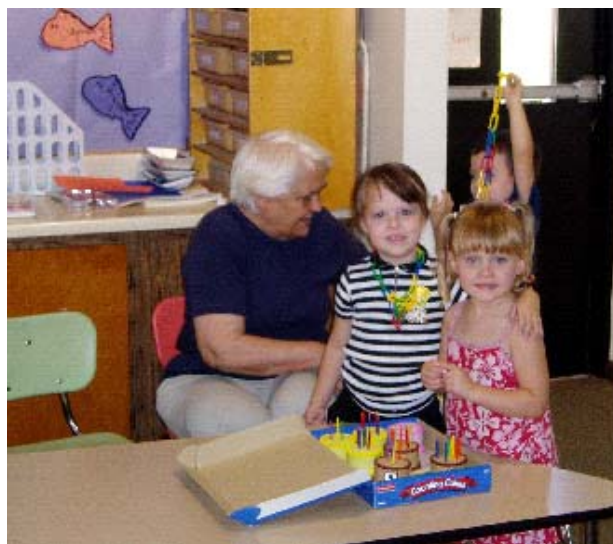


ANW Education Cooperative



Para Educator Handbook



1 PARA EDUCATORS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Definition

To follow the intent of K.S.A. 72-962, a paraeducator is qualified *...to assist certified teachers in the instruction of exceptional children...* This individual, therefore, shall be referred to as an *instructional paraeducator*.

The special education paraeducator is a team member who works alongside the special education teacher. She/he not only frees the teacher from the more routine tasks of the classroom, but also serves as an effective part of the educational team. With differentiated responsibilities, she/he carries out the programs developed by the special education professionals. The scope of the definition described here and in K.A.R. 91-12-61 in general focuses on the instructional paraeducator who works with a specific teacher and is assigned to a particular classroom.

This definition also includes those paraeducators located in a public institution or other private facility who are providing assistance to the special education teacher in an accredited special education program. The standards for program approval shall remain the same for these settings as for the public school programs.

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

NEED AND RATIONALE

The special education paraeducator has become an essential person in the expansion of programs for students with special needs. Exceptional children and youth require smaller classes; therefore, more personnel are needed. In addition, more and more pupils who are in situational settings or were receiving no educational services at all are being admitted to public school programs. The paraeducator can help overcome these obstacles and work towards the quality education that is necessary for exceptional students.

UTILIZATION OF PARA EDUCATORS

In order to use a paraeducator effectively, the teacher must first have a clear vision of his/her own role as a teacher. He/she needs to understand the hierarchy of the instructional tasks and then decide which ones best involve his/her time and which ones should be delegated to his/her assistant. The amount and quality of professional supervision given is crucial in deciding what duties paraeducators can and should perform. There is universal agreement that the diagnosis of education needs, the planning and design of programs and procedures to meet those needs are professional functions. The role of the paraeducator is to provide support to the approved special education personnel in the educational program, management of students, and

assistance with non-instructional and instructional tasks.

PARA EDUCATOR EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

To be employed as a paraeducator, a person must:

- Be a high school graduate, and
- complete an orientation session addressing confidentiality, the services to be provided and the policies and procedures of the local education agency concerning special education.

PARA EDUCATOR DUTIES

Para educators provide instructional or related services under the supervision of licensed or certified special educational professionals in an accredited or approved special education program. Examples of allowable activities include instructional support under the supervision of a professional; participation in IEP meetings; staff development; and student data collection and record-keeping, such as maintaining observational and anecdotal records. Para educators also may assist the *special teacher* with paperwork related to the special education students for whom he/she is responsible, which provides important support to those students and *special teachers*.

A paraeducator may be assigned to support students with exceptionalities in a general education program when one or more students with exceptionalities are included in that program, if the paraeducator is assigned to and supervised by a *special teacher* who meets the requirements.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

The paraeducator is recommended for hire by the supervising teacher. They are given a one year *at-will-agreement*. Either party can terminate with a 2 week prior notice. Each year the supervising teacher will recommend to the ANW Administration your re-employment for the following school year in your current position. ANW Administration does reserve the right to assign and re-assign any and all ANW employees at any time.

