

Paraeducator Guidelines

2022-2023 School Year



NEW LONDON
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Table of Contents

JOB QUALIFICATIONS..... 3

RESPONSIBILITIES 3

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ITS APPLICATION 4

DISTRICT POLICIES/PROCEDURES 5

CHARACTERISTICS OF SPECIAL LEARNERS..... 9

RECEIPT OF DISTRICT POLICIES/PROCEDURES 11

Job Qualifications

Applicant Qualifications – Complete at least one (1) of the following:

- Two years of college credit (60 credits total); or
- Hold an Associate’s (or higher) degree; or
- Passed the ParaPro Assessment

Responsibilities

What is a **Paraeducator**??

A **Paraeducator** is a school employee who works under the supervision of a certified /licensed staff member to support and assist in providing instructional and other services to children and students. *

“**Para**” means alongside of

“**Paraeducator**” means working alongside an educator.

* Adapted A.L. Pickett, Director for National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals, City University of New York 1997

Various factors influencing the specific responsibilities assigned to the paraeducators include but are not limited to: individual teachers may vary the responsibilities of the paraeducators to enhance the program of instruction. The following list illustrates instructional duties that may be assigned to para educators:

- Participates in in-service training and programs.
- Uses universal health precautions for preventing illness and infections, proper body mechanics for lifting learners and objects.
- Communicates with professionals regarding students, alerts teachers to student needs.
- Maintains confidentiality of students.
- Performs other related tasks as the teacher may assign.
- Assists individual students in performing activities initiated by the teachers.
- Supervises children in the hallway and lunchroom.
- Assists in monitoring supplementary work and independent study.
- Reinforce learning in small groups or with individuals while the teacher works with other students.
- Provides assistance with individualized programmed materials.
- Assists the teacher in observing, recording, and charting behavior.
- Assists the teacher with crisis problems and behavior management.

- Assists in preparation /production of instructional materials.
- Carries out instructional programs designed by the teacher
- Collects data for behavior and academic tracking
- Assists with Behavior Intervention Plans
- Assist the teacher with students' **functional needs** that may include; toileting, potty training, lifting, dressing, shoe tying

Confidentiality and Its Application

Confidentiality is the most critical and important aspect of the par educator's job. It is a legal responsibility to observe both the rights of students with disabilities and parents regarding data privacy. Like teachers and administrators, paraeducators have access to personal information about children and their families including these examples:

- The results of formal and informal tests;
- Behavior in classrooms and other education settings;
- Academic progress;
- Family circumstances and family relationships;

Both the children and the family have the absolute right to expect that all information will be kept confidential and made available only to personnel in school or another agency who require it. This ensures that the rights, health, safety, and physical well-being of the children are safe guarded. Confidentiality must be maintained and protected. The rights of students' to due process, dignity, privacy and respect must be promoted.

Always ask yourself:

- What information would you want discussed with others regarding your child?
- What would you like said about yourself as a parent?
- What would you like said about your family, your values, your lifestyle?

Confidentiality Pointers:

- Avoid using names if you are asked about your job.
- Suggest that questions about a student are best directed to your supervisor.
- Do not share other students' names or information regarding their programs with parents during PPT meetings, conferences or informal conversations.
- Information regarding specific students and programs should not be shared in the lunchroom, staff room, office areas, out in the community or any other setting.
- No matter who asks you a question about a student, if you are unsure whether you should answer, DON'T. Please refer questions pertaining to individual students to your supervising teacher or school administrator.

District Policies/Procedures

Special Education Teacher will oversee daily roles and responsibilities

- **Working Day:**

A standard working day consists of 7 hours, but it may vary depending on your assignment. A paraprofessional is entitled to a half-hour duty-free lunch.

You should arrive at least 5 minutes before the start time of the school you are assigned to (see below). Your scheduled times may vary based on building needs for arrival and dismissal.

<u>School:</u>	<u>Start Time:</u>	<u>End Time:</u>
C.B. Jennings Elementary	8:40 AM	3:35 PM
Nathan Hale Arts Elementary	8:10 AM	3:10 PM
Winthrop STEM Elementary	8:40 AM	3:35 PM
Middle School Campus	7:35 AM	2:30 PM
High School Campus	7:40 AM	2:40 PM

It is the professional responsibility of paraeducators to punch in each day upon entering and leaving the school.

