

## **School Paraprofessional Advisory Council**

**Tuesday, March 12, 2013**

### **Meeting Notes**

**ATTENDANCE:** Annie MacDonald, CILU; Loyola Welsh, MEUI, Rhonda Kempton, CSDE; Stacey Cannon Cronk, CES; Anthony Brisson, SERC; Heather Dawes, SERC; Bill Walkauskas, ACES; Tenisha Baker, East Hartford Paraprofessional of the Year, Regina Birdsell, CAS; Marcia Cattanach, AFT CT.

### **Updates:**

**SERC:** Para Conference is Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>. Anthony asked for suggestions on any presenters. SERC is working on Common Core State Standards “ParaBriefs”, and “Webinars”, and a video about Paraprofessionals. The video would be shown at the beginning of the conference, on the website, and possibly feature Tenisha as the star! SERC is also looking for grants. They are monitoring the research being done linking student achievement to paraprofessional instruction. Jack Jackter School in Colchester is currently conducting an informal survey on this topic. SERC is considering offering “Learning Seminars” on Saturdays. Some of the workshops being offered at the conference are: Common Core State Standards, Autism, Challenging Behaviors, Math, and Literacy. Suggestions were made to include “de-escalation” strategies, and presenting a teacher-para team working with IEP’s, and a workshop for school administrators. Possibly have a panel of administrators discuss how the IEP is implemented at their schools. Anthony also suggested combining sections of the Para Guidelines with BEST practices to develop an easy to use manual for paras to reference. Regina will look for districts that already have a manual.

**REORGANIZATION:** The discussion centered on Legislative bill # 6183 and 6502. We are not sure if the bills expansion includes the members already on the council. Would the new list of members be added to the existing council, or be replaced by the new requirements? Of course, this is only if the bills pass the Education Committee. Several of the amended requirements pertaining to council membership are already on the council; AFT CT, CT State Employees Assoc, United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America Local 222, Current Para of the Year, as well as SERC & CREC. Concerns were over whether additional paraprofessionals joining the council would be released from school to attend council meetings.

**REPORT to GENERAL ASSEMBLY & the COMMISSIONER:** Everyone agreed that the report was well done. Thank you, Iris!

**ANNE MARIE MURPHY PARA OF THE YEAR AWARD:** Everyone is aware the award is being named after Anne Marie, that her family will be attending the conference, and that the Commissioner has been invited. We agreed that Governor Malloy or his designee should be invited as well. We also agreed that the Superintendent of Newtown, and the Director of Special Education should be invited to the Conference.

**OTHER PARAPROFESSIONAL ISSUES:**

- The council would like to go forward with the request for Governor Malloy to proclaim April 3<sup>rd</sup> as Paraprofessional Appreciation Day in Connecticut
- We welcome Peg MacIntyre, president of the Newtown Educational Assistants Union to join our council.
- The council has set tentative dates for Paraprofessional of the Year interviews: Thursday, August 1, and/or Friday, August 2.
- The committee requests that Iris White remain as our Chairperson.
- June 18<sup>th</sup> is set aside for Paraprofessional of the Year application screening 9:30 to 3:30. Everyone on the council who is available will try to attend.
- Suggestion was made to review our Mission Statement at the next meeting.

Our next meeting in on Tuesday, May 14<sup>th</sup> at CAS, 9-11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted my Marcia Cattanach