



Part-Time Paraprofessional Model

2026-2027

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Legal Framework

Under (IDEA) and (NJ) Regulations - (N.J.A.C. Title 6A; Chapter 14)

- **Services (Paraprofessionals) must be:**
 - Individually determined by the IEP Team
 - Based on each individual student's needs (Ex: (1:1) / (2:1)
 - Can vary drastically
 - Necessary to provide (FAPE) - Ages (3-21) in (LRE)
- **A ratio para is driven by the following:**
 - Safety Needs (i.e. elopement / aggression)
 - Instructional access
 - LRE considerations
- Under **(IDEA)**, we are required to provide **Appropriate Support, not Maximum Support**

Special Education Service Needs

- **Special Education Numbers:**
- **(391 - CST) ; (21) in CST Process**
- **(55) Speech Only; (5) Speech in Process**
- **Total = (472) serviced under CST and Related Services (Speech / OT / PT / Nursing)**

Paraprofessional Numbers

(1:1) Paraprofessionals *	(39) *
(2:1) Paraprofessionals	(28)
(3:1) Paraprofessionals - <u>Changing</u>	(5)
General Education Paraprofessionals	(2)
Classroom Aides	(4)
Current Total	(78)of (80) Projected
Total Applicants currently (26-27)	(71) +

(80) Total Paraprofessionals out of (472) SPED Students = (17%)

Current Hybrid Model

- Currently, we have a Hybrid Model of Paraprofessionals (FT & PT)
- Has discrepancies and gaps which have continuously caused:
 - Communication Challenges
 - Inconsistent staffing patterns
 - Frequent coverage adjustments and limited flexibility of staffing
 - Has contributed to disparities in workload distribution
 - Scheduling efficiency across buildings and classrooms
 - Replacement Issues during staff absences (1:1; 2:1)

Attendance / Accountability:

- Frequent and excessive absenteeism has impacted:
 - Consistency of support for students (i.e. compliance issues)
 - Compensatory Services (OT / PT / Speech)
 - Ensuring students receive the level of support as outlined in their IEPs / Programs

Additional Support

We are continuing to interview and hire to fill vacant positions

- **Internal Assignments** - Paras are moved temporarily as needed - based on: Daily student attendance / student needs. We are reviewing ratio paraprofessionals **(2:1)**
- **Assigning Substitutes** - Through **(AESOP)** as necessary (Daily)
- **Use of Outside Agencies** - as needed **(MOESC / ESS / Aequor)**

Newly Proposed “Staggered” Model

Building Schedules	Group A (50%)	Group B (50%)
FPE (8:25 AM - 3:25 PM)	FPE (8:15 AM - 1:45 PM)	FPE (10:05 AM - 3:35 PM)
GJM (8:30 AM - 3:30 PM)	GJM (8:20 AM - 1:50 PM)	GJM (10:10 AM - 3:40 PM)
ECC (9:40 AM - 4:00 PM)	ECC (9:30 AM - 3:00 PM)	ECC (10:40 AM - 4:10 PM)

Strengths of Staggered Model

- Para schedules are intentionally aligned to student needs
- More consistent and uniform staffing structure district-wide
- Coverage is distributed strategically
- Promotes greater equity across classrooms and programs
- This model is showing success in other local and surrounding districts

Local Districts - Staggered Schedules

School District	Part-Time (Paras)
Stafford Township	PT - Currently (250) Para's*
Absecon	Part-Time
Mays Landing (Hamilton)	Part Time
Tuckerton School District	Part-Time
Waretown School District	Part-Time
Lacey Township	FT - Going PT (26-27)

Why This Model Works Well

- **There are no gaps in coverage**
 - Offset “Staggered” hours are intentional to have full coverage
 - Can allow for paras as “Floaters” due to stability
 - Best fit of para(s) / student needs is the very top priority
 - Ex: Health
 - Ex: Safety
 - Allows us to monitor student needs and staff attendance more consistently
- **This helps student receive:**
 - Reliable - Responsive Support
- **It promotes:**
 - Consistency
 - Positive Climate / Culture
 - Talent Retainment (Structure)

Hybrid vs. Staggered

Current (FT) Para Hours	New (PT) Para Hours
(7) Hours per day or (35) hours per week	(5 hours / 50 minutes) or (29.5 hours) per week
30 minute lunch / 15-minute Break	20-minute break
6 hrs / 15-minutes	5 hrs / 30 minutes
Instructional Time = 5 hours / 45 minutes	Instructional Time = 5 hours / 45 minutes
Current (Avg.) = \$20,339.00	\$26,992.00

Recent Interview Paraprofessional Feedback

- (+) “A significant pay increase helps me and my family so much”
- (+) “Less hours at work - more time with children and grandchildren”
- (+) “Most other districts are moving to this model from what I hear”
- (+) “Do not have to ride buses anymore because of pay increase”
- (+) “More flexibility in my personal and professional life”
- (+) “I’m a single mom, this pay increase makes me so happy”
- (+) “I love the children and this does not make a difference for me”
- (+) “I love working here, and the children are what matter”

Proposal: Development of a Paraprofessional Academy

- **(Summer) - Paid (3) Days of Training (Paid) – August:**

- Would improve consistency of support between school and home
- Increase trust by ensuring staff are paired with students they are the best fit for
- Will enhance student safety, engagement, lead to more stable school experiences for all

- **Training for all paraprofessionals:**

- Crisis Prevention (CPI)
- CPR
- Instructional Strategies
- Sensory Trainings
- Training and resources for working with all (14) areas of disabilities in NJ (Well-Rounded)
- How to assist with differentiation and modeling
- *Connecting paraprofessionals with teachers, children, and families prior to school*

- **Trainings conducted by:**

- Current Paraprofessionals
- RBTs
- Administration
- Teachers

Proposal: Development of a Paraprofessional Academy - (2)

- *Develop an **Awards Recognition Program** for our paraprofessionals
- *Spotlighting stories of their journeys and growth
- *Ask for honest feedback on experiences so we can plan for the future as a team

Why The Academy Truly Matters

- **Ensures our paraprofessionals are consistently trained in:**

- Standards, Roles, Expectations
 - Self / CST / Teachers
- CPI
- CPR
- Special Education Law
- Instructional Strategies and Differentiation Techniques
- Differences between special education programs (ERI / RR / AUT)
- Equip with behavioral support strategies

- **This Academy also matters because:**

Connect with students, families, and teachers prior to the school year

- It gives all of our paraprofessionals support, guidance, resources, and confidence going into the classrooms

Thank you

