



Windsor Locks Public Schools Pupil Services Department Paraeducator Handbook **2025-2026**

All students with exceptionalities will meet or exceed their goals and objectives.

Introduction

Over the past decade, the roles and responsibilities of the paraeducator have changed in Windsor Locks. Increased diversity, new assistive technology, new programs, educational initiatives, and the evolving needs of our students have created a growing demand for well-trained and effective paraeducators.

This paraeducator handbook is designed to be a reference guide for paraeducators working in Windsor Locks. The purpose of the handbook is to provide you with the school and district expectations, policies, and procedures, and a guide to access supports at the school and district level.

This handbook is to serve as a broad overview as Pupil Services recognizes that every Paraeducator's position may vary based on the school and students' individual needs. The handbook addresses the specific requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A key provision of IDEA is to provide staff development and training to ensure students have access to the general education curriculum and classroom. This handbook will serve as a guide to keep that critical goal a priority.

Please keep this handbook as a reference, as its primary purpose is to provide consistency in our daily practices.

If you have any questions concerning school or district policies, procedures, and practices, please speak to a building administrator, the secondary or primary school special education coordinator, or myself.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joshua Robinson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joshua Robinson
Director of Pupil Services
Windsor Locks Public Schools

General Information

The Connecticut State Department of Education defines a paraeducator as:

"An employee who assists teachers and/or other professional educators or therapists in the delivery of instructional and related services to students. The paraeducator works under the direct supervision of the teacher or other certified or licensed professional. The ultimate responsibility for the design, implementation, and evaluation of instructional programs, including assessment of student progress, is a collaborative effort of certified and licensed staff."

Staff development is a critical and federally mandated aspect of paraeducator support. Training programs and job-embedded processes provide the knowledge and skills needed by the paraeducators and those who oversee the use of paraeducator services. It is often helpful to begin a comprehensive paraeducator training program by conducting a needs assessment. Sound professional development decisions are determined through an ongoing evaluation of current practices, needs, and intended outcomes.

Paraeducators should be part of a team that recognizes that all students can learn. Certified teachers should have training in the principles of teaching and learning that emphasize scaffolding teaching, foster independence, create strategies for student engagement, and facilitate data collection. Proper teacher training and modeling will help ensure that the paraeducator will also be effective when working with students.

** Disclaimer: Not all paraeducators perform all duties described in this definition.*

Pupil Services Department Overview

The Director of Pupil Services provides direction to all special education instruction and pupil support services. The director serves as the administrator of RISE Transition Academy, Pine Meadow Academy, and Sisu Academy. The primary responsibilities of the Director are to facilitate improvement of instruction and service, to participate in school staffing, to supervise and evaluate special education and pupil services staff, to oversee the identification process, program development, and program placement services for students who are mandated as special education, and to administer compliance with State and Federal regulations.

Pupil Services is supported by three administrative assistants who carry out specific functions to support pupil services.

- Amy Bonito: Transportation, Financial Compliance, and Grants Management
- Erin Blake: CT SEDS Resource Specialist, IEP Compliance, State reporting
- Joanne Hinckley: District PPT Scheduling Coordinator

Pupil Services is also supported in part by Central Office:

- Bjorn Burke - Assistant Director of Finance

There are two Special Education Coordinators for pupil services who serve as building-based compliance specialists who carry out the responsibilities of the IDEA. Under the supervision of the Director and in concert with the school principals, they initiate Planning and Placement teams (PPTs), develop Individualized Education Plans in conjunction with the case manager and PPT team, promote student achievement, act as a resource to the SRBI team, review and improve student service delivery, communicate with staff, parents, and consultants, and schedule paraeducators as described in the student's IEP.

Pupil Services Contact Information

- Joshua Robinson – 860-292-5707 - Director of Pupil Services
- Rachel March - 860-292-6987 - Secondary Education
- Megan Parrette - 860-292-3986 - Primary Education
- Erin Blake – 860-292-5782
- Amy Bonito – 860-292-5708
- Joanne Hinckley - 860-292-6986

Special Education Program and Services

Pupil Services in Connecticut public schools provides a comprehensive range of supports to meet the diverse needs of students in accordance with their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). These services include:

- **Specially Designed Instruction** – Developed and implemented by certified special education teachers/case managers to address each student’s unique learning needs.
- **Related Services per IEP** – Such as psychological services, school social work, school counseling, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) supports, nursing services, transition planning/services, and specialized transportation.
- **Consultation and Specialized Supports** – Including psychiatric consultation, assistive technology evaluations and supports, services for students who are deaf or hard of hearing, additional speech and language consultation, and coordination of specialized transportation services.

All services are provided in collaboration with families, educators, and outside professionals to ensure each student’s educational, social-emotional, and functional success.

Delivery of Special Education

The delivery of special education services is determined by the individual needs of the student and the requirements of the Federal and State mandates (IDEA). The referral for special education services requires data on the student’s response to instruction and intervention in general education (for example: differentiated instruction, accommodations, strategies, reading specialist, early intervention, SRBI recommendations, etc.) In addition to examining the student’s performance on curriculum-based assessments, a psychoeducational evaluation is completed.

Upon review of the data, the PPT (Parents, Administrator, general education teacher, related service providers) determines eligibility for a disability and the need for special education services. Then, an IEP is developed to meet the unique needs of the student to determine educational placement. All supports and services are implemented within the least restrictive environment (LRE). The district is transitioning to a web-based PPT platform called CTSEDS.

Developing the Individualized Education Plan

An IEP meeting is scheduled and conducted by Windsor Locks Public Schools. The meeting is held, and the IEP is developed and written according to the child’s needs based on educational assessments,

classroom data, and observations. Parents and the student (when appropriate) should be active participants in determining supports.

