

Paraprofessional Consortium Meeting

August 9, 2007

The mission of the Utah Paraprofessional Consortium is to promote training and support for paraprofessionals, leading to improved outcomes for children, youth and families.

In Attendance: Nan Kirkpatrick, Bob Morgan, Diana Fillmore, Marilyn Likins, Jan Pace, Mary Baldwin, Linda Alsop, Jan Harris, Pat Fender, Lois Oestrich

Dates set for future meetings:

September 13	1-3 pm	polycom will be available
October 16	1-3 pm	UPDC
December 6	2-4 pm	polycom will be available

Because Michelle Fritz has had a change in her assignment, she will no longer be our facilitator. We will miss her a great deal and appreciate her work. Diana Fillmore has been appointed to be the new facilitator.

Program Updates:

- **SLCC:** Jan Harris, who is replacing Tim Reisen, reported on their outreach to potential students. Paras desire the training but are faced with the cost of the program and lack of financial rewards. The money spent of education does not translate to a pay raise in most districts.
- **USU:** Bob Morgan, for the benefit of those who were new to the group, gave a brief overview of the history of his program. In looking at statistics of students who have completed the teacher program, they have discovered that those who were paraprofessionals before they entered had higher GPAs on graduation than other students. Paras are more likely than others to remain in the teaching field and to remain in their home area. However, paraprofessionals have a hard time affording the tuition. They are planning an online program. It is poised and ready contingent on finding staff and financial resources.
- **Deaf-Blind Program:** Linda Alsop said that some of her coursework has shifted to USU as part of an associate degree and some is available for

credit through SLCC. To facilitate district needs, three courses have been merged into two, making it possible to complete the coursework in a single school year. There has been interest in her program from all over the country. There has been interest expressed in an emphasis for a "blind track" to train those who serve students who are blind, but able to hear.

There are three pathways to follow in her program:

- i. Certificate of Completion with college credit, also available for post-graduate credit (Master's)
 - ii. Certificate of Complete without college credit (for a lower cost)
 - iii. Associate degree
- **DATC:** Michelle has left that program. It was cut because of low numbers while Michelle was out on medical leave. Michelle took a job elsewhere. Then after rethinking the decision, DATC reinstated the program. A substitute teacher was hired. We do not know who will head the program in the future.

Information Item: Marilyn Likens shared the information presently on the Utah Para website (utahparas.org) and requested organizations that provide additional training (for example, SLCC and USU) review the information and send her corrections or updates. Her email address is: marilyn@nrcpara.org.

Para-educator Training Money: There was some discussion on possible sources. This included:

- School districts have up to \$20,000 that can be used to pay for training of classified personnel - of which paras are a part.
- Pat Fender (AFT) and Nan Kirpatrick (USEA) will include information in their newsletters to educate paras about how to access this money.
- Paras can go to their Human Resource departments to find out how to apply for funds. Many districts will reimburse at least part of tuition spent on training related to their job.

Conference Update: Next year's conference will be held November 9th and 10th 2007 in Ogden at the Eccles Conference Center.

Mission Statement: The mission statement was reviewed. Some of the items listed as strategies for accomplishing our goals need to be revised. Please review and give feedback.