Paraeducators must complete their required number of inservice hours each year. Any less hours may lead to probation, freeze in wages and/or dismissal. The employment days will coincide with the days school is in session or as approved by the director. The paraeducator may substitute one or more credit hours of college coursework for the staff development requirement. Each college hour will be counted as 20 staff development hours, applied to the school year in which the coursework is obtained.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

ANW INSERVICE SIMPLIFIED

1. Paras working the complete school year **MUST** have their required number of hours of Inservice by April 15th of each school year.
2. Paras must participate in staff development, regardless of the number of hours/day or days/week worked.
3. Any para starting after the first school day in August will be prorated based on months worked for inservice hour requirement.
4. It is acceptable for all inservice to be knowledge points only.
5. Any inservice attended the month of May or over the summer can be turned in for the upcoming school year. Hours can not be completed August through April, then simply turned at the end of school for next year's hours.
6. Application and Impact hours can occur and be credited from one school year to the other. Example: 4 hours knowledge inservice for a student behavior mod plan completed **April 28th, 2008**.
November 28th, 2008 - application inservice points for the April 28th inservice. Documentation accompanies this request showing para implements the behavior plan on a regular basis. Request date is November 28th. Points requested are 8 hours. {2 x knowledge points}
April 26th, 2009 - impact inservice points for the April 28th inservice. Documentation accompanies this request showing impact on the student. Impact activities are for long periods of time, not short term. Request date is April 26th, 2009. Points requested are 12 hours. {3 x knowledge points}

**All of the above examples can not be dated April 28th, 2008. This must be dated the completion date of each stage of inservice points you are requesting.

The following pages are directly taken from the Kansas State Department Special Education Reimbursement Guide

Tiered Para Inservice Requirements

Beginning for the 2008/2009 school year, paraeducator staff development requirements will be tiered based on the special education experiences and/or credentials of the paraeducator. A guide is included to help assist you in determining the amount of inservice required of you.

1. 20 staff development hours required

Paras who have worked as a Kansas special education para less than 3 years (**within the past 3 years**) are to complete 20 hours of inservice if employed for 9 months during the school year. All inservice hours are reported to KSDE through the Personnel Web System by ANW.

2. 10 staff development hours required

Para who have worked as a Kansas special education para for more than 3 years (**including the past 3 years**) as validated through archived Special Education Personnel data, must complete 10 hours of inservice if employed for 9 month during the school year. All inservice hours are reported to KSDE through the Personnel Web System by ANW.

3. Staff development locally determined

Inservice requirements are determined by the LEA for paraeducators that hold a current Kansas license/certificate in the following areas.

Teacher

Related service provider , (SLP or OT, PT, etc)

Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA)

Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA) or:

Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)

POSSIBLE INSERVICE TOPICS

Behavior modification for the classroom
Attend First Aid and CPR class
College class
Learn how to use equipment (copy machines, laminator, computers etc.)
Discipline procedures
Learning new procedures/duties specific to your students being served
Observation of a different classroom
Learn methods/skills involved in the integration process
Teacher/para discussions of para educator's involvement in accomplishing IEP goals
Learn new programs for use with students and/or classroom
Attend Coop sponsored inservice events
MANDT training or recertification
Collaboration for inclusion paras

SPECIAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTIONAL PARA EDUCATOR ROLE, RESPONSIBILITY AND SUPERVISION

I. Role

The paraeducator's role is primarily to assist in the instruction of exceptional students while being directly supervised by a certified professional. This frees the professional from some of the more "routine tasks" and allows them to use their professional skills and knowledge for diagnostic assessment, program planning and implementation. By fulfilling their role, paraeducators will help increase the quality of instruction and services provided to the students in the special education programs.

Except for paraeducators providing supervised occupational, physical, or speech-language therapy, any paraeducator assigned to a professional may work with an exceptional child when the professional is not in the building. **ONLY IF** the professional works directly with both that child and the paraeducator at least 10 % of the total service time each week. Any paraeducator providing supervised occupational or physical therapy must receive direct supervision by a professional occupational or physical therapist twice each month. If the professional therapist is not present each day, the paraeducator must have a designated principal or teacher available in the building for assistance and supervision if needed. Paraeducators assigned to speech-language pathologists or audiologists must be supervised a minimum of 10 % of the

time they are working with students (training time does not count toward this minimum percentage).

II. Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the paraeducator is to follow the program planned by the certified professional. The professional assumes the primary responsibility for the instruction of the students. Many times the para and the professional will have responsibilities that are comparable and overlap. Para educators must work under supervision from a professional, therefore paraeducators MUST NOT BE:

- Solely responsible for a special education instructional or related service.
- Responsible for selecting or administering formal diagnostic or psychological instruments or for interpreting the results of those instruments.
- Responsible for selecting, programming, or prescribing educational activities or materials for the students without the supervision and guidance of the *special teacher*.
- Solely responsible for preparing lesson plans or initiating original concept instruction.
- Assigned to implement the IEP for students with exceptionalities without direct supervision and involvement from the professional.
- Employed in lieu of certified or licensed special education personnel.
- Used as *substitute special teacher* unless the paraeducator possess the appropriate Kansas certification or license.
- Enrolled as elementary or secondary school students
- Performing nursing procedures or administering medications without appropriate supervision from an approved health care professional.

A *special teacher* must supervise any paraeducator who is assigned to a learning site that is off school property. The *special teacher* must work with the paraeducator and the student at least twice per week if services are provided daily. If services are provided at least once a week, 20 % of the sessions per month must be supervised. If services are provided less than one time a week, 20 % of the sessions per quarter must be supervised.

Supervising Teacher

1. Diagnosis education needs
2. Plans instructional programs
3. Grades students' performance.
4. Takes responsibility for new concepts skills and each new classroom activity.
5. Revises instructional programs.
6. Designs instructional materials.
7. Designs and implements behavior intervention plans.
8. Communicates with parents.

Para Educator

1. Scores & compiles data associated with testing and other types of assessment; carries out informal assessments.
2. Assists with the planning process; copies, transcribes, types, files, etc.
3. Checks and scores student work.
4. Reinforces and reviews concepts and skills. Assists students in performing activities initiated by the supervising teacher.
5. Monitors student progress in instructional programs and relates finds to supervising teacher.
6. Helps develop instructional materials designed by the supervising teacher.
7. Monitors and reinforces student performance concerning behavioral interventions through observation; assumes data collection, compilation, and other record keeping duties.
8. Maintains records associated with the parent conferencing procedure, confirms conference dates.

9. Responsible for behavioral management.

9. Manages students during times when the teacher is involved in the regular performance of professional duties or has logical emergency reasons for being out of the classroom; plays supportive management role when supervising teacher is present.

10. Attends inservice workshops.

10. Attends inservice workshops for paraeducators.

The delineation of supervising teacher and paraeducator responsibilities offered above may be further clarified by the following list of paraeducator do's and don'ts.

The paraeducator MAY:

1. Be left alone in the classroom for short periods of time when the supervising teacher is away. The supervising teacher remains responsible for the classroom at all times and must remain accessible.

2. Work without direct supervision with individuals or groups of students.

3. Have specific instructional and management responsibilities for the students.

4. Be involved in student staffings.

5. Be used to support the integration of exceptional students into regular classes by tutoring these students in regular class assignments and giving tests orally, etc.

The paraeducator MAY NOT:

1. Be used as a substitute for a certified teacher, **unless** they possess a substitute teaching certificate filed in the Central Office.

2. Teach independently new concepts and skills.

3. Be given primary responsibility for working with individual students.

4. Be assigned to attend student staffings in lieu of the supervising teacher.

5. Be given primary responsibility for mainstreaming one or more students or used to teach regular curriculum content to non-exceptional students.

6. Be assigned record keeping tasks relevant to the classroom assignment.

6. Be used to carry out clerical responsibilities usually assigned to others.

7. Assist the supervising teacher in supervising assemblies and group field trips. Take assemblies individual students on job related activities, job duties interviews, curriculum-based recreation, shopping. teachers, e.g. duty, lunch duty,

7. Take full responsibility for supervising field trips, or other non teaching usually assigned to hall duty, extra

school clubs, etc.

III. Supervision

Supervision of the special education paraeducator in most districts is a joint responsibility of the supervising teacher, principal, special education regional administrator and special education director. The supervising teacher will be responsible for structuring the paraeducator's schedule and working with the paraeducator on a regular basis to ensure that responsibilities assigned are carried out in an efficient manner. The supervising teacher may assign duties to the paraeducator according to classroom needs and capabilities of each paraeducator.