Parents must give consent before the school system may provide special education and related services to the child for the first time. The child will begin to receive services within ten days of the IEP meeting in which they have been identified as needing special services, or sooner.

If the parents disagree with the IEP and placement, they may discuss their concerns with the members of the IEP team and try to work out an agreement. If they still disagree, parents can ask for mediation, or the school may offer mediation. Parents may file a complaint with the State Department of Education and may request a due process hearing, at which time mediation must be available. All IEP services stay in effect until the mediation or due process hearing is complete.

Implementation of the IEP

Services are provided. The school is responsible for making sure that the child's IEP is being carried out as written. Parents are given a copy of the IEP, and each of the child's teachers and service providers has access to the IEP and knows their specific responsibilities for carrying out the IEP. This includes the accommodations, modifications, and supports that must be provided to the child.

Progress is measured and reported to parents. The child's progress toward their annual goals is measured, as stated in the IEP. The student's parents are regularly informed of their child's progress. These progress reports must be given to parents *at least* as often as parents are informed of their non-disabled children's progress.

IEP is monitored and reviewed. The child's IEP is reviewed by the PPT team at least once a year or more often if the parents or school ask for a review. If necessary, the IEP is revised. Parents, as well as team members, must be invited to attend these meetings. Parents can make suggestions for changes, agree, or disagree with the IEP goals and placement for their child.

The child is re-evaluated at least every three years (known as a "triennial"). Its purpose is to find out if the child remains eligible for individualized instruction as defined by IDEA and to determine specific needs for instruction. However, the child must be reevaluated more often if conditions warrant or if the child's parent or teacher asks for a reevaluation.

IEP Overview

The IEP is a vital document for children with disabilities and for those who are involved in their education. It is designed to identify specific teaching strategies, learning goals, and projected results. Each child's IEP describes, among other things, the educational program that has been designed to meet that child's unique needs.

Contents of the IEP: By law, the IEP must include specific information about the child and the educational program designed to meet their unique needs.

Current performance: The IEP must state "present levels of educational performance" or how the child is currently doing in school. This information comes from a variety of sources: classroom assessments and assignments, individual tests given to decide eligibility for services during reevaluation, and observations made by parents, teachers, related service providers, and other school staff. The statement about current performance includes how the child's disability affects their involvement and progress in the general curriculum.

Annual goals: Are ones that the child can reasonably accomplish in a year. The goals are broken down into short-term *objectives or benchmarks*. They may be academic, address social or behavioral needs, relate to physical needs, or address other educational needs. The goals must be measurable -- meaning that they must be possible to measure whether the student has achieved them.

Special education and related services: The IEP must list the special education and related services to be provided to the child or on behalf of the child and the length of time services are provided. This includes supplementary aids and services that the child needs. It also includes changes to the program or supports for school personnel, such as training or professional development, that will be provided to assist the child.

Participation with non-disabled children: The IEP must explain the extent (if any) to which the child will or will *not* participate with non-disabled children in the regular class and other school activities.

Participation in state- and district-wide tests: Most states and districts give achievement tests to children in specific grades or age groups. The IEP must state what modifications in the administration of these tests the child will need. If a test is not appropriate for the child, the IEP must state why the test is not appropriate and suggest how the child will be tested.

Dates and places: The IEP must state when services will begin, how often they will be provided, where they will be provided, and how long they will last.

Accommodations: Provides a list of accommodations and strategies to support the student in the general education classroom.

Transition services. When the child reaches age 14 (or younger, if appropriate), the IEP must address the courses they need to take to reach their post-school goals. A statement of transition service needs must also be included in each of the child's subsequent IEPs according to the *CT Transition Bill of Rights*.

Age of majority. Beginning at least one year before the child reaches the age of majority (18), the IEP must include a statement that the student has been informed of any rights that will transfer to him or her at this age.

Measuring progress. The IEP must state how the child's progress will be measured and how parents will be informed of that progress.

The IEP and the paraeducator

- The paraeducator and the teacher should review the IEP's goals and objectives together.
- The paraeducator should have access to portions of the educational plan that address classroom instruction (Goals and objectives, Accommodations). A paraeducator may be asked to take data on student performance based on goals and objectives in the general education classroom setting.
- A paraeducator should have access to a behavioral intervention plan if applicable.

Involuntary Transfers

Paraeducators may occasionally be reassigned to another school or program. These transfers are made at the discretion of the administration and are guided by the needs of students and the district.

Assignments and reassignments will be based on the best interests of students, with administration selecting staff whose skills, training, and experience align with the needs of the receiving school or program.

If a Paraeducator is transferred to another school involuntarily and a position later becomes available at their original school, they may request to return. Such requests will be reviewed, and a return may be granted if:

- The Paraeducator's skills are the best match to support the needs of the students at the school, and
- A clear plan is in place to ensure continued support for the students and the school they will be leaving.

This process aligns with the language in the Paraeducator Contract, which grants administration the authority to assign or reassign staff while emphasizing fairness and responsiveness to student needs.

Confidentiality

Information may only be exchanged or discussed among staff members who are working with the student when there is a need to do so, to carry out a student's educational program. Otherwise, there is no reason to discuss students or their performance, either in or out of school. When confidential information is being shared, the conversation should occur in the classroom or an office -- and only when students and non-involved adults are not present. It is essential to remember that students and their families are not to be discussed in the staff lunchroom.

Discussions about students are never to occur outside of the school environment. The only exception to this is if the teacher must convey information to the parents or professionals over the phone.

Student status may be shared with parents by administrators, teachers, and pupil service staff only. If parents and/or family members ask about a student's progress, you can simply say, "I can't comment on that. You will have to discuss that with Mr./Ms. _____. Can I have him/her call you?"

