

1. Awareness of the human, civil, and legal rights of all children and youth and their families and the responsibility of all district / agency staff for respecting and protecting these rights.
2. Understanding of the ethical and professional standards of conduct established by the professional organization representing their discipline and/or the State / agency for the selection, supervision, assessment, and preparation of paraprofessionals.
3. Awareness of resources and opportunities for professional development to improve team leadership and supervisory skills of paraprofessionals.

II. Skill competencies include an:

1. Ability to follow standards of professional and ethical conduct for the supervision, assessment, and preparation of paraprofessionals established by the professional organization representing their discipline and/or the State / district / agency.
2. Ability to model standards of professional and ethical conduct for paraprofessionals (i.e., maintaining confidentiality, respecting rights of children, youth, and families, and demonstrating sensitivity to diversity in culture, ethnicity, family structure, learning styles, and abilities).
3. Ability to evaluate one's own skills to improve paraprofessional supervision.

APPENDIX J

DANBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PARAPROFESSIONAL - ASSISTANT TEACHER - ONE-TO-ONE TUTOR PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Employee Name: _____

Date: _____

Activity or Tasks

S	E	D	U	NO
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Taking Responsibility

- Accepts and responsibly acts on directives from supervisor
- Demonstrates support for district's mission, values and goals
- Involves appropriate people in decision-making process
- Completes all assignments in a timely manner
- Attendance

Comment

Flexibility

- Takes positive approach when adapting to change
- Adjusts to changing work demands while maintaining the continuity of ongoing work
- Maintains composure under stress and adversity

Comment

Teamwork

- Keeps supervisor informed of issues affecting classroom mgmt.
- Works to resolve conflict situations through negotiation and consensus building

Comment

Activity or Tasks

S	E	D	U	NO
---	---	---	---	----

Communication

Practices listening, questioning and clarifying skills
 Willingly discusses day-to-day issues with supervisor
 Accepts constructive guidance to aide in self improvement and goal achievement
 Uses the most effective means of communication for each given situation

Comment

Diversity

Treats co-workers and students with dignity and respect
 Works to value contributions of other employees
 Demonstrates a commitment to a climate of openness, trust and acceptance

Comment

Innovation and Creativity

Seeks new, more effective and efficient ways of improving assignments and activities

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S=Superlative performance
E=Effective [Does what is expected]
D=Developmental [Needs improvement]
U=Unsatisfactory
NO=Not Observed

Comment

Employee Signature _____ Date _____

Supervisor Signature _____ Date _____

**MIDDLETOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PARAPROFESSIONAL
ANNUAL REVIEW FORM**

Name: _____ Date: _____ School: _____
 Current Assignment (i.e., Preschool, Resource Room): _____

Directions: Administrator shall complete this review form and meet with the employee to discuss the content. This form shall be used as a constructive guideline.

1.0 Relationships with students	Above Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Not Applicable
1.1 Deals positively with students	—	—	—	—
1.2 Displays patience with students	—	—	—	—
1.3 Communicates effectively with students	—	—	—	—
1.4 Supports the student's behavior intervention plan	—	—	—	—
Comments: _____				

2.0 Relationship with teacher	Above Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Not Applicable
2.1 Follows teacher's oral and written directions	—	—	—	—
2.2 Follows through on teacher's directions	—	—	—	—
2.3 Asks for clarification when needed	—	—	—	—
2.4 Reports pupil progress to teacher	—	—	—	—
2.5 Has cooperative and congenial attitude	—	—	—	—
Comments: _____				

3.0 Responsibilities	Above Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Not Applicable
3.1 Prompt in getting to assigned areas	—	—	—	—
3.2 Demonstrates initiative	—	—	—	—
3.3 Seeks to improve skills required for the job	—	—	—	—
3.4 Works independently and completes work assigned	—	—	—	—
3.5 Maintains confidentiality	—	—	—	—
Comments: _____				

4.0 Additional Comments

4.1 Principal/Designee Comments: _____

4.2 Para Educator Comments: _____

4.3 Teacher(s) Comments: (Teachers will provide input to the principal or designee.)

5.0 Action Plan to Address Areas of Improvement (This is required if areas need improvement. This is a non-disciplinary action plan.)

5.1 _____

5.2 _____

5.3 _____

Employee Signature Title Date

Employee Signature (employee disagrees with review)

Principal or Designee Signature Title Date

This annual review form will not be placed in the file unless the paraprofessional agrees.

_____ I want this form in my personnel file.

EAST HAMPTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
East Hampton, Connecticut
Paraprofessional Performance Appraisal

Part Time
 Instructional
 Program Assistant

Date: _____
Employee: _____
Year: _____

Instructions

Evaluate the employee in each of the areas listed under performance responsibilities. Check the rating that most nearly coincides with your overall judgment of each quality. The care and accuracy with which this appraisal is made will determine its value to you, to the employee and to the school system.