A paraeducator should not be assigned responsibilities specifically prohibited in this outline. It is important that supervision provided by the teacher be well organized and consistent. Proper supervision requires effective planning and communication, which must be initiated and fostered by the supervising teacher. It is suggested that formal communication between the paraeducator and supervising teacher concerning delegation of responsibilities and results in paraeducator performance be documented. The principal and special education regional administrator should be available for consultation with the teacher if questions or problems related to supervision of a paraeducator should arise.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

Para educators may work with and supervise pupils in the classroom, hall, restroom, therapy area, gymnasium, on the playground, and in other specified instructional areas on campus under the supervision of the professional to whom they are assigned.

A supervising professional may leave the class under the supervision of the paraeducator. The length of time the professional is out of the classroom should be kept to a minimum. If the supervising teacher must leave the campus, another professional on campus should be designated as the supervisor of the class. The designated professional may be the principal or a certified special or regular education staff member.

Off-campus activities, such as work-study placements and community programming, may be supervised by paraeducators. The paraeducator also may accompany small groups of students on shopping trips and other such instructional activities without the supervising professional being present. Supervision of each paraeducator must be provided by certified professional staff. The certified professional must work with the paraeducator and students at least twice a week progressing toward accomplishment of program goals. When the paraeducator is "on-site", and the certified professional is not present, the paraeducator shall be subject to the direction of designated on-site personnel. Designated on-site personnel shall be identified and a record maintained of same in the administrative office of each district.

INSTRUCTIONAL PARA EDUCATOR

Acceptable Responsibilities

1. Assist in organizing field trips.
2. Read aloud or listen to children read.
3. Assist students in performing activities that have been initiated by the teacher.
4. Hand out papers and collect work.
5. Assist with supplementary work for advanced pupils.
6. Provide special help such as drilling with flash cards, spelling, and play activities.
7. Assist in preparing instructional materials.
8. Reinforce learning with small groups.
9. Assist children in learning their names, addresses, telephone numbers, birthday, and parents' names.
10. Supervise free play activities.
11. Prepare flash cards and charts.
12. Prepare art supplies and other materials.
13. Hear requests for help, observe learning difficulties from pupils, and report such matters to teachers.
14. Score objective tests and papers, keep appropriate records for teachers.
15. Escort children on educational trips outside the classroom with the teacher and other appropriate adult support.
16. Assist in educational demonstrations for the class or small groups.
17. Support the teacher in the areas of sewing, cooking, industrial arts, and physical education.
18. Assist in setting up learning centers.
19. Provide assistance with individualized programmed materials.
20. Work with individual students or small groups on language development as outlined by the speech clinician.
21. Run the duplicating machines, and related equipment.
22. Type any or all material that needs to be typed to help the teacher or other staff in the program.
23. Perform routine telephone duties.
24. Deliver mail, instructional materials and other items.
25. Order materials from stock room and check that needed supplies are on hand.
26. Keep a current record of all inventory and help instructor maintain related program records.
27. Pick up materials at the Instructional Media Center and other resource locations.
28. Run all equipment for efficient operation of the classroom and program.

29. Collate printed materials that are used in the district.
30. Maintain and file materials.
31. Keep bulletin boards current.
32. Collect materials for teacher use.
33. Make games.
34. Read, understand and implement under supervision of the IEP for children in his/her classroom.
35. Keep appropriate records of child's progress in attaining the goals specified in the IEP including the following skill areas: academic, social, language/speech, fine/gross motor, self-care.
36. Use records of child's progress to suggest appropriate changes in instructional format to teacher as he/she makes programmatic decisions.
37. As instructed by teacher or special resource personnel, administer first aid as appropriate.
38. Administer skills tests.
39. Assist in the supervision of students during playground, lunchroom, library, music, PE, assemblies, arrivals, departures, halls.
40. Maintain discipline in classroom when teacher is called out of room.
41. Manage behavior and maintain discipline established by teacher.
42. Keep records & files, charts, attendance.
43. Refer parent's inquiries to supervising teacher.
44. Assist in the maintenance of the classroom.