By law, student information may not be shared with anyone who is not associated with the school program (for example, friends, family, other professionals) without written consent from the student's parents or guardians.

Strategies for Confidentiality

- Understand and follow established confidentiality guidelines.
- Roleplay a conversation with the class teacher if you're unsure how to respond to parent inquiries in a public setting.
- Do not remove confidential student documents from school buildings.
- Do not discuss your student with any staff who are not working directly with the students you are supporting.

Responsibilities and Roles of Paraeducators

The following information is an adaptation from the National Resource Center for Paraeducators. The primary focus for all paras is to assist and support students with a strong emphasis on paraeducators' understanding of their role, as well as an appropriate level of guidance and training by the case manager to carry out these roles. Paraeducators fulfill a variety of different jobs in Windsor Locks, but all share certain functions, including the responsibility to:

1. Build and maintain effective instructional teams. The paraeducator is there to *assist the teacher*, not the students. When a paraeducator assists in instructional supports under the supervision of a highly qualified teacher, the students benefit and achieve higher rates of success.
2. Maintain learner-centered, supportive environments. In the classroom, the paraeducator helps the teacher help the students by maintaining an environment in which *all* students are included -- not just physically, but academically, socially, and emotionally. The paraeducator assists in accommodating and modifying learning strategies based on learning styles, ability level, and other individual differences.
3. Plan and organize learning experiences for students. There are two primary categories: clerical and materials. The clerical category includes the preparation and organization of materials.
4. Engage students in learning and assist in instruction and behavior management. The paraeducator should know the mission and philosophy of the district, school, and classroom. They should also be proficient in basic reading, writing, math, and the English language. Paraeducators should also know the technology and assistive technology devices that facilitate student learning, including those found in a computer laboratory, library, or media center.
5. Assess learner needs, progress, and achievement. Designing and implementing assessments is the teacher's responsibility, but the para is expected to support and assist, specifically in data collection, carrying out functional (informal) assessment activities, documenting student strengths and needs, maintaining learner records, and assisting in administering standardized tests.

6. Meet standards of professional and ethical conduct. This includes civil, legal, and school policies as well as participation in continuing professional development, career advancement, chain of command, and an awareness of racial, ethnic, cultural, lingual, and learning differences in students, families, and staff.

You will receive a plan for each of your students from the case manager that will include:

- Students' goals and objectives that they are currently working on
- Accommodations
- Strategies to utilize in the classroom to support goals
- Progress monitoring tools to track academic and behavioral goals

Other Appropriate Roles and Duties for Paraeducators

- Participate in regularly scheduled meetings and share relevant information (PLC / Faculty Meetings)
- Implement proactive behavior and learning strategies.
- Use strategies that provide learner independence and positive self-esteem.
- Review and reinforce learning activities presented in the general education classroom.
- Help to engage learners through an awareness of cognitive, physical, social, emotional and language development.
- Use developmentally and age-appropriate reinforcement and other learning activities.

Attending Planning and Placement Team (PPT) Meetings

If a paraeducator spends an extensive amount of time with a student, a decision may be made by the SEC and case manager for you to attend the student's PPT. If a paraeducator attends a PPT, they will review their work with the student and provide only details on information regarding the goals and objectives outlined in the PPT. The case manager and the Administrator will share any other information. The Administrator will meet with the paraeducator before the PPT to review the PPT process.

Information for Paraeducators Who Serve as Bus Monitors

If a student's IEP requires support on the bus or behavioral concerns warrant the need for a bus monitor, this position will be posted and filled in alignment with the paraeducator contract. The bus monitor is hired to accompany a specific student or students and is only responsible for them during their time on the bus. The role of the bus monitor may include:

- Securing seat belts
- Monitoring behaviors
- Supporting students with health concerns
- If an emergency arises, assist the driver with the safety of the other students.

Information for Paraeducators who provide toileting assistance

Toileting is a task that requires proper equipment and supplies to ensure the safety of both students and staff. These supplies should be reviewed and discussed with the case manager, teacher, or nurse. There are different reasons why a student may require assistance with toileting, including health, physical, or mental impairment, as well as toilet training in the early grades (pre-K and Kindergarten).

Procedure:

- Escort the student to the bathroom
- Prepare the toilet by wiping it with a school-approved disinfectant.
- Put on PPE – gloves.
- Talk to the student about what you are doing.
- Assist students with their clothes.
- Transfer and/or assist the student to the toilet.
- If required, stabilize the student on the toilet seat.
- Clean student - Assist the student with the necessary hygiene tasks, such as wiping or cleaning, according to their individual abilities and needs. Provide clear and simple instructions or prompts to help the students understand and participate. Be sure to wipe front to back. Wipes should not be flushed, regardless of packaging, to avoid plumbing issues.
- Encourage the student's independence and self-care skills by allowing them to do tasks they are capable of performing. Provide assistance and guidance as needed, but always promote their autonomy and self-confidence.
- Dispose of soiled gloves and wipes in the trash and put on a clean pair of gloves.
- Transfer student from the toilet.

Additional Recommendations:

If you are involved in toileting and/or diapering students, you must receive OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Training, which includes topics such as universal precautions, personal protective equipment, and procedures to follow if you have blood or body fluid exposure. You may request training or seek advice from the school nurse, the physical/occupational therapist, and the case manager.

