

# SEPTEMBER 2012 UPDATE FOR DISTRICT

## CONTACTS FOR PARAPROFESSIONAL ISSUES

### School Paraprofessional Advisory Council Recommendations



For the past three years the School Paraprofessional Advisory Council, as required by Section 10-155k of the Connecticut General Statutes, has met on a quarterly basis to provide the Commissioner of Education and the General Assembly, the effectiveness of the content and delivery of existing training for paraprofessionals.

During this time, the Council has worked on the following:

- Assisted in the development of the CSDE resource materials for educators, including the Scientific Research-Based Interventions

(SRBI) and paraprofessionals brief and provided guidance on the District Contacts for the Paraprofessional Issues Newsletter.

- Assisted in the development of surveys to districts, which identified the professional development needs of instructional paraprofessionals and problem areas that may exist.
- Developed the Connecticut Paraprofessional of the Year Program to recognize the important role of the paraprofessional in the supporting student achievement.

Recognizing Governor Malloy's pledge to make 2012 the year of school reform and supporting his commitment to improve teachers and administrator preparation and effectiveness, the Council developed the following recommendations:

1. Field experiences for teacher candidates should include opportunities to observe effective collaborative practices between teachers and paraprofessionals and the appropriate utilization of paraprofessionals in the classroom. Such field experiences will better prepare candidates to understand the appropriate roles of teachers and paraprofessionals.
2. Collaboration with paraprofessionals should be integrated into the Teacher Educator and Mentoring Program. Module 5, which focuses on professional responsibilities and teacher leadership, would be an appropriate place to integrate the knowledge and skills teachers need to effectively communicate and collaborate with paraprofessionals.
3. Training programs for school administrators should include coursework on how to supervise and evaluate paraprofessionals. Coursework should also include a study of current legislation regarding required professional development and training for paraprofessionals.
4. Districts should be encouraged to involve their paraprofessional

Continued on page 2



**Save the Date!**  
**Wednesday, November 14, 2012 Crowne Plaza Hotel, Cromwell 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.**  
**Registration opens at 8:30 a.m.**

**SERC's 17th Annual Statewide Paraprofessionals as Partners Conference**

**Mission: Possible, Paraprofessionals are always on the job.**

**Keynote Speaker: Mr. Michael Foran, Principal of New Britain High School and National Principal of the Year**

*Breakout Session Topics: Understanding Challenging Behaviors, Literacy for Students Who Can't (or Won't) Sit Still, Boys and Girls: Differences that Impact Learning, Understanding Autism: The Role of the Instructional Facilitator, Differentiating Instruction for Small Groups of Students, IEPs: What Every Paraprofessional Needs to Know, Paraprofessionals: What Administrators Need to Know (A.M. only)* **Registration is \$85 per person, Administrator Special Session & Rate: \$45.00 includes Lunch**  
Registration form is available at: <http://ctserc.org/conferences/2012/paras%20flyer%202012.pdf>



## School Paraprofessional Advisory

### Council Recommendations Continued



workforce in regular professional development activities each school year aimed at ensuring that these staff members: 1) remain current on all instructional practices related to their assignments; and 2) 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.). This recommendation would ensure that paraprofessionals would have the necessary tools to help students reach their academic potential.

For more information regarding the School Paraprofessional Advisory Council, please log onto: [www.ct.gov/sde/para-cali](http://www.ct.gov/sde/para-cali).

### Changes in School Paraprofessional Advisory Council Membership

The School Paraprofessional Advisory Council welcomes three new members:

**Dr. Jacqueline Kelleher** began teaching in the Isabelle Farrington [College of Education](#) at Sacred Heart University in January 2010. Dr. Kelleher holds a Masters in Education with an emphasis on Special Education and a [doctorate](#) in Educational Psychology with a concentration in Measurement, Evaluation, and Assessment.

**Stacey Cannon** teaches in the Cooperative Educational Services (CES) Preschool/Primary Learning Center. She has had a keen interest in improving the practices used at CES for the supervision of Paraprofessionals and made this her internship topic for her 092 certification training.

**Niloufar Rezaei** is the Interim Director for the Child and Family Development Center at Eastern Connecticut State University.

The Council wishes to send its appreciation and well wishes to former member, **Anthony Maida**, who recently retired as Associate Executive Director of CES.

### Revised Connecticut Guidelines for Training and Support of Paraprofessionals

The Connecticut Guidelines for Training and Support of Paraprofessionals has been revised. The previous guideline document for paraprofessionals highlighted the increasing number of paraprofessionals in our state, the current requirements under NCLB and the importance of training for paraprofessionals as well as their supervisors and evaluators. Recent studies demonstrate the positive impact that paraprofessionals can have on student achievement when they receive ongoing professional development, training, and supervision. Continuing in a tradition steeped in the assurance that public schools have the tools necessary to provide all students with a quality education experience; the CSDE is pleased to present this revision to the Guidelines.

This publication includes resource materials designed to further clarify the roles of paraprofessionals in providing instructional support to students. It reflects the Department's commitment to supporting district's efforts to improve education outcomes for all students. These resource documents include the newly developed paraprofessional topical briefs covering areas, such as, working with English Language Learners, students with ADD/ADHD; and students with challenging behaviors.

The revised *Connecticut Guidelines for Training and Support of Paraprofessionals* is available online on the CSDE Paraprofessional Information and Resources page: [www.ct.gov/sde/para-cali](http://www.ct.gov/sde/para-cali).

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