(this list is not all-inclusive)

INSTRUCTIONAL PARA EDUCATOR Unacceptable responsibilities

The instructional para educator **shall not** :

1. be solely responsible for the classroom or a professional service.
2. be solely responsible for the diagnostic and programming functions of the classroom.
3. be solely responsible for preparing lesson plans and initiating original concept instruction.
4. grade subjective or essay tests.
5. be solely responsible for assigning grades to a student.
6. be used as a substitute for certified teachers unless he/she possessed the appropriate substitute teacher's certification/license.
7. assume full responsibility for supervising assemblies or field trips.
8. regulate pupil behavior by corporal punishment or similar disciplinary means.
9. treat injuries or other medical needs of children without permission from appropriate personnel/training.
10. be assigned to work with the most "difficult" student the day in a "babysitting"

- type of arrangement.
11. follow through on physical or occupational therapy unless under the direct supervision of a physical or occupational therapist.
 12. solely program and prescribe educational activities and materials for children.
 13. be solely responsible for preparing progress reports on students.
 14. communicate with parents unless under the direction and supervision of the teacher.
 15. be involved in psychological counseling or psychotherapy, even if they are a baccalaureate school psychology para educator.
 16. be involved in psychological counseling or psychotherapy, even if they are a baccalaureate school social work para educator.
 17. be solely responsible for the establishment of IEP's.
 18. give medications unless properly licensed or under the direct supervision of licensed personnel.
 19. drive buses or vans unless issued a separate contract.

Para Educators Facilitating Least Restrictive Environment

State and Federal law speak to the provision of the least restrictive environment in programming for students in special education programs. *Any paraeducator may be assigned to a regular classroom program where one or more special education students are being maintained, but that paraeducator shall be supervised by a special education teacher who meets the requirements in K.A.R. 91-12-22 (qq) (1) through (5), shall be assigned duties which relate solely to the education of exceptional children. (K.A.R. 91-12-61 (b) (1)).*

These paraeducators must be assigned to and confer with the special education teacher in the program the student is being mainstreamed from regarding the progress of the student in the regular class setting. The amount of time the special education paraeducator spends in the regular classroom should depend on the number of students mainstreamed and the nature and degree of the students' handicaps.

The paraeducator may also be utilized to maintain a physically or visually impaired student in regular class programs. In these situations the paraeducator should spend the majority of the school day providing individual attention to the pupil, assisting him/her with physical needs and/or educational activities. The paraeducator should be assigned to the regular class teacher(s) and the appropriate special education professional. *Each local education agency shall obtain individual approval from the special education administration.*

Reimbursement

All paraeducators are reported to the Kansas State Department of Education through a personnel report by the employing agency. Kansas provides funding which is used in

part for wages for paraeducators. Those funds are all contingent upon the proper use of paraeducators and inservice requirement fulfillment.

What is the IEP process?

IEP development correlates with the whole process of diagnosis, planning and design.

Pre-staffing is a conference where an individual's strengths and weaknesses are discussed and a decision is made whether or not the student should receive special education services. If so, an IEP is required.

Formal staffing is next if special education services are required.

The IEP is developed. The written IEP is a formal document which outlines an individual student's strengths and weaknesses and a set of educational goals and objectives are designed to meet the student's overall needs.

The teacher, special education teacher, district representative(s), parents and sometimes the student, all take part in this formal staffing.

The para may be asked at this time to monitor the special education teacher's classroom, and consequently may not be present in this diagnostic task.

The special education professional designs plans that are reasonably likely to be met. The para can ask questions and must understand what needs to be done. But the designing itself takes professional training.

Confidentiality

Two forms of confidentiality are to be observed by all ANW Special Education Staff.

The first, Professional Confidentiality; No child, parent or case history is to be discussed outside of the school setting and only within staffing and orientation sessions. The foremost issue should be to protect that child's privacy and any information regarding that child's history. Staff must conduct themselves as professionals at all times.

We must be totally aware of the basic right to privacy. Although a school child may be in dire need of services, the parents may choose not to take advantage of the available services. Services are not mandated for school children. However, state and federal law protect the confidentiality of any personally identifiable data collected or maintained pursuant to the identification and evaluation of all handicapped children, regardless of age.

