

# Building Effective Paraeducator & Teacher Teams: The Utah Paraeducator Handbook

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## Objectives

- ◆ Why a handbook
- ◆ Organization
- ◆ Multiple Uses
- ◆ Free download at: [www.utahparas.org](http://www.utahparas.org)



## Why a Handbook?

- ◆ There need to be State Standards that:
  - ◆ recognize the importance of paraeducators...
  - ◆ stress the importance for paraeducator training & supervision &
  - ◆ open the door for building career pathways for paraeducators

## Currently, There Are...

- ◆ Approximately 8,500 paraeducators in Utah
- ◆ Every district sets their own standards
- ◆ Paraeducator training, supervision and support differs greatly
- ◆ As a result, services for children may vary between districts



- ◆ There has also been no clear cut description of paraeducator roles and responsibilities  
AND...
- ◆ Paraeducators need to understand their roles and responsibilities
- ◆ Teachers and Administrators must also understand the roles and responsibilities of paraeducators



Organization

# Utah State Standards

- ◆ Federal & State Legislation drove the development of Utah State Standards for Instructional Paraeducators
- ◆ Handbook chapters are built around the Utah state standards

STANDARD 1 Support instructional opportunities	STANDARD 2 Demonstrate professionalism and ethical practices	STANDARD 3 Support a positive learning environment	STANDARD 4 Communicate effectively & participate in the team process
<p><b>Core Competencies:</b></p> <p>A. Have knowledge and proficiency<sup>1</sup> in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic reading/reading readiness</li> <li>• basic math/math readiness</li> <li>• basic writing/writing readiness</li> </ul> <p>B. Have knowledge of strategies, techniques, and delivery methods of instruction</p> <p>C. Assist in delivering instruction according to supervisors* lesson plans</p> <p>D. Demonstrate the ability to record relevant information/ data about learners</p> <p>E. Organize material and be prepared to support learning and the instructional process</p> <p><b>Supporting Competencies:</b></p> <p>F. Demonstrate the ability to use assessment instruments specified by supervisor* to document and maintain data</p> <p>G. Demonstrate the ability to use strategies to facilitate effective integration into various settings (e.g., libraries, computer labs, learning centers, playgrounds, community, and assorted modes of transportation)</p> <p>H. Use basic educational technology</p> <p>I. Use basic interventions to adapt to learner needs, learning styles, and ability</p> <p>J. Assist in providing objective documentation for observations and functional assessments</p> <p><sup>1</sup> as determined by individual school districts</p>	<p><b>Core Competencies:</b></p> <p>A. Have knowledge of and adhere to the distinctions in the roles and responsibilities of teachers/providers, paraprofessionals, administrators, families, and other team members</p> <p>B. Carry out responsibilities in a manner consistent with all pertinent laws, regulations, policies and procedure</p> <p><b>Supporting Competencies:</b></p> <p>C. Respect confidentiality</p> <p>D. Have a positive attitude and contribute to a positive work environment</p> <p>E. Have reliable attendance, punctuality, and dependability</p> <p>F. Exhibit sensitivity to cultural, individual differences and disabilities</p> <p>G. Adhere to the civil and human rights of children, youth, and their families</p> <p>H. Have knowledge of health, safety, and emergency procedures</p> <p>I. Pursue and participate in staff development and learning opportunities</p>	<p><b>Core Competencies:</b></p> <p>A. Use proactive management strategies to engage learners</p> <p>B. Support the supervisors* behavior management plan</p> <p><b>Supporting Competencies:</b></p> <p>C. Demonstrate knowledge of learner characteristics and factors that influence behavior</p> <p>D. Assist in maintaining an environment conducive to the learning process</p> <p>E. Assist in teaching children and youth social skills</p> <p>F. Assist learners in using self control and self management strategies</p> <p>G. Assist in monitoring learners and make appropriate decisions while coaching or tutoring in different settings</p> <p>H. Assist in providing medical care and/or teaching self care needs</p>	<p><b>Core Competencies:</b></p> <p>A. Serve as a member of an instructional team</p> <p>B. Use effective communication skills (written, verbal, nonverbal)</p> <p><b>Supporting Competencies:</b></p> <p>C. Provide relevant feedback and make recommendations regarding learner performance and programming to supervisor*</p> <p>D. Participate in instructional team** meetings</p> <p>E. Use appropriate channels for resolving concerns or conflicts</p> <p>F. Participate in conferences with families or primary care givers when requested</p> <p>G. Foster beneficial relationships between agency/school, families, children/youth, and community</p>

\* Supervisor refers to supervising licensed and/or certified personnel. \*\* Instructional team refers to those individuals who have day-to-day responsibility for providing education and other direct services to children/youth and their families. Instructional teams are found in general and special education settings, Title I, multilingual/ESL, early childhood, and school-to-work preparation programs.

