

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Utah State Board of Education

FROM: Glenna Gallo
Special Education Director

DATE: February 4-5, 2016

ACTION: Updating Existing Paraeducator Standards

Background:

In 1985, the State Board last approved special education paraeducator standards. Those standards have been reviewed by a stakeholder committee and revised to align with ESSA and reflect applicability to all paraeducators, rather than focusing on those working with students with disabilities.

Key Points:

Paraeducator standards include four standards (i.e., support instructional opportunities, demonstrate professionalism and ethical practices, support positive learning environment, communicate effectively and work as a team) and describe competencies and skills needed for each standard.

Anticipated Action:

It is proposed that the Law and Licensing Committee review the draft Paraeducator Standards, and if approved by the Committee, the Board consider approving the standards.

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Utah Standards for Instructional Paraeducators

After training and under the supervision of licensed or certificated personnel, the Instructional Paraeducator will:

| <u>STANDARD 1</u> | <u>STANDARD 2</u> | <u>STANDARD 3</u> | <u>STANDARD 4</u> |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Support instructional opportunities:</p> <p>Core Competencies:</p> <p>Knowledge:</p> <p>A. Have knowledge and proficiency¹ in assigned instructional area such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reading/reading readiness • math/math readiness • writing/writing readiness <p>B. Have knowledge of strategies, techniques, and delivery methods of instruction</p> <p>Skills:</p> <p>A. Assist in delivering instruction according to supervisor's* lesson plans</p> <p>B. Use basic interventions to adapt to student needs, learning styles, and skills</p> <p>C. Demonstrate the ability to record relevant information/ data about students</p> <p>D. Use assessment instruments specified by supervisor* to document and maintain data</p> <p>E. Organize material and be prepared to support learning and the instructional process</p> <p>Supporting Competencies:</p> <p>A. Use strategies to facilitate effective integration into various settings (e.g., libraries, computer labs, learning centers, playgrounds, community, and assorted modes of transportation)</p> <p>B. Use basic educational technology</p> <p>C. Assist in providing objective documentation for observations and functional assessments</p> <p>¹ as determined by LEAs</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Demonstrate professionalism and ethical practices:</p> <p>Core Competencies:</p> <p>Knowledge:</p> <p>A. Have knowledge of and adhere to the distinctions in the roles and responsibilities of teachers/providers, paraeducators, administrators, families, and other team members</p> <p>Skills:</p> <p>A. Carry out responsibilities in a manner consistent with all pertinent laws, regulations, policies, and procedures</p> <p>B. Respect confidentiality</p> <p>C. Have reliable attendance, punctuality, and dependability</p> <p>D. Exhibit sensitivity to cultural, individual differences, and disabilities</p> <p>E. Adhere to the civil and human rights of children, youth and their families</p> <p>F. Have knowledge of health, safety, and emergency procedures</p> <p>Supporting Competencies:</p> <p>A. Have a positive attitude and contribute to a positive work environment</p> <p>B. Pursue and participate in staff development and learning opportunities</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Support a positive learning environment:</p> <p>Core Competencies:</p> <p>Knowledge:</p> <p>A. Support the supervisor's* behavior management plan</p> <p>B. Have knowledge of student characteristics and factors that influence behavior</p> <p>Skills:</p> <p>A. Use proactive management strategies to engage and support learning in the classroom</p> <p>B. Assist in maintaining an environment conducive to the learning process</p> <p>C. Assist in monitoring students and make appropriate recommendations while coaching or tutoring in different settings</p> <p>Supporting Competencies:</p> <p>A. Assist in teaching children and youth social skills</p> <p>B. Assist students in using self-control and self-management strategies</p> <p>C. Assist in providing medical care and/or teaching self-care needs</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Communicate effectively & participate in the team process:</p> <p>Core Competencies:</p> <p>Knowledge:</p> <p>A. Participate as an effective member of an instructional team utilizing a problem solving process</p> <p>Skills:</p> <p>A. Use effective communication skills (written, verbal, nonverbal)</p> <p>B. Provide relevant feedback regarding student performance and instruction to supervisor*</p> <p>C. Use appropriate channels for resolving concerns or conflicts</p> <p>Supporting Competencies:</p> <p>A. Participate in instructional team** meetings</p> <p>B. Participate in conferences with families or primary caregivers when requested</p> <p>C. Foster beneficial relationships between agency/school, families, children/youth, and community</p> |

Core Competencies: Essential knowledge and skills required for effective performance as an instructional paraeducator. Core Competencies are based on Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) 12/2015 & and state-approved Special Education Standards (05/85).

Supporting Competencies: Additional knowledge and skills demonstrated by paraeducators while on the job. Some supporting competencies may only be required for specific roles (e.g., personal assistants, job coaches, computer lab aides). Training programs both at an LEA or university/community college/applied technology college should address such role distinctions and skill needs.

* **supervisor** refers to supervising licensed or certificated personnel.

** **instructional team** refers to those individuals who have day-to-day responsibility for providing education and other direct services to children/youth and their families. Instructional teams are found in general and special education settings, Title I, multilingual/EL, after school, early childhood, and school-to-work preparation programs, including traditional and charter schools.