Any educational organization or agency which receives federal funds must be in compliance with the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Buckley Amendment) and the Education for ALL Handicapped Children Act. P.L. 93-380. Any actions taken toward identifying children must be in strict compliance with both state and federal confidentiality laws.

In regard to ANW Cooperative procedures, no referral or dissemination of information obtained may be released without parental signatures. A full explanation of why a signature needs to be obtained and what ramifications that release of information signifies should be afforded to each and every parent.

If there is doubt as to the appropriateness of your elected procedure contact the ANW Education Cooperative, Director or Asst. Director at 620-473-2257.

Confidentiality II

The Kansas State Board of Education ensures the protection of the confidentiality of any personally identifiable data collected or maintained pursuant to the identification and evaluation of students for purposes of placement in special education and pursuant to the provision of special education and related services for students with an exceptionality shall be responsible for ensuring confidentiality.

Under K.A.S. 72-6214, the State Board of Education and the board of education of any school district must adopt a policy in accordance with applicable Federal laws and regulations to protect the right of privacy of any student and his or her lawful custodians regarding personally identifiable records, files and data directly related to such student.

A significant Federal education law addressing confidentiality is the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) which went into effect in 1974. The Act, with its subsequent amendments and regulations, set forth the access and privacy rights to personal school records for all the nation's students and their lawful custodians. In 1975, congress passed 20 USC 1400 et seq., Education of Handicapped Act now titles the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). this Act and its regulations expand the confidentiality provision in FERPA for students with disabilities.

DEFINITIONS

1. Authorized employees means persons within the education agency who have a legitimate education interest in the individual child or youth.
2. Confidentiality means the protection of personally identifiable information at all stages including the collection, use and maintenance.
3. Directory information means information contained in the education records of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy, if disclosed. It includes, but not limited to, the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previously attended educational agency (34CFR 99.3).
4. Education records means those records, files, documents, and other materials

which:

- a. are maintained by an educational agency or institution, or by a person acting for such agency or institution, and
- b. contain information directly related to a student.

The term education records does not include records of instructional, supervisory, and administrative personnel and educational personnel ancillary to those persons that are kept in the sole possession of the maker of the record, and are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a temporary substitute for the maker of the record (34-CFR 99.3) For the purpose of this definition, substitute means an individual who is carrying out the responsibilities of the person who made the record on a short-term basis. It does not refer to an individual who permanently succeeds the maker of the record in his/her position.

5. Inspect and review means the right of parents or eligible students to gain an understanding of information contained in the educational records.
6. Legitimate educational interest means having an educational reason for access to records. Persons who do not have direct or indirect special education and related services or general education contact with the child or youth shall not have access to his/her records.
7. Notify means to provide information in writing or in the primary mode of communication of the individual for whom the notice is intended.
8. Personally identifiable means that the data or information in the education records includes:
 - a. the name of the student, the student's parents, or other family member;
 - b. the address of the student;
 - c. a personal identifier, such as the student's social security number or a student number;
 - d. a list of personal characteristics which would make the student's identity easily traceable; or
 - e. other information which would make the student's identity easily traceable.

Being a “Professional Para Educator”

1. Clerical duties - Communicate with teachers on what tasks need to be done ahead of time. Remember, there will always be clerical tasks a paraeducator will be responsible for.
2. Be thorough in your work. Make sure you check it over to see that it is correct. If uncertain on a particular area, talk to the teacher. Inquire about the grading procedures of the teacher.
3. Be accurate in your work. Get work done on time.
4. Listen to directions and follow them. If unclear, ask questions. Never assume you know all the answers on all the ways. Never resort to your own methods unless discussed with the teacher first.
5. Work only on teacher concepts the teacher has set for the student. If unclear, ask questions.
6. When teachers are busy with other students and you are unclear on a concept, keep the student busy until you can discuss the concept with the teacher. This holds true when teachers are late getting to class. Go ahead and proceed with the student's assignment. Don't sit and wait for the teacher to tell you to begin.
7. Perform tasks before you have to be told. Know what has to be done. Don't rely on the teacher to always have to tell you.
8. Spend time before school or after school learning where materials and equipment are within the classroom and building. Always return materials and equipment where they belong. Don't make the teacher hunt or have to ask you where it is.
9. Let teachers know when the task is done, then proceed to another task.
10. Become eager to assist the teacher both in clerical and in instructional tasks. Don't sit back and watch. Be an instructional paraeducator.
11. Always conduct yourself as a professional; i.e. to manners, attitude, and appearance. Remember you are representing yourself and the school district.

