

PARAEDUCATOR JOB DESCRIPTION CORE COMPETENCIES

To work in education and related services programs for children and youth with special needs, paraeducators will possess:

- An understanding of the value of serving children and youth with disabilities in special education classrooms and integrated settings.
- An ability to work as an effective member of the service delivery team.
- An ability to practice ethical and professional standards of conduct established by the profession and this agency.
- A working knowledge of patterns of human development and developmental milestones typically achieved at different ages.
- The ability to assist children and youth with disabling conditions to develop self-esteem, develop autonomy, and participate in group activities in the school and community.
- The ability to use developmentally and age appropriate instruction procedures.
- A knowledge of appropriate classroom management and student discipline strategies.
- A knowledge of health, safety and emergency procedures.
- The ability to use adaptive equipment, and provide special care or physical assistance to infants, children and youth. This may require positioning, transferring, handling, lifting, and/or feeding.

CODE OF ETHICS FOR PARAEDUCATORS

- The paraeducator should discuss the children's limitations only with the supervising teacher and those directly involved with the child's educational program.
- The paraeducator should refrain from: (1) airing school problems and confidential matters, including personalities, outside of school circles; (2) discussing administrative, interdepartmental, and interschool problems in the presence of pupils; and (3) gossiping about problems with those who cannot assist in the solution.
- The paraeducator should be consistent in managing the behavior of the students.
- The paraeducator should refrain from expressing differences of opinion or dissatisfaction with the supervising teacher in the presence of the students.
- The paraeducator should never show that he/she is angry at himself or others when students are present.
- The paraeducator should not threaten students.
- The paraeducator should never evaluate children from psychological or diagnostic instruments.
- The paraeducator should never program and prescribe educational activities and materials for children.
- The paraeducator should never be assigned to work with the most "difficult" students the majority of the day.
- The paraeducator should never be responsible for preparing lesson plans and initiating original concept instruction.
- The paraeducator should never initiate parent or teacher contact.
- The paraeducator should never make value judgments concerning teacher strategies and placements.
- The paraeducator should never be directly responsible for discipline of children.
- A paraeducator shall not be assigned to more than two professionals, or more than two educational settings.
- The paraeducator should not be employed to make the teacher's job any less responsible.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARAEDUCATORS

As an integral part of the educational team, paraeducators have a commitment to maintain ethical standards of behavior in their relationships with students, parents, their supervisor, and other school personnel. A code of ethics provides guidelines for appropriate behavior.

- Engage only in non-instructional and instructional activities for which qualified or trained.
- Discuss a child's progress, limitations, and/or educational program only with the supervising teacher.
- Discuss school problems and confidential matters only with appropriate personnel, and only when students are not present.
- Respect the dignity, privacy, and individuality of all students, parents, and staff members.
- Refrain from engaging in discriminatory practices based on a student's handicap, race, sex, cultural background, or religion.
- Take responsible action to insure that the best interests of individual students are being met.
- Serve as a positive role model for students in personal interactions and communications.
- Use behavior management strategies which are consistent with standards established by the local school district and classroom teacher.
- Follow the grievance procedures outlined by the local school district.
- Respect the confidentiality of information about students and do not communicate progress or concerns about students to parents without authorization of the teacher.
- Refer concerns expressed by parents, students, or others to your teacher or supervisor.
- Represent the educational agency in the community and refrain from expressing negative opinions of the program and agency.
- Recognize that the supervisor has the ultimate responsibility for the instruction and behavior management of children and follow the directions prescribed by him/her. Express differences of opinion only when students are not present.