Appendix

- School Hours
- Safety and Security
- Chain of command
- Professional Development
- Professional Development and Evaluation Committee
- New Hires - First-week Expectations
- School closure procedures
- Performance Review Document
- School Calendar
- Personal Leave Document
- Clocking in and out of school

School Hours and Para Work Hours

School	School Hours	ParaEducator Hours
North PreK AM	8:30AM - 11:00AM	8:10AM - 3:10PM
North PreK PM	12:15PM - 2:45PM	
North (K-2)	8:40AM - 3:25PM	8:25AM - 3:25PM
South (3-5)	8:10AM - 2:55PM	8:00AM - 3:00PM
Sisu (K-5)	8:30AM - 2:30PM	None
Middle (6-8)	7:40AM - 2:25PM	7:30AM - 2:30PM
High (9-12)	7:30AM - 2:15PM	7:15AM - 2:15PM
PMA (9-12)	8:45AM - 2:45PM	8:30AM - 3:00PM
RISE (12+)	8:00AM - 2:15PM	7:15AM - 2:15PM

Safety and Security

Classroom Emergency Response Chart

Emergency Steps Proceed Vertically Down the Designated Column

<u>Lockdown</u> (Ex: Imminent danger, threat of an intruder)	<u>Secure School</u> (Ex: Suspicious activity, crime occurred in Town)	<u>Evacuate</u> (Ex: Fire alarm, bomb threat)	<u>Shelter in Place</u> (Ex: Fight, behavior or health issue)	<u>Extreme Weather</u> (Ex: Hurricane, lightning, tornado)
Immediately lock classroom doors and windows. Turn lights off. Silence mobile devices.	Continue teaching. Advise students of increased security. All outdoor activities are suspended.	Give explicit directions to students on evacuation procedures. If bomb threat: do not use cell phone; stay off of radio.	Give explicit directions to students, clear hallways and bring non-involved students into the nearest classroom.	Give explicit directions to students on safety procedures.
If outside, do not go into the building. Guide students to pre-designated outdoor safe areas and take attendance.	Close windows, lock classroom doors and take attendance.	Immediately guide all students out of the classroom to the pre-designated fire exit. Count the number of students as they exit the classroom and stay as a group. No bathroom or locker stops upon exit.	Immediately close and lock classroom doors and draw window shades.	Guide all students to clear hallways and seek refuge in classrooms or designated safe areas. Check all bathrooms for students.
Disregard the fire alarm unless smoke/fire - when other danger is imminent.	Continue normal school operations, re-take attendance at each change of class.	Exit building and guide students to pre-designated safe area. Recount students and immediately report missing students to the main office staff.	Take and document attendance, do not call the main office.	Close all doors and windows and keep students away from doors and windows.
Once the locked classroom door is closed, no entry is allowed to the classroom. Keep students quiet and take attendance. Do not call the main office and stay off of the radio.	Report any missing or tardy students to the main office.	If a pre-designated safe area is unsafe due to specific conditions, extend your distance from danger and relocate to a secondary safe area.	Stay off of the radio and remain alert.	Take and document attendance.
Be prepared to exit the classroom through any means, or be prepared to defend yourself or your students.	Stay alert. Report any unusual activity observed outside. Remain in heightened security until directed.	Remain in the safe area until notified, continue to monitor students and take attendance.	Be prepared to exit the classroom through any means, or be prepared to defend yourself or your students.	If a pre-designated safe area is unsafe due to specific conditions, extend your distance from danger and relocate to a secondary safe area.

INDEX OF FUNCTIONAL ANNEXES

A. Fire Drills

- General information
- Quick Checklist for Teachers
- Handicapped students during school emergencies

B. Lockdown

C. Secure School

D. Evacuation

E. Shelter-in-Place

A. Fire Drills General Information:

- You must be aware of the procedures to be followed during a drill.
- Teachers are responsible for all students assigned or under their supervision during drills or emergency procedures. Paraeducators are responsible for supporting the teacher and any students in their care during a fire drill.
- **ALL PERSONS** in the building are expected to respond to the first sounding of the alarm by evacuating to the predestinated area. This includes students, teachers, office staff, visitors, contractors, cafeteria personnel, and custodians.
- If the PA system is not operational due to the emergency, information will be passed by the most expeditious means, including a bullhorn or messengers.
- All students in the cafeteria are to leave quickly and proceed quietly away from the building.
- Students who are not in a classroom (for example, in the restroom, at the media center, etc.) should leave the building by the nearest available doorway and report to the area where their class musters outside. If between classes, muster in the meeting area of the previous class.
- The students who are leaving a particular room/shop are to remain with that group, under the teacher's supervision, during the entire drill.
- Classroom doors and windows should be closed during a fire drill. Teachers should outline proper procedures and exit routes to each of their groups when the fire alarm goes off. Directions for exiting should be posted prominently in all rooms.
- Teachers should ascertain the presence of physically handicapped students under their supervision in each of their assignments; further, they are responsible for providing immediate and safe evacuation of handicapped students from the building with the rest of the students under their supervision. (See below.)

- Teachers are expected to remind the students to remain with their groups during a fire drill and to file out of the building quietly. Teachers are responsible for checking attendance outside the building. Except for the building secretary, the switchboard operator, the head dietitian, custodians, fire patrol staff/students with specific assignments, all personnel are expected to evacuate the building and follow other fire drill procedures.

Quick Checklist for Teachers and professional staff in the school building:

1. Check the corridor for heat; if it's hot, do not open the door! Exit the room by the secondary exit if available. If there is no other means of egress, block the door and await evacuation by fire personnel.
2. Check the corridor for smoke; use the exit route that is away from the fire and smoke.
3. Support the teacher in assembling the students, check with the teacher to ensure attendance was taken, and help the teacher lead an orderly and quick evacuation to the nearest accessible exit.
4. Assemble the students away from the building and help the classroom teacher take student attendance—report students who are not accounted for to the designated collector.
5. Maintain order during the evacuation.

