

# DRAFT: Utah Standards for Instructional Paraeducators ([Board Rule R277-324](#))

These standards and corresponding knowledge and skill competencies provide approved performance expectations for the paraeducator. These performance expectations are designed to be used in any setting across all LEAs.

The Standards apply to all instructional paraeducators. Some standards have special education-specific competencies, as appropriate.

With training, support, and under the direction of the \*supervising educator, the Instructional Paraeducator will:

## **STANDARD 1**

### **Support instructional opportunities**

#### **Competencies:**

##### **Knowledge**

A. Have knowledge and proficiency in an assigned instructional area(s) such as:

- Reading/Reading readiness
- Math/Math readiness
- Writing/Writing readiness
- Assigned instructional areas as defined by board-approved standards
- Other (e.g., social skills, life skills, behavior support strategies)

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- B. Have knowledge of evidence-based strategies, techniques, educational terminology, and service delivery methods and models of instruction.
- C. Have knowledge that instruction is most effective when open to adjustment and revision, based on student strengths and needs, student input, and changing circumstances.
- D. Have knowledge of the purposes of formative and summative assessment as they relate to instruction and student learning.

**\*\*\*Special Education Competencies:**

**Knowledge**

- A. Have knowledge of educational challenges due to varying disabilities which may impact cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and language development.
- B. Have knowledge of non-verbal modes of communication used by students with disabilities including augmentative and alternative communication.
- C. Have knowledge of purposes of support, services, and specially designed instruction which provide access to the general education curriculum and content.
- D. Have general knowledge of inclusive practices for students with disabilities.
- E. Have knowledge of accommodations on student Individualized Education Program (IEP) and procedures for proctoring accommodated tests

**Skills**

- A. Assist in reviewing, preparing, and delivering instruction.
- B. Use basic interventions and modify instructional pacing to adapt to student needs, learning styles, and skills.
- C. Provide the least intrusive levels of support, adjust support, and adjust physical proximity for students.

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- D. Accurately record relevant student information and data.
- E. Administer progress monitoring assessments while adhering to the assessment protocol.
- F. Use instructional time effectively by being prepared to support learning and the instructional process.
- G. Use strategies to facilitate meaningful inclusion for students with disabilities in various settings (e.g., libraries, computer labs, learning centers, playgrounds, community, and assorted modes of transportation).
- H. Use basic educational technology to assist and enhance instruction and support student learning.
- I. \*\* Assist in providing objective documentation for observations and LEA approved functional behavior assessments.

### \*\*\*Special Education Competencies:

#### Skills

- A. Provide opportunities and support for students to understand, acquire, and use verbal and nonverbal communication.
- B. Reinforce student use of verbal and nonverbal communication.
- C. Support students with disabilities in their use of self-assessment, problem solving and other cognitive strategies.
- D. Adapt, accommodate, and adjust the physical environment and learning materials and activities according to the student's individual needs.

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- E. Support students in the use of adaptive equipment and materials and assistive technology (e.g., augmentative and alternative communication devices) according to the student's individual needs.
- F. Implement differentiated instruction, accommodations, modifications, high leverage practices, and specially designed instruction according to student needs.
- G. Assist in teaching specific skills outlined in the student's IEP or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP).

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**STANDARD 2**

**Demonstrate professionalism and ethical practices**

**Competencies:**

## Knowledge

- A. Have knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of team members and adhere to the role and responsibilities of a paraeducator.
- B. Have knowledge of disabilities, individual characteristics, strengths and needs, and an awareness of how they influence perceptions, values, and educational practice.
- C. Have knowledge of legal and ethical practices for the use of behavioral support.
- D. Have knowledge of state, district, and federal behavior policies and procedures to support students.

## \*\*\*Special Education Competencies:

### Knowledge

- A. Have general knowledge of federal law for students with disabilities and common special education terminology (e.g., Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (DEA), IEPs, Child Find).
- B. Have knowledge of legal and ethical practices for the use of behavioral support and state and district behavior policies and procedures to support students with disabilities.

