



The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), established the District Contacts for Paraprofessional Issues to disseminate information of importance to paraprofessionals and their supervisors. The focus of this newsletter is to provide resources for more effective teacher and paraprofessional collaboration.

Connecticut Professional Legislation

Sec. 10-155j of the 2008 Supplement to the General Statutes. Development of paraprofessionals. The Department of Education, through the State Education Resource Center and within available appropriations for such purposes, shall promote and encourage professional development activities for school paraprofessionals with instructional responsibilities. Such activities may include, but shall not be limited to, providing local and regional boards of education with training modules and curricula for professional development for paraprofessionals and assisting boards of education in the effective use of paraprofessionals and the development of strategies to improve communications between teachers and paraprofessionals in the provision of effective student instruction.

Sec. 10-155k of the 2008 Supplement to the General Statutes. School Paraprofessional Advisory Council. The Commissioner of Education shall establish a School Paraprofessional Advisory Council consisting of one representative from each statewide bargaining representative organization that represents school paraprofessionals with instructional responsibilities. The council shall advise, at least quarterly, the Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee, of the needs for the training of such paraprofessionals and the effectiveness of the content and the delivery of existing training for such paraprofessionals. The council shall report, at least quarterly, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, on the recommendations given to the commissioner, or the commissioner's designee, pursuant to the provisions of this section, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education.

Job Descriptions for Paraprofessionals

The job description should clarify the roles of the paraprofessional in the education program. The job description should specifically delineate the paraprofessional duties that paraprofessionals are to perform and the duties the paraprofessionals are not to perform. Supervision procedures should also appear in the job description.

What Should be Included in a Job Description?

1. The job description should be specific to the job and emphasize the team role.
2. Details of what the paraprofessional is expected to do should be delineated.
3. A description of the paraprofessional's relationship with the student served should be described.
4. Supervision guidelines must be addressed.
5. All necessary personnel (including paraprofessionals) should be consulted in the development of the job description.

Analysis of Job Description: Analyze your district's job description to determine if they contain the components listed below:

1. Are the following subtitles included with the job description?

Position title	Evaluation and supervision
Position setting	Orientation and training
Qualifications	Time/hours
Rationale/purpose for the position	Supervisor
Orientation/training requirements	Salary
Duties and responsibilities	Benefits (optional)
Hours of employment	
2. Is the job title appropriate and reflective of current trends in paraprofessional employment?
3. Does the job description show a true relationship to what paraprofessionals are currently doing?
4. Are the paraprofessionals responsibilities to students detailed? Are limits to authority identified?
5. How is supervision addressed?
6. Does the job description provide direction for the development of paraprofessional training programs? Are on-the-job training goals identified?
7. Is information included on the methods of evaluation of the paraprofessional?

Sec. 28 of PA 07-3 of the June Special Session.

Not later than December 1, 2008, the department shall report and make recommendations to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education concerning professional development for paraprofessionals and the status and future of school paraprofessionals with instructional responsibilities.



A Paraprofessional's Guide to Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI)

SRBI is *Connecticut's Framework for Response to Intervention (RTI)*, a process used to determine if and how students respond to instruction and social-emotional learning. SRBI provides a framework for school teams for designing, implementing and evaluating educational interventions in a timely manner. SRBI emphasizes successful instruction for all students through high-quality general education practices, as well as targeted interventions for students experiencing learning, social-emotional or behavioral difficulties. A child's progress is assessed and results are used to make decisions about appropriate supports. SRBI uses a three-tiered model as a continuum of support.

Tier I: (Core) the on-going general education curriculum, instruction and social/behavioral supports for all students, with adequate differentiation of instruction.

Tier II: (Supplemental/Targeted) short-term (e.g., 8 – 20 weeks) targeted interventions provided in small group settings for students who are not making progress with the Core instruction; it is part of the general education system. Student progress should be assessed weekly or biweekly.

Tier III: (Intensive) more intensive and/or individualized short-term (e.g., 8 – 20 weeks) interventions for students who fail to respond adequately to the supplemental/targeted interventions; it is part of the general education system.

A key component to SRBI is that all children, including English Language Learners, receive high-quality curriculum and instruction, attention to the quality of the school climate, as well as a comprehensive system of social-emotional learning and behavior supports in the general education classroom or program. (Tier I)

Common Assessments are given to all students to enable teachers to monitor academic and social progress, and identify those who are experiencing difficulty early. Students may be identified as needing additional supports to supplement what they are currently receiving in Core instruction (Tier I). Additional teaching strategies or methods that have been proven to be effective in teaching children and result in improved student achievement are used (Tier II and Tier III).

Teachers need to determine whether an intervention is successful or needs to be changed. Progress monitoring is the process by which teachers can better understand a child's needs and demonstrate the growth children are making in a specific area. For students not making progress from supplemental interventions (Tier II), they are provided with a higher level of support (individualized instruction) they need to be successful learners (Tier III). With appropriate selection and monitoring of interventions, the expectation is that most students make enough progress to continue with Core Instruction (Tier I) without additional supports.

Collaboration among all school staff ensures positive learning experiences, early identification of student needs and positive outcomes for struggling students. As a paraprofessional, you can be a valuable part of SRBI teams by assisting teachers with screening, benchmarking and progress monitoring assessments, recording observations of behavior and learning strategies and entering assessment data into a management system. Paraprofessionals can also serve as a member of the intervention team. On this team you can collaborate with teachers to provide support for students and implement teacher planned interventions. It is important that in each of these roles you work under the direct supervision of a certified teacher and complete specialized training and participate in schoolwide professional development to enable you to perform these duties.

For more information regarding SRBI, please log onto www.ct.gov/sde/SRBI. For additional information regarding appropriate roles for paraprofessionals in the SRBI process, please contact Iris White, Education Consultant, Bureau of Accountability and Improvement, 860-713-6794 or e-mail at iris.white@ct.gov.

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