Students with functional needs during school emergencies:

The following procedures are to be followed by staff during emergency evacuation of the building;

6. Members of the staff to whom the functional needs students are assigned (see item 3) are to remain with the student(s).
7. Ensure the teacher has contacted support to assist with students if required. (You will be provided training if you work with a student who needs these accommodations.
8. If assigned to a student, accompany the student to the nearest fire emergency window where you can signal the fire department for assistance if the need arises.
9. If a functional needs student is not assigned to a teacher at the time of an emergency, the nearest staff member should take charge and follow procedures 1 and 2 above.
10. If a functional needs student is in a location where evacuation by a staff person can be accomplished, such as the first floor, retain the handicapped person until the floor is clear to avoid an accident, and then evacuate the child.
11. For these purposes, handicapped is any person who, because of disability, might have difficulty evacuating the building at the pace the school population is moving. This inability could cause harm to the student and/or others by causing congestion, leading to an accident.

B. Lockdown

A **lockdown** is used to handle a threat emanating from inside the school. During a lockdown drill, all interior and exterior doors are closed and locked. This procedure is used when there is an immediate and imminent threat to the school building population. School staff and students are secured in their current rooms, and no one is allowed to leave until the situation has been curtailed. This allows the school to secure the students and staff in place and remove any innocent bystanders from immediate

danger. Once the doors have been locked, only law enforcement officials will be allowed to enter the school. If a lockdown is announced, do the following:

- The school building's Management Personnel gives the lockdown signal.
- No one will be allowed to remain in the hallways or unprotected areas
- Support classroom teachers by securing the doors, turning out lights, covering windows, pulling shades (after checking with local responders), and moving students out of line of sight of door windows.
- Support teaching in taking attendance and recording students who are in the room, missing, and extra students from the hall, and await further instructions.
- Only enforcement officials will be allowed to enter your room. Do not open doors for ANYONE under ANY Circumstances.
- All activities cease
- If outside of the building, evacuate to a predetermined, off-campus location. This includes bus runs and field trips.

C. Secure School

Secure School will be utilized to counteract a threat coming from outside the school. During a secure school drill, all exterior and classroom doors are closed and locked. No one will be allowed to remain outside the school. Any parents or guardians present outside of school who have been determined not to be a threat can enter the building before the doors are locked, or they are required to leave the school grounds immediately. Once the doors have been locked, only law enforcement officials will be allowed to enter the school. Students and staff are expected to move to their scheduled classroom. If a secure school is announced, do the following:

- Secure School is provided by the Administrative/Management Personnel of any school building.
- Have students who are outside immediately return to the school building.
- Support teachers in locking and securing all exterior and classroom doors and entrances in your classroom/shop.
- Students and staff are expected to move to their scheduled classroom.
- Continue normal classroom/shop activities.

D. Evacuation

An **evacuation** of a school will be performed for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to **fire, explosive threat, weather conditions, and health concerns**. An evacuation drill will begin with the use of the fire alarm notification system. Once activated, all staff, students, and visitors are required to leave the school and assemble at a predetermined location. Once outside the school, attendance will be taken, and further instructions may be given. No one will be allowed to leave the assembly location without permission from the school administration. If an Evacuation is announced, do the following:

- Assist teachers with closing classroom windows/doors; turn off lights/ computers.
- After the alarm, evacuate to the pre-designated area
- Support your assigned students as needed
- Support teachers in keeping students in safe areas away from buildings and out of the way of emergency vehicles. Always evacuate crosswind and/or upwind.

- Support the teacher with taking attendance, and per the teacher's request, relay it to the designated area.
- Remain with the students until the "all clear" is given or until receipt of further instructions.
- Accompany students to the alternate site, if needed
- Accompany students back to the classroom and take attendance

E. Shelter-in-Place

One of the instructions you may be given in an emergency where hazardous materials may have been released into the atmosphere is to shelter-in-place. This is a precaution aimed at keeping you safe while remaining indoors. (This is not the same thing as going to a shelter in case of a storm.)

Shelter-in-place means selecting a small, interior room with no or few windows, and taking refuge there. It does not mean sealing off your entire home or office building. If you are told to shelter-in-place, do the following:

- Move all students to the designated shelter area (You will practice this during the year)
- Follow reverse evacuation procedures to bring students, faculty, and staff indoors.
- Close all windows and the exterior door.
- If there appears to be air contamination within the shelter, place a wet paper towel over your nose and mouth for temporary respiratory protection. Inform the Main Office. Relocate to another part of the building.
- Continue to follow the instructions given over the PA.
- Do not allow anyone to leave the shelter until "all clear" is given.
- If there are visitors in the building, ensure their safety by asking them to stay rather than leave.
- If there is a danger of explosion, close window shades, blinds, or curtains.
- If instructed, support the teacher with using duct tape and plastic sheeting (heavier than food wrap) to seal all cracks around the door(s) and any vents into the room.
- Support the teacher with taking attendance and reporting contact to the office over the phone.

Paraeducator Chain of Command

Communication Protocol for Paraeducators

To ensure clear and efficient communication, Paraeducators should follow the steps below when addressing questions, concerns, or requests related to their roles and responsibilities:

First Point of Contact – Building Administration

Paraeducators should begin by bringing all concerns, questions, or issues to their immediate building administrator (principal or assistant principal).

Second Point of Contact – Coordinator of Pupil Services

If the matter is not resolved at the building level, Paraeducators should next reach out to the Secondary Coordinator of Pupil Services (for middle and high school matters) or the Primary Coordinator of Pupil Services (for elementary school matters).

Third Point of Contact – Director of Pupil Services

If the situation requires further attention, the Director of Pupil Services will address the matter.

Final Point of Contact – Central Office

If additional resolution is necessary, the concern will be elevated to the Central Office for final review and action.

Following this communication pathway ensures that concerns are addressed promptly and by the appropriate staff at each level.

