

School Paraprofessional Advisory Council Meeting Notes

Tuesday, May 14, 2013

9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Connecticut Association of Schools

Attendance: Bill Walkauskas, Loyola Welsh, Anthony Brisson, Rhonda Kempton, Donna Morelli, Peg McIntyre, Janet Scialdone, Marcia Cattanach, Tenisha Baker, Annie MacDonald, Iris White

CREC Update: About fifteen people attended the COMPASS Common Core Train the Trainer Session. CREC received some worthwhile feedback and are making edits. Suggestion was made to wait until August when hopefully we will have some more information about work being done on alternative assessments and to address bias/sensitivity issues.

CREC is considering developing a PBIS Overview module. Module would focus on the proactive nature of PBIS-setting up school wide expectations. Basic modules are all under revision. It's important to consider how we can integrate updated SDE documents, i.e. the Assistive Technology Guidelines which hopefully will be finalized soon.

Janet, Donna, and Peg have been talking about creating a peer to peer module. The Council agrees that this is an excellent idea.

National Resource Center for Paraeducators conference: Janet, Bill, and Donna attended. The conference offered workshop sessions on topics such as career ladders, building your own resume, the importance of being a lifelong learner whether you are a paraprofessional, teacher, or administrator. Many of the conference presentation are on the Center's website: www.nrcrepara.org.

Marilyn Likins, co-director for the Center, asked Bill about the possibility of Connecticut once again hosting the national conference in Hartford (we hosted in 2008). Iris has mentioned this offer to Debra Kurshan, the Chief Turnaround Officer who suggested running the offer by Sarah Barzee, the Interim Chief Talent Officer.

SERC Update: paraprofessional proposal for next year includes an IEP webinar, learning seminars (last year's was poorly attended so SERC is considering Saturday workshops). The annual conference will be November 14, 2013 at the Crowne. This would be an opportunity to "unveil" our transition to the use of the word "paraeducator." Possible workshop topics, based on last year's evaluation feedback and council member input: Mentoring, Common Core, De-escalation, Teacher-Paraprofessional Collaboration, math and literacy strategies.

Development of a handbook-we need to revisit the idea of forming a committee to develop a manual on how to develop a handbook. Representatives from the South Windsor School District could assist.

Video highlighting the work of paraprofessionals. Suggestion was made that Iris send a notice out to the district contact asking if they have videos of paraprofessionals working that they would like to share.

Need a keynote: Andrew Maynard from the Education Committee who supports paraprofessionals. The Commissioner and the Governor have already been invited to participate in the ceremony, but have not yet confirmed.

Iris will check if there is Priority school District funds to once again support fee waivers.

Paraeducator of the Year: Application Deadline is Friday, June 7th. So far, Iris has received one application from North Branford; although she has received email requests for the nomination packet. Applications will be screened on Tuesday, June 18th from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. (time will vary based on number of application received).

Public Act Legislation passed the House and Senate unanimously; it now awaits the Governor's signature. There was a discussion around the language of the bill and what it might mean for current council members.

A small group planned to stay after the meeting to review last year's paraeducator of the year rubric and make suggested revisions.

Meeting Dates for Next Year: September 10, November 12th, January 14th, March 11th, and May 14th. Meeting location to be determined.