## Standards & Training

- ◆ State standards give sufficient details for:
  - ◆ Providing roles and responsibilities to new paraeducators and directors
  - ◆ Providing a full year's worth of curriculum training

## Let's Examine Each Standard



## Standard One

### ◆ Support Instructional Opportunities

- ◆ Have knowledge and proficiency in :
  - ◆ basic reading/reading readiness
  - ◆ basic math/math readiness
  - ◆ basic writing/writing readiness
- ◆ Have knowledge of strategies, techniques, and delivery methods of instruction
- ◆ Assist in delivering instruction according to supervisors lesson plan
  
- ◆ Demonstrate the ability to record relevant information/data about learners
- ◆ Organize material and be prepared to support learning and the instructional process
- ◆ Demonstrate the ability to use assessment instruments specified by supervisor to document and maintain data
- ◆ Demonstrate the ability to use strategies to facilitate effective integration into various settings
  
- ◆ Use basic educational technology
- ◆ Use basic interventions to adapt to learner needs, learning styles, and ability
- ◆ Assist in providing objective documentation for observations and functional assessments

## Standard Two

### ◆ Support Professionalism & Ethical Practices

- ◆ Have knowledge of & adhere to the distinctions in the roles & responsibilities of teachers/providers, paraeducators, administrators, families, & other team members
- ◆ Carry out responsibilities in a manner consistent with all pertinent laws, regulations, policies, & procedures
- ◆ **Respect confidentiality**
  
- ◆ Have reliable attendance, punctuality, & dependability
- ◆ Exhibit sensitivity to cultural, individual differences & disabilities
- ◆ Adhere to the civil & human rights of children, youth, & their families
- ◆ Have knowledge of health, safety, & emergency procedures
  
- ◆ Pursue & participate in staff development & learning opportunities

## Standard Three

- ◆ Support a Positive Learning Environment
  - ◆ Use proactive management strategies to engage learners
  - ◆ Support the supervisors behavior management plan
  - ◆ Demonstrate knowledge of learner characteristics & demonstrate knowledge of learner characteristics & factors that influence behavior
  - ◆ Assist in:
    - ◆ maintaining an environment conducive to the learning process
    - ◆ teaching children & youth social skills
    - ◆ teaching using self control & self management strategies
    - ◆ monitoring learners & make appropriate decisions while coaching or tutoring in different settings
    - ◆ providing medical care &/or teaching self care needs

## Standard Four

- ◆ Communicate Effectively & Participate in the Team Process
  - ◆ Serve as a member of an instructional team
  - ◆ Use effective communication skills
  - ◆ Provide relevant feedback & make recommendations regarding learner performance & programming to supervisor
  - ◆ Participate in instructional team meetings
  - ◆ Select & use appropriate channels for resolving concerns or conflicts
  - ◆ Participate in conferences with families or primary care givers when requested
  - ◆ Foster beneficial relationships between agency/school, families, children/youth, & community

# Appendix

- Terminology e.g., IDEA, IEP, LD, EBD, etc.
- Qualifying students for special education (classification definitions)
- Other disabilities (ADHD, Cerebral Palsy)
- People first language
- Responsibilities matrix for paraeducator and teacher teams
- Teacher's self evaluation checklist.
- Supervisor/Administrator's self evaluation checklist (helps define critical roles)
- Resources
- 101 ways to praise a child!



Multiple Uses

## Training

- ◆ An entire year's worth of professional development trainings are outlined in each standard

## Example

- ◆ Using effective instructional practices includes:
  - ◆ Knowledge of basic reading, math, writing, strategies, techniques, and delivery
  - ◆ Direct Instruction
  - ◆ Effective Teaching Cycle
  - ◆ Student Responses
  - ◆ Response Cards
  - ◆ Peer Tutoring
  - ◆ Data Collection
  - ◆ Antecedents, Behaviors, and Consequences

## Handbook as a Resource

- ◆ If there is a question or issue about assignments, schools can turn to the handbook for the “bottom line”
- ◆ Address & create trainings for paraeducators, teachers and administrators from handbook

## Where You Can Access the Handbook

- ◆ [www.utahparas.org](http://www.utahparas.org)
- ◆ [www.nrcpara.org](http://www.nrcpara.org)

## Contacts

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