Paraeducator Union Building Representatives

● North Street School	Kirsten Ireland	kireland@wlps.org
● South Elementary School	Tracey Rand	TRand@wlps.org
● Windsor Locks Middle School	Alison Greene	agreene@wlps.org
● Windsor Locks High School	Cynthia DeCasperis	cdecaperis@wlps.org
● Paraeducator Union President	Janine Liddell	JLiddell@wlps.org

2025-2026 Professional Development Options

PLC Options

- Attend Monthly Faculty Building
- Meet with your Case Manager to review student progress
- Meet with colleagues to discuss best practices in supporting students
- Review “at a glance IEP,” document to review accommodations for students you support
- Prepare student materials under the guidance of the case manager to support the educational process
- Additional PD options may be made available to you during half-day release times based on building needs.
- 321 Insight Parasharp Series; Special Ed Connection Online Modules

District Paraeducator PD and Evaluation Committee Members

Looking to volunteer?

Please contact Pupil Services if you're interested in getting involved.

North – Lisa Quagliaroli, Karen Walker, Emily Kalenauskas, Kirsten Ireland

South - Allison McCurdy & Katie Golden

Middle – TBA

High School – Cynthia DeCasperis

PMA – Janine Liddell

RISE - Melinda Seip & Nicole Marinone(will alternate)

Ongoing Professional Development

321 Insight: PARASHARP

ParaSharp is designed to support paraeducators in becoming more effective at addressing common challenges they face. With 5-13 minute easily digestible videos and relevant materials, new strategies are easily learned and can be immediately applied, regardless of how much or little training time is available. ParaSharp’s videos all include summaries and discussion/self-study guides for extending the learning, and ParaSharp’s Insight Sheets, planning forms, and tracking tools offer additional ways to implement best practices in your school.

Login Information:

www.321insight.com. Then go to Log in

User Name: email address

Password: 321insight (all lower case)



Login Information: All Lowercase

Username: ctwindsorlocks1

21 rev 7-25

New Hires

Getting Started

You will be assigned to a case manager who will provide you with student information, your assignment, and keep you informed of any instructional or behavioral shifts in programming. During your first two days, you will be assigned to shadow a veteran paraeducator who will provide you with a tour of the building, introduce you to key staff members (nurse, administrative assistants, custodian), and familiarize you with the classrooms and designated workspace.

Your Role as a ParaEducator

Paraeducators play a vital role in supporting teachers and creating a successful learning environment. Your specific responsibilities may vary depending on your grade level and classroom assignment, but some general duties include:

- **Providing Instructional Support:** You may work with small groups or individual students to reinforce concepts taught by the teacher, prepare instructional materials, and assist with assessments.
- **Classroom Management:** This may involve helping with setting up and maintaining a positive classroom environment, assisting with routines and transitions, and managing student behavior.
- **Student Support:** You may work with students with special needs, providing one-on-one support, implementing individualized education programs (IEPs), and collaborating with special education teachers.
- **Communication & Collaboration:** Maintain open communication with the lead teacher, other paraeducators, and school administration. Attend staff meetings and professional development opportunities as required.

Strategies for Your First Week

- **Introduce Yourself:** Take the initiative to introduce yourself to your colleagues in the building, including teachers, other paraeducators, administrative staff, and support personnel. Let them know you're excited to be part of the team!
- **Observe & Learn:** Spend the first few days observing the classroom routine, teacher-student interactions, and established management strategies. This will help you get acclimated to the classroom dynamics.
- **Ask Questions:** Don't hesitate to ask clarifying questions about your specific role, classroom expectations, or school procedures. The lead teacher and school administration are there to support you.

- **Learn Student Names:** Make a conscious effort to learn the names of your assigned students early on. This will help build rapport and create a more positive learning environment.
- **Focus on Building Relationships:** Building positive relationships with students is crucial for their success. Smile, be approachable, and find ways to connect with them on a personal level.
- **Be Patient with Yourself:** It takes time to adjust to a new environment. Don't be discouraged if everything doesn't click immediately. Focus on learning, observing, and supporting the teacher in any way you can.

School Closures

School Closing

When the weather is unsafe for travel and schools are closed, **all buildings** will be closed for the day. Staff who work a 12-month contract will be expected to maintain their regular hours unless otherwise directed by the Superintendent of Schools. No other staff will be permitted to enter the building on school closures unless directed and/or approved by the Superintendent or his designee.

Delayed Openings

When the weather forces us to conduct a 2-hour delay, **all certified and support staff** will be expected to report 2 hours later than their normal start time. The Superintendent of Schools will direct all 12-month employees and 10-month administrative assistants on whether to report on time or at another time. The time, as directed by the Superintendent, must be adhered to so that our custodial and facilities staff can prepare the parking lots for arrival and ready the building for safe entry by students and staff. Food Service staff at the High School, Middle School, South Elementary, and North Street should arrive no earlier than 7:00 am, 7:00 am, 8:15 am, and 8:15 am, respectively. The change in arrival time will ensure that a grab-and-go breakfast is ready and an adequate amount of time is allotted to prepare lunch for our students.

Early Dismissals

When the weather forces us to dismiss schools earlier than the normal dismissal time, 12-month administrative assistants will be dismissed 1 hour after their respective schools are dismissed, and central office 12-month administrative assistants will be dismissed 1 hour after the last school is dismissed. All teaching staff will be dismissed when the students have safely departed the campuses.

These procedures mirror what we have done in the past. Your safety and that of our students is of utmost importance to all of us. To ensure the safety and provide adequate space and time for our staff and the town crews to clear roads and lots, your adherence to these procedures is appreciated in advance.



Windsor Locks Paraeducator Performance Review

Employee Name:

Date:

Job Title:

Last Review:

School:

Review Type:

☐ Annual

☐ New Hire (6 Months)

☐ Follow-up

Rating Definitions:

(3) Meets Expectations: Met the key requirements of the job in all areas. This is what is expected. Performance is characterized by high achievement.