12. Be a responsible person. Don't force the teacher to always plan tasks for you. Work with the teacher, not against him/her.
13. Be on time to work. The teacher and students depend on you.
14. Don't feel that you should begin or leave your job at the exact starting and stopping times. Come a few minutes early and stay a few minutes later. Your time on the clock starts with the bell. This gives you the opportunity to visit with your teacher on the events of the day and how the day went. This is all in being part of a professional team. A little extra of your own time lets people know that you are proud of what you do and interested in your job and doing the best you can do to help the instructional process of the students.

Establish Team Work

1. Communicate with your teacher daily, this is essential to building a program which is responsive to handicapped learners.
2. Offer suggestions or ideas but don't get your feelings hurt if your suggestions or ideas aren't taken.
3. Ask your teacher's opinion on your performance.
4. Discuss problems NOW. Don't let them grow longer by ignoring them.
5. Try to follow instruction given exactly.
6. Remember all final decisions are up to your teacher.
7. Don't talk about school problems to people outside of school.
8. Give the teacher feedback, it helps in communication.
9. Let teachers know your interests, hobbies, background and experiences. You may be able to contribute much to special class projects and special interests centers.
10. Ask questions - the teacher may assume that you know what she (the teacher) is talking about when giving directions.
11. Learn classroom procedures, i.e. to restroom, recess, lunch, drinks, fire drills.
12. Share responsibilities - offer to do something to help equalize the work in the

room. Don't wait to be told to do something. Work with the teacher as a team.

13. Be patient with - yourself (teaching is a learned profession, it takes time)
 - the teacher - some days are more demanding than others.
 - the children - the courtesy and respect we show children will be imitated.
14. Become familiar with the types of children served in the classroom.
15. Become familiar with the academic approach of the teacher.
16. Become familiar with the various types of academic equipment and materials used in the classroom.
17. Have a positive self-concept that you are not dependent upon constant positive feedback from the children.
18. Enthusiasm and a sensitivity to the feelings of children is important. On the other hand this sensitivity must not get in the way of giving the child security by the use of firmness and structure.
19. Mutual respect and support between the teacher and the paraeducator must be shown at all times.
20. There must be consistency in handling of rules and rewards in the classroom.
21. Be prepared to give any practical assistance that the teacher feels necessary for the success of the program (helping make teacher -made materials etc.) Work with the teachers, not against them. Have a positive attitude and emphasize the progress made. Don't be a complainer.

Show some enthusiasm for your job. Be on time and be dependable.

Be a professional.

If work problems arise and you have discussed them unsuccessfully with your supervising teacher, feel free to visit with your regional ANW administrator. But first, make sure you have discussed the problem with your supervising teacher.

IEP - Individual Education Plan

Discuss with the teacher the student's goals and objectives on the IEP. Discuss with the teacher how you will be involved in implementing these goals and objectives.

Suggestions for becoming a more SUCCESSFUL PARA EDUCATOR

1. Learn the names of pupils immediately.
2. Learn as much about each child as quickly as possible.
3. Lend personal assistance to pupils wherever possible.
4. Consult often with the teacher as to how you can help.
5. Give encouragement to pupils whenever and wherever you can.
6. Praise pupils' efforts and successes.
7. Be patient in dealing with pupils.
8. Become familiar with the school building, grounds, and personnel.
9. Learn the routine of the school day.
10. Get acquainted immediately with emergency procedures.
11. Learn the location and how to use the equipment.
12. Get acquainted with school policy as it applies to you and your work.
13. Inform the teachers with whom you work of any special talents, interests, or special experiences you have had.
14. Practice observing in a meaningful way every chance that you get.
15. Watch carefully how the teacher deals with and directs pupils.
16. Exchange telephone numbers with your teacher (s).
17. Get acquainted with other staff members.
18. Be mature in your conduct and demonstrate that you are a responsible person.

19. Ask for clarification when you do not understand an assignment or suggestion.
20. Be on time and leave at an appropriate time.

