



## October 2010 Update for District Contacts



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

### ***Paraprofessional Overview of the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI)***

This module provides a one-day overview of the components of the initiative so paraprofessionals are prepared to support teachers in implementing the strategies and goals of CALI.

**DATE:** Thursday, October 21, 2010

**TIME:** 8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

**LOCATION:** ACES, Hamden

Registration fees are waived for all Title I Schools identified as being "in need of improvement," for central office staff who support Title I Schools identified as being "in need of improvement," and for educators in Priority School Districts. Registrants who are not eligible for free participation will be charged \$85.00 for this session.

Registration is now available on the CALI website at: [www.sdecali.net](http://www.sdecali.net).



SERC is proud to be holding its 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Statewide Paraprofessionals as Partners Conference on October 26. The theme this year is "Dynamic Duos: Paraprofessional and Teacher Partnerships." We will be focusing on paraprofessional and teacher relationships but, as always, we also will be providing breakout sessions on a wide range of topics to choose from, including **Autism, SRBI, Self-advocacy, Behavior Strategies** and more. Lunch will be provided along with a cake to celebrate the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this popular conference. **Registration fees will be waived for staff from priority school districts.** Whether you have never been or will be joining us for the 15<sup>th</sup> time, we look forward to seeing you at the most exciting professional development opportunity for paraprofessionals in the state of Connecticut! For more information please visit our Web site at: [www.ctserc.org](http://www.ctserc.org) or e-mail Stefanie Carbone at [carbone@ctserc.org](mailto:carbone@ctserc.org).

### **Key Topics That Need to Be Discussed with the Paraprofessional at the Beginning of the Year**

1. Introductions.
2. Orientation to the school or agency's philosophy of education, rules and regulations.
3. Introduction to the teacher's short and long range plans for the class.
4. Discussion of the teacher's daily and weekly teaching schedules.
5. Discussion of expected lesson plan format.
6. Discussion of procedural matters (discipline, checking pupil's work, turning in lesson plans, planning future conferences, etc.).
7. Discussion of paraprofessional's role in the teacher's classroom.
8. Clarification of the paraprofessional's expectations and goals for himself/herself.
9. Discussion of the paraprofessional's self-concept of strengths and weaknesses pertaining to this and other experiences.
10. Discussion of the kinds of training needed by the paraprofessional.
11. Provision for planning a program of early observations, structured support (mentoring), and independent support role activities.
12. Discussion of evaluation criteria that will be used to assess the paraprofessionals work performance.

Adapted from: Gerlach, K. "Let's Team Up," NEA Professional Library

### ***Supervision and Evaluation of Paraprofessionals: What Administrators Need to Know***

This session will address some of the current legal and ethical issues regarding the employment, supervision, evaluation and training of paraprofessionals. Discussion topics will include clarifying the appropriate role of paraprofessionals who assist with classroom instruction and the need for state and local policy regarding paraprofessional qualifications. The Appropriate Supervision of Paraprofessionals, as mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEIA 2004), will be defined and discussed, as will the quality indicators for designing staff development for paraprofessionals, administrators and teachers. The State Education Resource Center (SERC) is providing this session in collaboration with the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS). Registration is available on the SERC Web site at: [www.ctserc.info](http://www.ctserc.info).

**Date:** October 27, 2010

**Time:** 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

**Location:** CAS  
30 Realty Drive, Cheshire

**Audience:** Pre K-Grade 12 and Administrators

**Presenter:** Kent Gerlach, Ed.D.  
Professor, Pacific Lutheran University, WA

**Fee:** \$75.00

**CEUs:** 0.7



## October 2010 Update for District Contacts



### Assistive Technology

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA 2004) have further defined that students with disabilities must have access and instruction in the general education curriculum. For many students with disabilities to be successful learners in the general education curriculum, they must receive supplemental aids and services. Assistive technology commonly referred to as AT, fits both the definition of supplemental aids, as well as related services for students with disabilities. Assistive technology services and devices allow access to the federal education curriculum for academic, social and extracurricular activities.

It is the responsibility of the individualized education program (IEP) team. The team makes its decisions based on the assessment of the student. Depending on the student's needs, the IEP team may decide that the student does not need any device or the device may be light-tech or high-tech.

Examples of Low-Tech AT are: Pencil grips, pictures, graph paper, communication boards and slant boards.

Examples of High-Tech AT are: Computers/laptops, sophisticated communication devices, software to support academics and complex computer access software.

Paraprofessionals must familiarize themselves with the AT supports that are written in the student's IEP, usually found in the accommodations and modifications page. Training is necessary for paraprofessionals to be able to utilize AT.

The National Paraprofessional Standards (1999) says that all Para educators should demonstrate:

- The ability to use assistive technology prescribed by teachers, providers, and other professional practitioners.
- Understanding of how various assistive and adaptive devices and materials facilitate learning and inclusion for children and youth with developmental, physical, and sensory disabilities and those who are medically fragile.
- Understanding of how the purposeful utilization of technology can promote learning.
- Ability to use computers and other technology in a purposeful manner to facilitate learning.
- The ability to prepare and use adaptive equipment and assistive technology prescribed by professionals and other professional staff.

THE CREC (Capitol Region Education Council) COMPASS is a comprehensive job embedded professional development curriculum developed specifically for paraprofessionals. This series of modules, aligned with National Paraprofessional Standards, has been designed to enhance the paraprofessional's skills in working with students in educational settings.

One of CRECs Advanced Modules, includes a training on Assistive Technology. Participants gain an understanding of assistive technology and how to utilize a variety of assistive technology tools used to promote student independence and learning in the school setting. Learn about the continuum of low- to high-tech assistive technology and its applications.

**More information can be found on the paraprofessional page of the CREC Web site at: [www.crec.org/paraprofessional](http://www.crec.org/paraprofessional) or by contacting your local regional education service center (RESC):**

<b>ACES:</b>	Patricia Hart-Cole <a href="mailto:phart@aces.org">phart@aces.org</a>	<b>EASTCONN:</b>	Elaine Rothenberge <a href="mailto:rothenberg@eastconn.org">rothenberg@eastconn.org</a>
<b>CES:</b>	Dr. Christine Peck <a href="mailto:peck@ces.k12.ct.us">peck@ces.k12.ct.us</a>	<b>EDUCATION CONNECTION:</b>	Jodiann Tenney <a href="mailto:tenney@educationconnection.org">tenney@educationconnection.org</a>
<b>CREC:</b>	Tricia Silva <a href="mailto:tsilva@crec.org">tsilva@crec.org</a>	<b>LEARN:</b>	Susan Hall <a href="mailto:shall@learn.k12.ct.us">shall@learn.k12.ct.us</a>

The State of Connecticut Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/ affirmative action for all qualified persons and does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. Inquiries regarding the Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to the Equal Employment Opportunity Director, State of Connecticut Department of Education, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457-1543, 860-807-2071.