(2) Progressing Towards Meeting Expectations: Met the key requirements in at least 60% of the areas of the job criteria. Some direction and follow-up may be needed.

(1) Below Expectations: Does not meet the key requirements of the job. Excessive direction and follow-up are needed. Immediate improvement is required.

N/A: This does not apply to this particular employee or because it is unavailable.

Performance Criteria	Meets Expectations	Progressing Towards Expectations	Below Expectations	NA
Adaptability (Adjusts to change situations, learns new and different tasks, responds appropriately to suggestions for work improvement)	3	2	1	☐
Comments:				
Punctuality (Arrives on time; works as scheduled)	3	2	1	☐
Comments:				

Communication (Maintain confidentiality; shares relevant information with classroom teacher and case manager to support identified students; shares student data in a timely and secure manner.	3	2	1	☐
Comments:				
Initiative/Problem Solving/Decision Making (Performs with minimal supervision, acts promptly to seeks out others to develop solutions to resolve unexpected problems that arise on the job, makes practical decisions in the best interest of supporting students)	3	2	1	☐
Comments:				

Performance Criteria	Meets Expectations	Progressing Towards Expectations	Below Expectations	NA
Interpersonal Skills (Maintains professional working relationships with supervisors, co-workers, and the public; helps to create a hospitable and inclusive environment)	3	2	1	☐
Comments:				
Job Knowledge (Demonstrates the knowledge and skills necessary to perform effectively; understands the expectations of the job and stays current with technology, methods, and processes in the area of responsibility)	3	2	1	☐
Comments:				

Work Habits (Demonstrates cooperation and positive behavior; complies with WLPS rules and policies; considers safety while working)	3	2	1	☐
Comments:				
Work Quality/Productivity (Completes duties as specified in the position description and other special assignments. Strives to increase student productivity, while supporting them towards demonstrating mastery of their goals and objectives)	3	2	1	☐
Comments:				

Areas of Strength / Special Accomplishments: Describe areas of strength that the Para-Educator demonstrated over the course of the year. Also, include any accomplishments that had a significant impact on the department or the school.

Recommendations for growth: Describe any areas where the Para-Educator needs to demonstrate growth. Also, describe the specific actions that the supervisor and the Para-Educator will take to strengthen these areas, any training required, and the deadline for which improvements are expected. Recommendations should become a goal for the next review period.

Follow-Up: (Optional) Indicate if follow-up is necessary. If so, state when and why.

A Para-Educator may submit comments on a separate page addressed to the Director of Human Resources within seven calendar days after being informed of his or her performance review. A copy of your review will be kept in your personnel file.

Signatures:

Employee (Signature does not necessarily signify agreement)

Date

Administrator Signature

Date

WINDSOR LOCKS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Personal Leave Form

PARAPROFESSIONALS



_____ hereby requests personal leave on _____.
Employee Name Date(s) of Leave

Application for personal leave shall be made to the immediate supervisor as far in advance as possible and at least forty-eight (48) hours before taking such leave except in emergencies.

The request for leave is for one of the following reasons (check appropriate reason):

- ☐ Legal demands which cannot be scheduled outside of the workday.
- ☐ Marriage (self, children, parents, siblings of self or spouse).
- ☐ For other personal business which cannot be conducted at other than scheduled work time.
- ☐ Attendance at funeral services for a family member not covered by Section B of the Agreement.

School _____ Signature of Employee _____ Date Submitted _____

- ☐ Approved
- ☐ Approved with condition(s)
- ☐ Denied

Comments: _____

Signature of immediate supervisor Date signed

Personal leave request forms are to be completed in triplicate. One copy is to be given to the employee, one copy to be retained in the school and the remaining copy retained by the central office.

Clocking in and out by school

North Elementary School Paraeducators

Start time: 8:10 am (Pre-K) or 8:25 (K-2)

End time: 3:10 pm (Pre-K) or 3:25 (K-2)

If you take a **Half day AM** clock in at 11:55 am.

If you take a **Half day PM** clock out at 11:25 am.

- On days you take a half a day (either am or pm) you do not take a lunch break.
- You can clock in up to 7 minutes before your scheduled start time – the system will automatically make your start time **8:10am.**
- You do not have to clock out and back in for lunch – the system will automatically deduct 30 minutes.
- You must have prior authorization from Ms. Testani to work beyond your scheduled 6.5 hours/day. The administrator will notify the Admin. Assistant to update your timesheet accordingly.
- In the event of an emergency where you must remain with a student, you must notify an administrator via email with the details.
- Any work performed before or after school will need to be submitted on a paper timesheet. (after school clubs, bus monitor)
- You will be able to view your timesheet on Aesop. Once you log in, click the Aesop tab at the top of the page, then click the work detail icon. Please check it regularly!

South Elementary School Paraeducators

Start time: 8:00 am

End time: 3:00 pm

If you take a **Half day AM** clock in at 11:40 am.

If you take a **Half day PM** clock out at 11:10 am.

- On days you take a half a day (either am or pm) you do not take a lunch break.
- You can clock in up to 7 minutes before your scheduled start time – the system will automatically make your start time **7:55 am.**
- You do not have to clock out and back in for lunch – the system will automatically deduct 30 minutes.
- You must have prior authorization from Ms. Briggs to work beyond your scheduled 6.5 hours/day. The administrator will notify the Admin. Assistant to update your timesheet accordingly.
- In the event of an emergency where you must remain with a student, you must notify an administrator via email with the details.
- Any work performed before or after school will need to be submitted on a paper timesheet. (after school clubs, bus monitor)
- You will be able to view your timesheet on Aesop. Once you log in, click the Aesop tab at the top of the page, then click the work detail icon. Please check it regularly!