Paraprofessional I - To be evaluated on the appropriate Para II or Para III criteria that would be applied if the position were to be full-time.

Paraprofessional II - Evaluate items 1 through 13.

Paraprofessional III - Evaluate items 1 through 22.

(Always) (Most Often) (More Often Than Not) (Not Often) (Rarely)

Performance Responsibilities:	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Unsatisfactory	Not Applicable
1. Basic Skills						
2. Sensitive to Needs						
3. Interpersonal Skills						
4. Student Differences						
5. Discipline						
6. Public School System						
7. Communication						
8. Organizational Skills						
9. Team Membership						
10. Student Management						
11. Plan and Implement						
12. Student Support						
13. Model Productive Behavior						
14. Knowledge and Ability						
15. Responsive Environment						
16. Maintain Resources						
17. Staff Notification						
18. Supplementary Assistance						
19. Evaluation Skills						
20. Tutorial						
21. Maintenance of Sp. Ed. Areas						
22. Participates in Team Meetings						

Additional Comments:

Consider other elements of job performance, which may not be included but are job related, i.e., problem-solving, judgment, poise, cleanliness etc.

Element	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Unsatisfactory

Overall Appraisal:

- Excellent Excellent on all Performance Responsibilities.
- Very Good No fair ratings and majority of items rated very good or better.
- Good Most elements rated good or better but no more than one element rated fair.
- Fair No unsatisfactory elements but at least two or more elements rated fair.
- Unsatisfactory One or more elements rated unsatisfactory.

Appraisal Comments: Comments are encouraged on all elements but are required on those elements rated Fair or Unsatisfactory.

	Date	Signature	Title
Rated by:			
Reviewed by:			
Approved by:			
Employee:			

APPENDIX K
COMMUNITY COLLEGES, REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTERS, AND
OTHER ORGANIZATIONS OFFERING PROGRAMS FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS

Organization / Contact Person	Program Description	Type of Program
<p>Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES) Rosemary Burdick 205 State Street Hamden, CT 06517</p> <p>Telephone: (203) 407-4443 Email: rdurdick@aces.k12.ct.uu</p>	<p>A series of nine training modules designed to assist paraprofessionals in meeting the requirements set forth by the <i>No Child Left Behind Act (2001)</i> – formal academic assessment, ParaPro.</p>	<p>Test Preparation Workshops for ParaPro Assessment</p>
<p>Cooperative Educational Services (CES) Esther Bobowick 40 Lindeman Drive Trumbull, CT 06611</p> <p>Telephone: (203) 365-8879 Email: bobowice@ces.k12.ct.us</p>	<p>A series of nine training modules designed to assist paraprofessionals in meeting the requirements set forth by the <i>No Child Left Behind Act (2001)</i> – formal academic assessment, ParaPro.</p>	<p>Test Preparation Workshops for ParaPro Assessment</p>
<p>Capital Region Education Council (CREC) Linda Russell 111 Charter Oak Avenue Hartford, CT 06106</p> <p>Telephone: (860) 524-4095 Email: lrussel@crec.org</p>	<p>A series of nine training modules designed to assist paraprofessionals in meeting the requirements set forth by the <i>No Child Left Behind Act (2001)</i> – formal academic assessment, ParaPro.</p>	<p>Test Preparation Workshops for ParaPro Assessment</p>

Organization / Contact Person	Program Description	Type of Program
<p>EASTCONN Paula Colen 322 Main Street Willimantic, CT 06226</p> <p>Telephone: (860) 455-0707 Email: pcolen@eastconn.org</p>	<p>A series of nine training modules designed to assist paraprofessionals in meeting the requirements set forth by the <i>No Child Left Behind Act (2001)</i> – formal academic assessment, ParaPro.</p>	<p>Test Preparation Workshops for ParaPro Assessment</p>
<p>Education Connection Kathleen McClellan 355 Goshen Road Litchfield, CT 06759</p> <p>Telephone: (860) 567-0863 Email: micciellan@educationconnection.org</p>	<p>A series of nine training modules designed to assist paraprofessionals in meeting the requirements set forth by the <i>No Child Left Behind Act (2001)</i> – formal academic assessment, ParaPro.</p>	<p>Test Preparation Workshops for ParaPro Assessment</p>
<p>LEARN Ellen Dalton 44 Hatchetts Hill Road Old Lyme, CT 06371 Telephone: (860) 434-4890 Email: edaltan@learn.k12.ct.us</p>	<p>A series of nine training modules designed to assist paraprofessionals in meeting the requirements set forth by the <i>No Child Left Behind Act (2001)</i> – formal academic assessment, ParaPro.</p>	<p>Test Preparation Workshops for ParaPro Assessment</p>
<p>SERC David R. Grice / Kjell Fenn Paraprofessionals as Partners Initiative 25 Industrial Park Road Middletown, CT 06457-1520</p> <p>Telephone: (860) 632-1485, ext. 343 Email: grice@ctserc.org or fenn@ctserc.org www.ctserc.org</p>	<p>Professional development designed to enhance the skills and understanding of paraprofessionals so as to increase their effectiveness as educational partners with general and special education teachers, student support services professionals, and administrators.</p>	<p>Professional Development and Technical Assistance</p>

