

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

**Paraprofessional Consortium
March 26th, 2003
Larry H. Miller Campus
Minutes**

Future Meeting Dates:

April 23, 2003 – CANCELLED - 12:30 – 2:30 p.m.

May 21, 2003 – 10:00-12:00 – Davis or Jordan District (place to be announced) – This will be a critical meeting to attend.

June 24, 2003 – 1:00-3:00 – Ogden School District

Attendance:

Cynthia Burchett, Carol Harrington, Ginny Wimmer, Ann Miller, Deanna Nyman, Margo Thurman, Jan Pace, Bruce Schroeder, Karl Wilson, Judy Stanfield, John Latkiewicz, Lyn Burningham, Douglas Allred, Ginger Rhode, Marshal Garrett, Ginny Eggen, Mary Baldwin, Marilyn Likins, Peggy Dooling-Baker, Katie Davis, Sue Ross, Bryan Sprague, Lyn Burningham, Fran Butler

Peggy Dooling-Baker welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. She stated that today's meeting agenda was as follows: Standards Committee Updates, Portfolio Committee Updates, Focused Conversation, and New Actions. Peggy will be unable to attend the April 23 meeting and Ginny Eggen will facilitate the meeting.

Meeting Notes:

Paraprofessional Standards: Marshal Garrett

Standard 1 – Demonstrate professionalism and ethical practices.

The subcommittee revised the paraeducator standards (see ivory sheet) Having Knowledge of and adhere to the distinctions in the roles and responsibilities of teachers/providers, paraprofessionals, families, and other team members. will be the Core Competencies. It was recommended that the rest of the competencies be moved into Related Competencies.

A discussion followed in regard to Core Competencies and Related competencies and comments and concerns included:

- Core competencies would provide guidance to districts and assist Paraeducators in structuring portfolios
- The community college will be able to structure a 48 semester hour coursework around the competencies (related and core)
- After looking at several states, Utah's was generated from standards across Minnesota, Rhode Island, Vermont and Utah. Some of these standards are 20 years old. The committee already has information that can be built upon for effective training.
- Karl asked the question, "Why 'respect confidentiality' was moved out of Core Competencies? Marilyn stated that Core competencies will be the expectation/foundation of university process and will be a vital piece that district will need to deal with. The core is a must and related competencies are not required but represent skills and knowledge of an effective paraeducator.

Standard 2 – Support instructional opportunities.

The first three Core Competencies: Have knowledge & proficiency in basic reading; Having knowledge & proficiency in basic writing, and Have knowledge & proficiency in basic math, will be the Core Competencies. These 3 competencies are global and will meet the NCLB law.

A discussion followed in regard to Core Competencies and Related competencies and comments and concerns included:

- Cynthia has a problem with proficiency and thinks it should have the same wording as in the law which reads as knowledge of, and the ability to assist in instructing, reading, writing, and mathematics.
- It was recommended the first 3 will use "ability to assist" - flexibility to match assignment.
- Ann Miller recommended that the rest should be moved down into Related Competencies. It was left open for discussion.
- Need to have a definition of Core Competencies and Related Competencies at the bottom of the form.

Standards 3 - Support a positive learning Environment.

This Core competencies has 3 parts including monitoring progress and implementation of data collection.

A discussion followed. Comments and concerns included:

- Sue Ross stated only need use proactive management strategies to engage learners.
- Lynn Burningham stated that this needs to be more global, not just special education, Title I., 504, ALDS, etc. Core competencies need to be more generic.

Standard 4 – Communicate effectively & participate in the team process.

It was suggested to keep the first three Core Competencies and move the 4th to Related Competencies.

A discussion followed and comments and concerns included:

- Karl stated that what we are focusing on is related to Title I and proposed that IDEA may have same requirements. Karl stated further that there needs to be flexibility, some schools will not need to meet the same requirements.
- Also, he stated this committee's goal is to promote professionalism for Paraeducators.
- Karl stated that maybe knowledge and ability to assist in instruction other than academic areas need to be related competencies.

- Cynthia this is only for Title I now and there is no need to focus on special education and maybe we do not want to impose until the law says so. When IDEA is reauthorized, re-look at the competencies. There were pros and cons on both sides related to this issue. Further discussion is warranted.
- Marshall Garrett stated that we need to get out a first generation of paraprofessional standards. The Standards subcommittee will meet and refine Core Competencies and Related Competencies and get information out to the group.

Portfolio: Marilyn Likins

Marilyn disseminated and highlighted a draft copy (white sheet) of the Knowledge, Skill, and Ability (KSA) Alignment with Paraprofessional Standards. She stated that for existing paraeducators, the use of portfolio has been approved by the USOE. Gail Johnson will get this information out to committee and if anyone else would like to be a part of this group let Gail know. The Portfolio group will meet on April 9th.

Whatever is changed on the Standards will be reflected in the requirements for the Portfolio. Districts will need to meet and provide input on how they want to handle the administrative piece. We would like to see Paraeducators responsible for the portfolio with assistance from their supervising teacher and administrator.

Paraeducators will document skills in the Core Competencies area. This 2-page (front/back) annual performance standard document will come back to the school supervisor. Marilyn stated that a Self Study/Independent Study was added and paraeducators will be responsible to keep track of their information. Marilyn asked group if they have any other ideas or concerns, to please let her know.

Marilyn stated that several recommendations that will be presented to the USOE Board include:

- A documentation key or set of criteria for each line of evidence will be developed and put in a packet along with examples.
- A university class and a letter from the teacher will also work as a means of validation of skills.
- Another question that arose was how to disseminate information. Will this require trainer of trainers, 2 or 3 people who might do an inservice in their district? This will need to be brainstormed as well.
- If this is the way the state wants to go, they will need to inform districts and get the information out.

Focused Conversation

The question: Is a paraeducator highly qualified if they pass one of the approved assessments? If they pass PARapro they are highly qualified. Joan Patterson in licensure has stated that beauty school, massage school, etc., does not qualify, The WGU assessment does qualify.

Bryan stated that USEA has an 8-hours preparation course for PARapro on basic math, basic test taking skills, etc. that will be provided at SLCC. More information will be coming. Districts need to keep in mind that this is not the test, just - how to take it. Lynn asked if SLCC would be the test site. Bryan stated that he did not think so, and thought it would be at the school districts. Bryan will find out.

SLCC: John Latkiewicz

John stated that SLCC has not had a program advisory committee for awhile and is asking the paraed. consortium to act as the advisory board for SLCC. He would like to use part of the consortium time and take a few minutes to discuss the needs of their program. Is there away to do that. It could happen every 3 or 4 meeting either a half hour before or after the meeting. John will gather information and present it at the April meeting.

Please email Peggy (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.