Middle School Paraeducators

Start time: 7:30 am

End time: 2:30 pm

If you take a **Half day AM** clock in at 11:15 am.

If you take a **Half day PM** clock out at 10:45 am.

- On days you take a half a day (either am or pm) you do not take a lunch break.
- You can clock in up to 7 minutes before your scheduled start time – the system will automatically make your start time **7:30 am**.
- You do not have to clock out and back in for lunch – the system will automatically deduct 30 minutes.
- You must have prior authorization from Mr. Prinstein to work beyond your scheduled 6.5 hours/day. The administrator will notify the Admin. Assistant to update your timesheet accordingly.
- In the event of an emergency where you must remain with a student, you must notify an administrator via email with the details.
- Any work performed before or after school will need to be submitted on a paper timesheet. (after school clubs, bus monitor)
- You will be able to view your timesheet on Aesop. Once you log in, click the Aesop tab at the top of the page, then click the work detail icon. Please check it regularly!

High School Paraeducators

Start time: 7:15 am

End time: 2:15 pm

If you take a **Half day AM** clock in at 11:00 am.

If you take a **Half day PM** clock out at 10:30 am.

- You can clock in up to 7 minutes before your scheduled start time – the system will automatically make your start time **7:15 am.**
- You do not have to clock out and back in for lunch – the system will automatically deduct 30 minutes.
- You must have prior authorization from Mr. Bernabe to work beyond your scheduled 6.5 hours/day. The administrator will notify the Admin. Assistant, to update your timesheet accordingly.
- In the event of an emergency where you must remain with a student, you must notify an administrator via email with the details.
- Any work performed before or after school will need to be submitted on a paper timesheet. (after school clubs, bus monitor)
- You will be able to view your timesheet on Aesop. Once you log in, click the Aesop tab at the top of the page, then click the work detail icon. Please check it regularly!

RISE Paraeducators

Start time: 7:15 am

End time: 2:15 pm

If you take a **Half day AM** clock in at 11:00 am.

If you take a **Half day PM** clock out at 10:30 am.

- You can clock in up to 7 minutes before your scheduled start time – the system will automatically make your start time 7:15am.
- You will need to clock in/out every day.
- You must have prior authorization from Mr. Robinson to work beyond your scheduled 6.5 hours/day. The administrator will notify the Admin. Assistant to update your timesheet accordingly.
- In the event of an emergency where you must remain with a student, you must notify an administrator via email with the details.
- You will be able to view your timesheet on Aesop. Once you log in, click the Aesop tab at the top of the page, then click the work detail icon. Please check it regularly!

PMA Paraeducators

Start time: 8:30 am

End time: 3:00 pm

If you take a **Half day AM** clock in at 11:00 am.

If you take a **Half day PM** clock out at 10:30 am.

- You can clock in up to 7 minutes before your scheduled start time – the system will automatically make your start time 7:15am.
- You will need to clock in/out every day.
- You must have prior authorization from Mr. Robinson to work beyond your scheduled 6.5 hours/day. The administrator will notify the Admin. Assistant to update your timesheet accordingly.
- In the event of an emergency where you must remain with a student, you must notify an administrator via email with the details.
- You will be able to view your timesheet on Aesop. Once you log in, click the Aesop tab at the top of the page, then click the work detail icon. Please check it regularly!

Every child deserves a champion – an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best that they can be. ~ Rita Pierson

Paraeducator Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Outline

1. Plan Overview

- **Employee Name:** _____
 - **School:** _____
 - **Supervisor:** _____
 - **Start Date of PIP:** _____
 - **End Date of PIP:** _____
 - **Purpose Statement:**
This Performance Improvement Plan has been developed collaboratively to support your growth in key areas of your role. It outlines expectations, provides structured support, and helps monitor progress. Compliance with this plan demonstrates our shared commitment to student success and your professional development.
-

2. Goal 1: [Insert Open-Ended Goal]

- **Description:** _____

(E.g., "To enhance instructional support strategies for students with diverse learning needs.")
- **Expected Outcomes:** _____

(Clear, observable indicators of growth - e.g., improved student engagement, positive feedback from teacher or supervisor, use of effective prompting).
- **Support & Resources:** _____

(Mentoring, training, co-planning, observation and feedback sessions, written resources, etc.)

- **Notes / Observations:** _____

(For the administrator to document progress, challenges, and adjustments.)

3. Goal 2: [Insert Open-Ended Goal]

- **Description:** _____

(E.g., "To improve documentation accuracy and timeliness in support logs and data entries.")
- **Expected Outcomes:** _____

(Examples: consistent, error-free logs; timely submissions; clarity and completeness in entries).
- **Support & Resources:** _____

(Training in documentation systems, templates, peer review sessions, and feedback meetings.)
- **Notes / Observations:** _____

(For the administrator to document progress, challenges, and adjustments.)

4. Timeline & Check-In Dates:

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| ○ Day 1: Review goal(s) and agree on strategies | Date: _____ |
| ○ Week 2: First informal check-in | Date: _____ |
| ○ Week 4: Mid-point review | Date: _____ |
| ○ Week 8: Summative review and next steps | Date: _____ |
-

5. Compliance & Accountability

- **Importance of Adherence:**

This plan is designed to support your professional growth and provide a fair opportunity to improve performance. Regular check-ins, open communication, and consistent effort are essential. Active participation demonstrates your commitment to both your role and the students you serve.

- **Consequences of Non-Compliance:**

If agreed-upon goals are not met within the specified timeline, or if there is a lack of meaningful progress, further action will be taken. This may include continued support, additional training, placement on extended improvement measures, or termination of employment if performance expectations are not met.

5. Signatures

- **Paraeducator:** _____ **Date:** _____
- **Administrator:** _____ **Date:** _____