Sick Time

Refer to Para Educator Contract

When calling out sick you must:

- Notify supervising teacher
- Notify building administration and secretary
- Text supervisor of your absences

***Electronic Usage** (Cell phones, laptop, tablet, and Chromebook) for personal use is not permitted during the school day. If you have an emergency – please step out of the classroom to use your phone. Adults should not be checking their phones during the school day.

- **Annual evaluation:**

All paraeducators will be evaluated annually utilizing the TalentEd. platform. Your supervising teacher will be a part of the evaluation process. They will collaborate with building administration and special education supervisor.

Staff is encouraged to dress neatly, in clothes that promote a professional appearance. If there is a question as to whether a certain item of clothing is appropriate (such as jeans, t-shirts, and sweatshirts) the Paraeducator is asked to consult the following and/or building administration / special education supervisor.

Personnel -- Certified/Non-Certified Conduct and Dress

<https://www.newlondon.org/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=458749>

- **Arriving Late/Early:**

Each paraeducator must arrive at their scheduled time. If a paraeducator is aware ahead of time, they may be late, a call or text to the building administration, school secretary and/or supervising teacher is required, stating the approximate time of arrival. This is so the supervising teacher can plan appropriately and account for each student that para educator is responsible for. Each paraeducator must stay until their scheduled time. If a paraeducator must leave their workday early, they must first clear it with building administration/supervising teacher and alert the special education supervisor. A paraeducator who leaves early without notifying the appropriate staff for the reason for their absence, will be subject to district discipline policy.

- **Attending Faculty Meetings or In-services:**

Paraeducator are generally not required to attend faculty meetings or in-services unless the meeting/in service is specifically designed for para educators or all staff. When a required meeting is scheduled the Supervisor of Special Education and/or building principal will notify the paraeducator.

- **Attending PPT Meetings:**

A Paraeducator may be asked to attend a student's Planning and Placement Team meeting at the case manager or parents' discretion. Paraeducators work closely with students and often have valuable information to share with the team. When the paraprofessional is not required to attend the meeting, they may be asked to provide information to the case manager to be relayed to the other members of the team. Consult with special education teacher prior to the meeting.

- **Responsibilities When Supervising Teacher is Absent:**

If the supervising teacher is absent (for personal or district reasons), the paraeducator is expected to aid the substitute in a manner that facilitates normalcy and continuity in the students' day. The supervising teacher may also give specific instructions to the paraeducator to be carried out during those times they are absent.

Policies

Paraeducators are responsible for following all policies and procedures determined by the New London Public School District and following all policies and procedures listed in the employee handbook.

SEX DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE (PERSONNEL)

<https://www.newlondon.org/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=87704949>

REGARDING SEX DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT (STUDENTS)

<https://www.newlondon.org/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=87704883>

Personnel -- Certified/Non-Certified Title IX

<https://www.newlondon.org/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=458705>

Personnel -- Certified/Non-Certified Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco

<https://www.newlondon.org/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=9256640>

Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified Staff/Student Non-Fraternization

<https://www.newlondon.org/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=458753>

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified Policy 4118.51: Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology) - Social Networking

<https://www.newlondon.org/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=46047914>

Bullying Prevention and Intervention

<https://www.newlondon.org/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=458897>

<https://www.newlondon.org/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=458899>

Crisis Prevention / Response

<https://www.newlondon.org/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=458919>

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION OF STUDENTS AND USE OF EXCLUSIONARY TIME OUT

<https://www.newlondon.org/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=88013347>

Mandated reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

<https://www.newlondon.org/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=87704972>

<https://portal.ct.gov/DCF/1-DCF/Reporting-Child-Abuse-and-Neglect#MR>

CT Statutes chapter 319a - Child Welfare, Sec. 17a-101:

Characteristics of Special Learners

Paraeducators need to understand the cognitive, physical, emotional, and social characteristics that are generally associated with children identified as in need of special education services. Children may exhibit one or more characteristics to varying degrees.

