

Paraprofessional Consortium
September 18, 2002
Utah State Office of Education
Meeting Minutes

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

Next Meeting Dates:

**October 24, 2002 10:00-12:00 SLCC Larry H. Miller Free
Enterprise Center (Building 3) Room 223**

November 22, 2002 1:00-3:00 State Office of Education

Present: Larry Abplanalp, Ron Stanfield, George Miller, Diana Fillmore, Margo Thurman, Bob Morgan, Dave Forbush, , Bruce Schroeder, Peggy Dooling-Baker, Marilyn Likins, Ginny Wimmer, Linda Alsop, John Latkiewicz, Rick Graham, (Peggy who else?)

UPDATE:

Since our meeting on Sept 18th, Ron Stanfield has called to clarify the equivalent credit hours of "two years of higher education" needed for paraprofessionals to be considered highly qualified. Ron reported the criteria that will be used by the state is 48 credit hours from a college or university of higher education.

Meeting Notes:

ESEA Assessments:

Ron Stanfield and George Miller are investigating three assessments to assist districts in determining highly qualified candidates. We discussed the three assessments and their perceived strengths and weaknesses:

1.) Western Governors University:

- + offers an assessment that is available immediately possible low cost

- Rigorous, tough assessment
- It is a teacher preparatory assessment

2.) ACT Workkeys:

- + available for reasonable price through Denver \$19.95
- + available online
- + contains reading, writing, math literacy
- + scored online, reports sent to districts
- Bare bones assessment
- No error analysis of responses
- No current "profile" for instructional assistant

In Workkeys a profiler identifies certain reading, writing, and math skills necessary to do their job. Without the profile you would not be able to use the measure to hire or fire.

A profile can be obtained one of three ways. 1.) Hire a profiler from ACT, 2.) Send someone to "profiler school" for 6 weeks or 3.) Hire a local profiler, (there are three in the surrounding areas). A profiler would observe 4-6 paraprofessionals to determine the specific skills and levels required for the job. The group felt they should sample preschool, elementary, jr. high and secondary.

3.) ETS

- + Pilot in September for Idaho, Wy. and Nevada
- + Standards setting pilot for Utah will be in November (25 paraed. Will be needed to assist.
- We do not have information other than informal reports about the assessment
- "Parapro" Test won't be ready until January

Assessment Pilot

George Miller asked for interested districts to identify paraprofessionals to participate in the pilot sample group. He is looking at a sample group of rural and urban paras along with experienced and non-experienced. He is also looking for:

60% of the paras with a GED or high school diploma
20% of the paras with an associated degree or higher
20% of the sample be teachers who supervise paras

And

25% of the sample to be working at high schools
50% of the sample to be working in elementary schools
25% of the sample to be working in middle level school

George and Marilyn will coordinate the effort.

Ron and George will get a memo out to the superintendents.

USEA-Brian Sprague said once we develop/decide on the assessment(s) they can help with preparations for taking the assessments; test taking skills. They are also working with Salt Lake Community College to offer remedial classes for interested parties via the ed-net or web based.

C.A.C.T.U.S.

CACTUS is the sole source of accountability. The state has begun to use **CACTUS** to build a database for paraeducators, beginning with Title 1. The districts have been asked to fill out a Title I application form for each paraprofessional working in a school that receives Title I funds. The state will be responsible to input all of the data into the **CACTUS** system. The districts can separate the listings by district and school by clicking on the red schoolhouse icon. With the database the state will be able to print labels for all paraprofessionals to disseminate information to every paraeducator in the state.

Newsletter Funding

Jill distributed 5,000 copies of this issue, mostly to paraprofessionals via the school districts. She has a few more; please contact her if you need more. The group agreed the newsletter far surpassed the expectations and it a viable tool to communicate with paraprofessionals.

The bad news is the funding from CSPD monies has been spent; we are in critical need of a funding source to continue to provide the PARAGraph.

Bruce reports he cannot fund the full amount for this upcoming year. It was suggested to discuss with Title I staff to collaborate on the effort. Bruce will meet with Laurie Lacy to discuss the possibility of shared funding. The cost for editing and printing was \$15,000-\$20,000 for four issues/YEAR.

Paraeducator Conference- One Person Can Make A Difference, Be The One!

November 22 and 23 at the Ogden Eccles Conference Center. Registrations forms are in the *PARAgraph*, along with a form to nominate an outstanding paraprofessional!

Project Impact

Dave and Bob reported on Project Impact. The national training project is well underway and is receiving excellent feedback. Enhancing Skills of Paraprofessionals (ESP) is the curriculum and is currently reaching 75-80 paras in multiple states. University credit is currently being offered for the paraprofessionals enrolled in the class.

Next Steps:

- Arrange for a profiler for ACT Workkeys: Rick Graham, Ron Stanfield,
George Miller, Marilyn
- Set up pilot dates for ACT and ETS-George and Marilyn
- Discuss funding with Laurie Lacy-Bruce S.
- Contact ETS and get a sample of the assessment if possible- Ron/George
- Check out ETS website: Test-at-a- Glance
www.ets.org/parapro/index.html