

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

**Paraprofessional Consortium  
February 26, 2003  
Jordan School District  
Minutes**

**Future Meeting Dates:**

**March 26, 2003-SLCC – Larry H. Miller Campus - 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**April 23, 2003 - Utah State Office of Education - 12:30 – 2:30 p.m.**

**Attendance:**

Carol Harrington, Ginny Wimmer, Diane Fillmore, Ann Miller, Cynthia Burchett, Deanna Nyman, Margo Thurman, Jan Pace, Bruce Schroeder, Karl Wilson, Gail Johnson, Judy Stanfield, John Latkiewicz, Jim Madsen, Lyn Burningham, Douglas Allred, Jill Morgan, Elizabeth Jensen, Lyle Cox, Ginger Rhode, Sharon Neyme, Marshal Garrett, Jennifer Upland-Novoa, Mary Baldwin, Marilyn Likins, Peggy Dooling-Baker

Peggy Dooling-Baker welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. She stated that today's meeting agenda was as follows: reports from the Standards Subcommittee and Portfolio subcommittee, PARagraph, Salt Lake Community College and Next Steps.

**Meeting Notes:**

**Paraprofessional Standards: Marshal Garrett**

A draft copy (purple sheet) was disseminated. It states, "Under the supervision of licensed and/or certificated personnel the paraprofessional will: Standard 1: Demonstrate professionalism and ethical practices, Standard 2: Support instructional opportunities,

Standard 3: Support a positive learning environment, Standard 4: Communicate effectively and participate in the team process.  
Under each standard, knowledge and skill competencies have been added for the first two standards. The consortium reviewed and made comments about the content and scope. Comments included:

Standard 1:

The standards are similar to the language of “No Child Left Behind.” A definition for “paraprofessional” will precede the standards. It states, “A paraprofessional is defined as an individual who works under the supervision of teachers or other licensed/certificated professionals who have the responsibility for any school that provides instructional support and assists with the delivery of instruction and other direct services as assigned and developed by licensed/certificated professionals.”

Standard 2:

A discussion followed and comments included:

- Very well done in separating paraprofessionals from teachers and providers.
- Acceptable in different areas i.e, elementary, high school.
- Basic level of performance is appropriate but higher skills or job specific skills (e.g., job coach, ALS) may be needed and need to be addressed.
- Needs to be a balance.
- If approved by state as an appropriate assessment, will passing the PARapro be equivalent to “highly qualified?”
- Will need clarification from the state on what is highly qualified (which is a “No Child Left Behind” language).

The question was raised: 1) Does there need to be a proficiency in the content area that paraprofessionals are assigned? Or is a para highly qualified if they pass one of the approved assessments? Gail Johnson will email the state position on this shortly.

NCLB criteria states that all Title I paraprofessionals must have a 2 year associate degree/certificate, or 48 semester hours of university/college credit or meet a “rigorous standard of assessment”. Portfolio development has been approved as one option to demonstrate competence in reading, writing, and math instruction.

The committee has not refined Standards 3 and 4. Standards will be reviewed at the March 26 meeting in Davis School District. The committee will meet to determine if any wording needs to be clarified, consolidated or changed. Anyone interested in participating is invited to attend.

### **Portfolio: Marilyn Likins**

A draft copy (green sheet) of the Knowledge, Skill, and Ability (KSA) Alignment with Paraprofessional Standards was disseminated. The form was discussed as a summary of paraeducator's work experience, training, and university/community college credits. It will allow flexibility as to how the paraeducator can demonstrate competence in the requisite areas. Portfolio documentation may include: annual performance evaluation, inservice trainings (agendas, content, etc.) observations, coursework to include transcripts, interview, written document by paraeducator, administrator or supervising teacher, work samples, videos of their teaching, letters of reference from supervisor/administrators, awards or certificates.

Document each competency mastered. May need to have more than one line of evidence for purposes of validity. May not need to complete all competencies, e.g., 6 out of 8. Some competencies may be mandatory others not.

A discussion followed and comments included:

- Will portfolio work for new people coming into the profession?
- Portfolios support and document their professional development and should be ongoing.
- This would be for paraeducators who are already on the job.
- Is this the direction we want to go? Is this a good approach? It seems overwhelming. Who will be responsible?
- "Demonstrate confidentiality" is one that needs to be added.
- Each standard area would have a sheet and a paraeducator would be responsible for completing with support from teacher and administrator.
- Need to look at the requirements of the law and look at the expectations of what paraprofessionals should demonstrate and not go beyond the requirements of the law.
- This is for someone who is already on the job and has the knowledge.

The question was raised: Can a portfolio be used to determine "highly qualified" as a new hire? There were again some conflicting answers. Gail J. said that she would go back to USOE and discuss.

Another question that was raised was: What happened to the letter about our thoughts on the appropriateness of the Western Governor's Assessment and the PARapro from ETS? The Consortium was not in favor of the WGU test due to the poor alignment between a paraprofessionals standard roles and responsibilities and the test items.

Jim M. read from NCLB and stated that paraprofessionals need to complete 2 years of higher education or an associate degrees or formal/academic assessment to be able to demonstrate knowledge in reading, math, writing or readiness skills. The USOE has already sent the state plan to the federal government. Input from the Title 1 directors I that the districts want to have input on the plan.

Gail J. reported that the State Board of Education approved the WGU and the PARapro as two assessment option for new hires. It will create a committee to look at portfolios. Several committee members would like to be included in that committee.

**PARAgraph: Jill Morgan**

The PARAgraph has been funded again for this year. The next issue will be going to print next month. 6500 issues will be printed. Funding has also been built into the November 2003 Paraeducator Conference Budget. A grant budget of \$20,000 was approved by CSPD.

**Salt Lake Community College: John Latkiewicz**

John requested the Consortium act as the Advisory Board for Salt Lake Community College. He would like to use part of the consortium every third month for approximately 30 minutes to discuss the needs of their program and an understanding that if other university programs requested, we would act in the same capacity.

Questions will be answered and discussed at the beginning of the March 26 Consortium Meeting.

***Please email Peggy ([doolingbakerp@m.ogden.k12.ut.us](mailto:doolingbakerp@m.ogden.k12.ut.us)) if you have any ideas to make the consortium meeting more meaningful or if you have any items or concerns that should be added to the agenda.***