### Skills

- A. Carry out responsibilities in a manner consistent with all pertinent laws, regulations, policies, and procedures.
- B. Respect and maintain the dignity, privacy, and confidentiality of all students, families, and school personnel.

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- C. Demonstrate reliability through regular attendance and punctuality.
- D. Use strategies that support all students, including students with disabilities, different academic and behavioral strengths and needs, and individual characteristics.
- E. Adhere to the civil and human rights of children, youth, and their families.
- F. Adhere to health, safety, and emergency procedures.

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**STANDARD 3**

**Support a positive and welcoming learning environment**

**Competencies:**

**Knowledge**

- A. Have knowledge of the basic principles of positive behavior support to promote social, emotional, physical, and educational well-being of students.
- B. Have knowledge of student characteristics and factors that influence behavior.
- C. Have knowledge that behavior is a form of communication.

**\*\*\*Special Education Competencies:**

**Knowledge**

- A. Have knowledge of behavioral de-escalation strategies.
- B. Have knowledge of the purpose of Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA)/Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP).

- C. Assist in teaching specific skills and procedures to facilitate safety and learning in each school setting.

### **Skills**

- A. Support the classroom management plan and use proactive management strategies to engage students and support learning in the classroom.
- B. Assist in maintaining a systematic and productive learning environment.
- C. Assist in monitoring students and making appropriate recommendations while instructing, supporting, and supervising students in a variety of learning environments and activities.
- D. \*\*Assist in teaching social skills by facilitating proactive peer interactions, self-management strategies, conflict resolution, and collaborative problem solving.
- E. \*\*Assist in providing medical care within the scope of paraeducator practice and/or teaching self-care needs.
- F. Implement and provide instruction and support when provided relevant information about a student plan (e.g., IEP, 504 Plan, BIP, and/or health care plan).

### **\*\*\*Special Education Competencies:**

### **Skills**

- A. Support student's independence, self-advocacy, self-management, and self-reliance.
- B. Support development of social skills and facilitate proactive peer interactions for students with disabilities.
- C. Implement positive behavior supports outlined in the student BIP.

D. Use techniques to address personal care, medical care, and physical assistance to students with disabilities.

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**STANDARD 4**

**Communicate effectively and participate in the team process**

**Competencies:**

## Knowledge

- A. Have knowledge that multiple communication methods and problem-solving strategies for decision making contribute to collaborative teamwork and promote student learning.

## Skills

- A. Participate as an effective member of an instructional team and implement team decisions to improve student outcomes.
- B. Effectively use multiple communication methods (e.g., written, verbal, nonverbal) to contribute to collaborative teamwork.
- C. Provide relevant feedback regarding student performance and instruction to the \*supervising educator.
- D. Provide specific, objective, and appropriate feedback to students regarding their performance.
- E. Follow the procedures established by the LEA to resolve conflicts, address policy questions and system-level issues.
- F. \*\*Participate in instructional team meetings.
- G. \*\*Participate in conferences with families or primary caregivers when requested.
- H. Establish and maintain positive, professional, collegial, and appropriate relationships with school personnel, students, and their families.

## **STANDARD 5**

### **Engage in continued professional improvement**

#### **Competencies:**

##### **Knowledge**

- A. Have an awareness of one's professional strengths and needs.
- B. Have knowledge about resources and support available for professional growth.

##### **Skills**

- A. Commit to ongoing self-reflection, self-assessment, and learning to refine one's professional practice.
- B. Request information about resources and professional learning opportunities related to one's professional improvement.
- C. Participate in meaningful professional learning opportunities to improve one's effective practices.
- D. Request and accept feedback from colleagues related to one's professional improvement.
- E. Reflect on and document one's progress toward professional improvement.

\*A supervising educator refers to the education professional (e.g., teacher, administrator, related service provider) who is licensed or certified to teach or provide services to students in the public school system.

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\*\*This competency may be assigned by the supervising educator and may not be an expectation for all instructional paraeducators.

\*\*\*These competencies are essential for paraeducators supporting students who are receiving special education services. However, not all of the standards require special education-specific knowledge and skills competencies.

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