Organization / Contact Person	Program Description	Type of Program
<p>Asnuntuck Community College Dr. Robert Winston 170 Elm Street Enfield, CT 06082</p> <p>Telephone: (860) 566-8760 Email: rwinston@acc.commnet.edu www.acc.comment.edu</p>	<p>The Early Childhood Education Program is designed to prepare qualified students to become teachers, assistant teachers, or family daycare providers in the important developing field of professional childcare.</p>	<p>Early Childhood Education Associate of Science Degree</p>
<p>Capital Community College Dr. Mary Ann Affleck 950 Main Street Hartford, CT 06103</p> <p>Telephone: (860) 520-7800 Email: maffleck@ccc.commnet.edu www.ccc.commnet.edu</p>	<p>The Early Childhood Education Program is designed to prepare qualified students to become teachers, assistant teachers, or family daycare providers in the important developing field of professional childcare.</p>	<p>Early Childhood Education Associate of Science Degree</p>
<p>Gateway Community College Dr. David Cooper 88 Bassett Road North Haven, CT 06473</p> <p>Telephone: (203) 285-2406 Email: dcooper@gwcc.commnet.edu www.gwcc.commnet.edu</p>	<p>The Early Childhood Education Program is designed to prepare qualified students to become teachers, assistant teachers, or family daycare providers in the important developing field of professional childcare.</p>	<p>Early Childhood Education Associate of Science Degree</p>

Organization / Contact Person	Program Description	Type of Program
<p>Housatonic Community College Peter Ulisse 900 Lafayette Boulevard Bridgeport, CT 06604-4704 Telephone: (203) 332-5000 Email: pulisse@hcc.commmnet.edu www.hcc.commmnet.edu</p>	<p>The Early Childhood Education Program is designed to prepare qualified students to become teachers, assistant teachers, or family daycare providers in the important developing field of professional childcare.</p>	<p>Early Childhood Education Associate of Science Degree</p>
<p>Manchester Community College Dr. Alice Savage P.O. Box 1046 Manchester, CT 06045-1045 Telephone: (860) 512-3100 Email: asavage@mcc.commmnet.edu www.mcc.commmnet.edu</p>	<p>The Early Childhood Education Program is designed to prepare qualified students to become teachers, assistant teachers, or family daycare providers in the important developing field of professional childcare.</p>	<p>Early Childhood Education Associate of Science Degree</p>
<p>Manchester Community College Dr. Eileen M. Fury Disability Specialist Program, MS #4 P.O. Box 1046 Manchester, CT 06045-1045 Telephone: (860) 512-2792 www.mcc.commmnet.edu</p>	<p>The Disability Specialist Associate Degree and certification programs provide educational opportunities for people currently employed in, and those interested in working in, the disability field. Through individual consultation, each student will pursue a course of study with an emphasis on the unique vocational goals he or she wishes to achieve. While specific skills instruction is provided, the focus of the curriculum is on building a strong knowledge base coupled with a positive value base that will prepare each student to assist children and adults with disabilities toward the goals of full community inclusion and participation.</p>	

Organization / Contact Person	Program Description	Type of Program
<p>Middlesex Community College Dr. Frank Samuels 100 Training Road Middletown, CT 06457-4889</p> <p>Telephone: (860) 343-5800 Email: fsamuels@mxcc.commnet.edu www.mxcc.commnet.edu</p>	<p>The Early Childhood Education Program is designed to prepare qualified students to become teachers, assistant teachers, or family daycare providers in the important developing field of professional childcare.</p>	<p>Early Childhood Education Associate of Science Degree</p>
<p>Naugatuck Valley Community College Dr. Patricia Bouffard 750 Chase Parkway Waterbury, CT 06710</p> <p>Telephone: (203) 575-8040 Email: pbouffard@nvcc.commnet.edu www.nvcc.commnet.edu</p>	<p>The Early Childhood Education Program is designed to prepare qualified students to become teachers, assistant teachers, or family daycare providers in the important developing field of professional childcare.</p>	<p>Early Childhood Education Associate of Science Degree</p>
<p>Northwestern Connecticut Community College Dr. Jean Wihbey Park Place East Winsted, CT 06089-1798</p> <p>Telephone: (860) 738-6300 Email: jwihbey@nwcc.commnet.edu www.nwcc.commnet.edu</p>	<p>The Early Childhood Education Program is designed to prepare qualified students to become teachers, assistant teachers, or family daycare providers in the important developing field of professional childcare.</p>	<p>Early Childhood Education Associate of Science Degree</p>

