



State Capitol Building
Hartford, Connecticut

SCHOOL PARAPROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The School Paraprofessional Advisory Council is responsible for submitting an annual report to the Connecticut General Assembly and the Commissioner of Education in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the Connecticut General Statutes, on the recommendations given to the Commissioner or the Commissioner's designee, to the joint standing committee of the Connecticut General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education. This year, the Council submitted the following recommendations:

1. In Connecticut, a multitude of titles are used to describe paraprofessional with instructional responsibilities in Connecticut's public schools. In order to demonstrate the Department's emphasis on the role of the paraprofessional in improving instruction, and elevating the need for paraprofessionals to receive professional development, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) should adopt the title "Paraeducator."
2. As the Educator Preparation Advisory Committee convenes to develop policy recommendations and proposed regulatory revisions that will increase rigor in teacher and school leader preparation, it should consider providing opportunities for teacher candidates to observe effective collaborative practices between teachers and paraprofessionals and the appropriate utilization of paraprofessionals in the classroom. Such opportunities will better prepare candidates to understand the appropriate roles of teachers and paraprofessionals, thereby strengthening their ability to be collaborative partners with their colleagues. It will also support Domain 6 of the Common Core of Teaching: Professional Responsibility and Teacher Leadership, which mentions the teacher's role in guiding and coaching paraprofessionals.
3. Districts should be encouraged to provide training to teachers on their role in guiding and coaching the work of paraprofessionals, as outlined in the Connecticut System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED). The CSDE should inform districts of the various resources that are available to support teachers in this area, including the *Connecticut Guidelines for Training and Support of Paraprofessionals*, the *Teacher Supervisory Checklist*, and the *Assessment Checklist for Paraprofessionals*.
4. The CSDE should develop a bank of best practices in supervising and evaluating paraprofessionals that districts can access in order to clarify the roles of paraprofessionals and to ensure their appropriate training and supervision. These practices should include: teacher and paraprofessional collaboration, professional development to paraprofessionals, development of a paraprofessional handbook, and hiring and orientation of paraprofessionals.
5. Districts should be encouraged to involve their paraprofessional workforce in regular professional development activities each school year aimed at ensuring that these staff members:
 - a. Remain current on all instructional practices related to their assignments.
 - b. Continue to develop and enhance their instructional competencies in core areas (such as working with students with autism, managing behavior, instructional strategies for students who are struggling, school climate, etc.)
 - c. Understand their role in supporting the CSDE initiatives, such as Common Core State Standards, Scientific Research-Based Interventions and early literacy.

The Council's intent behind this recommendation is to ensure that paraprofessionals would have the necessary tools to help students reach their academic potential.

For a list of Council members and to view past meeting notes, please log onto: www.ct.gov/sde/para-cali.

MARCH 2013 UPDATE FOR
DISTRICT CONTACTS FOR
PARAPROFESSIONAL ISSUES

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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



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**TEACHING IS
THE ONE
PROFESSION
THAT
CREATES ALL
OTHER
PROFESSIONS.**
-Unknown

INTERNET-BASED PARAPRO ASSESSMENT

LEARN, the Regional Education Service Center located in Old Lyme, continues to offer the Educational Testing Service (ETS) Internet-Based Para-Pro Assessment. Below is a list of upcoming sessions. All are held from 2:15 p.m.-5:30 p.m., LEARN at Southwest Computer Lab:

April 10, 2013

June 5, 2013

To register online, please log onto:

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

**APRIL 3, 2013, IS NATIONAL
PARAPROFESSIONAL AND INTERPRETER
APPRECIATION DAY**

National Paraprofessional Appreciation Day is always the first Wednesday in the month of April. The date is set aside to show appreciation to paraprofessionals around the country. Below are some suggested strategies from the Minnesota Department of Education for recognizing and celebrating the contributions of paraprofessionals working in schools:

- Encourage school staff to visit with paraprofessionals and acknowledge their contributions.
- Send information to parents and students acknowledging the role of paraprofessionals.
- Recognize your school's paraprofessionals with appropriate tokens of appreciation such as a certificate, a handwritten note acknowledging contributions, etc.
- Construct a bulletin board at school highlighting the contributions of paraprofessionals.
- Highlight Paraprofessional Recognition Day in the school or district newsletter.
- Organize an appreciation lunch for paraprofessionals.
- Introduce and thank paraprofessionals in front of the school community.

For more ideas, please log on to:

<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/EdExc/Para/index.html>.

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