Autism: Autism means a range of pervasive developmental disorders that adversely affect a pupil's functioning and result in the need for special education instruction and related services. Autism is a disability category characterized by an uneven developmental profile and a pattern of qualitative impairments in several areas of development: social interaction, communication, or restricted repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities, with onset in childhood. Characteristics can present themselves in a wide variety of combinations from mild to severe, as well as in the number of symptoms present.

Deaf/Blindness "Deaf-blind" means medically verified visual loss coupled with medically verified hearing loss that, together interfering with acquiring information or interacting in the environment. Both conditions need to be present simultaneously and must meet the criteria for both visually impaired and deaf and hard of hearing.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing "Deaf and hard of hearing" means a diminished sensitivity to sound, or hearing loss, that is expressed in terms of standard audiological measures. Hearing loss has the potential to affect educational, communicative, or social functioning that may result in the need for special education instruction and related services.

Emotional Disturbance means an established pattern characterized by one or more of the following behavior clusters:

- A. Severely aggressive or impulsive behaviors,
- B. Severely withdrawn or anxious behaviors, general pervasive unhappiness, depression or wide mood swings.
- C. Severely disordered thought processes manifested by unusual behavior patterns, atypical communication styles and distorted interpersonal relationships.

This category may include children or youth with schizophrenic disorders, affective disorders, anxiety disorders, or other sustained disturbances of conduct or adjustment when they adversely affect educational performance. The established pattern adversely affects education performance and results in either an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relations necessary to the learning process, with peers, teachers, and others, or failure to attain or maintain a satisfactory rate of educational or developmental progress which cannot be improved or explained by addressing intellectual, sensory, health, cultural, or linguistic factors.

Intellectual Disability refers to pupils with significantly sub average general intellectual functioning resulting in or associated with concurrent deficits in adaptive behavior that may require special education instruction and related services.

Other Health Impaired means a broad range of medically diagnosed chronic or acute health conditions that may adversely affect academic functioning and result in the need for special education instruction and related services. The decision that a specific health condition qualifies as other health impaired will be determined by the impact of the condition on academic functioning rather than by the diagnostic label given the condition. (ADHD)

Physically Impaired means a medically diagnosed chronic, physical impairment, either congenital or acquired, that may adversely affect physical or academic functioning and result in the need for special education and related services.

Multiple Disabilities means concomitant impairments (such as intellectual disability, blindness, orthopedic impairment, etc.), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. Severely Multiple Disabilities means a pupil who has severe learning and developmental problems resulting from two or more disability conditions determined by assessment

Specific Learning Disability means a condition within the individual affecting learning, relative to potential and is:

- A. Manifested by interference with the acquisition, organization, storage, retrieval, manipulation, or expression of information so that the individual does not learn at an adequate rate when provided with the usual developmental opportunities and instruction from a regular school environment.
- B. Demonstrated by a significant discrepancy between a pupil's general intellectual ability and academic achievement in one or more of the following areas: oral expression, listening comprehension, mathematical calculation or mathematics reasoning, basic reading skills, reading comprehension, and written expression.

A specific learning disability may occur with, but cannot be primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor impairment; and/or cognitive impairment.

Speech or Language Impairment means the intrusion or repetition of sounds, syllables, and word; prolongation of sound; avoidance of words; silent blocks; or inappropriate inhalation, exhalation, or phonation patterns. These patterns may also be accompanied by facial and body movements associated with effort to speak. Fluency patterns that are attributed only to dialectical, cultural, or ethnic differences or to the influence of a foreign language must not be identified as a disorder.

Traumatic Brain Injury means an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's education performance and result in the need for special education and related services. The term applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; speech/language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory perceptual and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing.

Visual impairment means a medically verified visual impairment accompanied by limitations in sight that interfere with acquiring information or interaction with the environment to the extent that special education instruction and related services may be needed.

**Receipt of District Policies/Procedures
for Para Educators at New London Public School
2021-2022**

I am in receipt of the 2021-2022 of the New London Public Schools' Para Educators Handbook District Policies/Procedures. I understand that I may request clarification from the Supervisor of Special Education upon completion of my reading of this packet.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____