Organization / Contact Person	Program Description	Type of Program
<p>Norwalk Community College Dr. John Fisher 188 Richards Avenue Norwalk, CT 06854</p> <p>Telephone: (203) 857-7000 Email: jfisher@ncc.commmnet.edu www.ncc.commmnet.edu</p>	<p>The Early Childhood Education Program is designed to prepare qualified students to become teachers, assistant teachers, or family daycare providers in the important developing field of professional childcare.</p>	<p>Early Childhood Education Associate of Science Degree</p>
<p>Quinebaug Valley Community College Dr. Susan Huard 742 Upper Maple Street Danielson, CT 06239-1440</p> <p>Telephone: (860) 774-1130 Email: shuard@qvcc.commmnet.edu www.qvcc.commmnet.edu</p>	<p>The Early Childhood Education Program is designed to prepare qualified students to become teachers, assistant teachers, or family daycare providers in the important developing field of professional childcare.</p>	<p>Early Childhood Education Associate of Science Degree</p>
<p>Three Rivers Community College Ann Branchini 574 New London Turnpike Norwich, CT 06360</p> <p>Telephone: (860) 886-4960 Email: abbranchini@trcc.commmnet.edu www.tree.commmnet.edu</p>	<p>The Early Childhood Education Program is designed to prepare qualified students to become teachers, assistant teachers, or family daycare providers in the important developing field of professional childcare.</p>	<p>Early Childhood Education Associate of Science Degree</p>

Organization / Contact Person	Program Description	Type of Program
<p>Tunxis Community College Colleen Keyes 271 Scott Swamp Road Farmington, CT 06032-3187</p> <p>Telephone: (860) 677-7701 Email: ckeyes@tcc.commnet.edu www.trcc.commnet.edu</p>	<p>The Early Childhood Education Program is designed to prepare qualified students to become teachers, assistant teachers, or family daycare providers in the important developing field of professional childcare.</p>	<p>Early Childhood Education Associate of Science Degree</p>
<p>AFT Connecticut Iris White 35 Marshall Road Rocky Hill, CT 06067</p> <p>Telephone: (860) 257-9782 Email: iwhite@aftct.org</p>	<p>Professional development programs designed to enhance the skills of paraprofessionals, and assist paraprofessionals to improve their understanding of relevant federal legislation and meet the requirements of this legislation.</p>	<p>Workshops, Conferences and Information Sessions</p>
<p>Connecticut Charts-A-Course (CCAC) Darlene Raggozine 495 Blake Street New Haven, CT 06515</p> <p>Telephone: (800) 832-7784 (203) 397-4036</p> <p>Email: draggozine@ctcharts-a-course.org www.ctcharts-a-course.org</p>	<p>A statewide professional development system that supports career development and program improvement for early care and education, and school-age early care, through scholarships, accreditation, and education and training that lead to advancement on the career ladder.</p>	<p>A Statewide Professional Development System</p>

APPENDIX L

RESOURCES

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APPENDIX M

WORLD WIDE WEB RESOURCES ON PARAPROFESSIONALS

American Federation of Teachers. Assisting Paraprofessionals in Meeting the Education Requirements of Title I.

<http://www.aft.org/esea/downloads/psrp.ppt>

Center on Disability and Community Integration. Paraeducator Support of Students with Disabilities in General Education Classrooms.

<http://www.uvm.edu/~cdci/parasupport/>.

Council for Exceptional Children. CEC Knowledge and Skills Standards for Beginning Paraprofessionals.

<http://cec.sped.org/ps/paraks.html>

Education Testing Service: Parapro Assessment.

www.ETS.org/parapro/idex.html

ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education. Paraprofessionals.

<http://ericec.org/faq/paraprof.html>.

National Clearinghouse for Paraeducator Resources. Resources for Paraeducator Training Programs.

http://www.special-ed-careers.org/educator_resources/para_osep_grants.html

National Education Association. Paraprofessionals in the workplace.

<http://www.nea.org/esp/resources/parawork.htm>.

National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals.

<http://www.nrcpara.org>.

OSPI ESEA Core Team. Paraprofessionals and the ESEA: Questions and answers.

<http://www.k12.wa.us/ESEA/Pubdocs/ParaproQA.pdf>.

SERC. Paraprofessionals as Partners Initiative.

<http://www.ctserc.org/initiatives/paras/index.shtml>.

Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education (SPeNSE). SPeNSE Data: Search results for Paraprofessionals.

<http://www.spense.org/scripts/tables/searchresults.asp>.

Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education (SPeNSE) Fact Sheet: The Role of Paraprofessionals in Special Education.

<http://www.spense.org/parasFinal.pdf>.

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