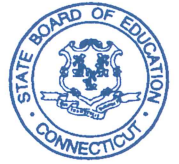




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



TO: Clerk of the Senate
Clerk of the House of Representatives

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell *DRW*
Commissioner of Education

DATE: September 8, 2015

SUBJECT: Annual Report on Paraprofessionals

In accordance with Section 10-155k of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.), enclosed is a copy of the School Paraprofessional Advisory Council Annual Report. Also, please note that by copy of this letter, I am distributing this report in accordance with C.G.S. Section 11-4a.

If you have any questions, please contact Laura Stefon at 860-713-6493. Thank you.

DRW:iwf
cc: Education Committee
Legislative Library
Office of Legislative Research
State Library

Enclosure

School Paraprofessional Advisory Council Report

The School Paraprofessional Advisory Council ("Council") as required by Public Act No. 13-10 has met on a quarterly basis to advise the Commissioner of Education of the needs for professional development and training of paraprofessionals and the effectiveness of the content and the delivery of existing training for such paraprofessionals, appropriate staffing strategies for paraprofessionals, and other relevant issues relating to paraprofessionals.

The following is the list of recommendations that were submitted to the commissioner's designee during the 2014-15 school year:

- 1. Recommendation:** The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) should continue its efforts to publicize resources available to schools and districts, on the effective evaluation, support, and training of Paraeducators. The maintenance of the District Contacts for Paraeducators and the revised Paraeducator Information and Resources page has made these resources more accessible, but CSDE also needs to encourage these resources to be utilized by building administrators. CSDE should explore how to integrate these resources in to existing leadership development programming.
- 2. Recommendation:** CSDE should encourage districts to provide behavior management training for Paraeducators. In 2013, the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities conducted a Professional Development Needs Assessment for Paraeducators. Responses were received from 2,438 paraeducators working in public schools in Connecticut. Twenty percent of the paraeducators reported not receiving any training in the previous 12 months. The majority of paraeducators that responded, indicated that they desired training on behavior management. Training for Paraeducators on behavior management should include de-escalation strategies. As a member of the school team, the paraeducator may have a role in classroom behavior management for particular students. These paraeducators should have access to behavior intervention plans and have an understanding of the Individualized Education Program information that is pertinent to their role as an implementer.
- 3. Recommendation:** The CSDE should encourage districts to train all of their Paraeducators on the appropriate roles and responsibilities as outlined in the Connecticut *Guidelines for the Training and Support of Paraprofessionals*. The CSDE adopted these roles and responsibilities from the National Resource Center for Paraeducators (NRCP). The NRCP is a non-profit organization whose mission is to share information about policy questions, regulatory procedures and training modules that will enable administrators and staff development to improve the recruitment, supervision and career development of Paraeducators. For each of the six responsibilities, this model describes the scope of responsibilities and the knowledge and skills needed by the paraeducator to perform these responsibilities as they work with students, particularly students with disabilities.