Checklist for you to find out!

1. What are your special and regular duties?
2. What records are you responsible for keeping?
3. What special services are available to the classroom and the school in which you work?
4. What schedules are you responsible for following?
5. What emergency provisions apply to your situations?
6. When do pupils come? When do they leave?
7. Where and when will the pupils in your classroom play?
8. What are the most significant playground regulations?
9. For what lunchtime activities will you be responsible?
10. Where are the supplies kept and how are they obtained?
11. What equipment is available and how is it obtained?
12. What is the line of communication and authority you are to follow?
13. If you are responsible for working with more than one teacher, how is your time divided?
14. What pupil records are available to you?
15. To whom should you direct questions concerning school property?
16. With whom should you discuss a problem concerning relationships?
17. What should my response be when a parent raises a question on their child's functioning in the classroom?

18. What is expected of you in terms of pupil discipline?
19. What course should you follow if you feel that you do not have enough to do?

Terms and Conditions of Employment

Initial Employment:

Anyone desiring employment as a Para educator is encouraged to contact the ANW Coop Central Office, fill out a classified application and request the application be put in the active files to which they are seeking employment. The office has those applications divided according to towns for which the applicant is seeking employment in. Teachers searching for Para (s) are provided the current, active applications at their request. The teachers select the applications of interest and contact the prospective para(s) for an interview. The selection of the teacher is then referred to the regional administrator along with the references that have been checked. Upon administrative approval the selected para then begins employment. ANW Personnel Clerk will then contact all new paras for the "New Para Roles and Responsibilities" and paperwork sign up date. These are held once per month and attendance is mandatory.

Inservice and Training;

Inservice and training is the joint responsibility of the supervising teacher and ANW administrative staff. (see inservice section) Paras are required by Kansas State regulations to obtain a minimum of 10 clock hours of inservice each year of employment. It is the joint responsibility of the supervising teacher and the para to make certain the inservice hours are completed in a timely fashion. It is recommended that all inservice be completed and documented by April 15 each school year. Forms for documenting inservice are provided at sign up and are a part of the ANW Forms book housed with every teacher in the cooperative.

Evaluations of Para Educators

The primary responsibility for para evaluations rests with the supervising teacher. The supervising teacher is encouraged to seek the opinions of the building principal or other professional staff members so the para can be offered an accurate and fair evaluation. Two evaluations are required per year. The first evaluation is due by **November 15** and the second by **February 15**. The supervising teacher is required to review the evaluation with their para prior to forwarding the evaluation to the Coop Central Office for the para's personnel file. If concerns arise the para will be placed on a plan of improvement with target goals and dates for review. The evaluation process is an ongoing processes to facilitate professional growth.

Length of “At-Will-Agreement”

All paras are hired on a 60 day probation period. Through that 60 day period, paras will be paid on an hourly basis according to hours worked each month. Time ends the last Friday of each month, for the following 15th payday. Once the para makes probation the para begins a pay cycle based on the 12 month cycle with pay occurring during the summer months school is not in session, if there are enough months left in that cycle. Each “at-will-agreement” is good for one year only. The amount of hours worked will be the length of the home district or as assigned by the ANW director or regional administrator. The length of the school day will vary depending upon the length of the school day for the home district. The average time is approximately 6 hours 25 minutes. It is the joint responsibility of the para and the supervising teacher to maintain a well balanced time schedule that best meet the needs of the special education students while conforming to the length of time requirements. Time cards with specific instructions will be kept by the para and verified by the supervising teacher, then submitted to the Central Office for recording each week.

Recommendations for new a “At-Will-Agreement”

Teachers recommending employment for their para the following school year must notify the personnel clerk and regional administrator in writing by returning the form sent to them in a timely fashion. Every effort will be made to accommodate these requests. Exceptions will be based on current caseload and the individual needs of students being served. If greater student need exists in another classroom paras may be transferred or re-assigned at the discretion of the ANW Administrative staff.

Teachers requesting a different para

Teachers with concerns regarding satisfactory performance of their para need to notify the regional administrator when a concern arises. The para must be notified of the concern immediately and a written plan of improvement documented. Every effort to assist with the improvement plan will be afforded the para.

If a teacher requests a different para it is the responsibility of the supervising teacher to inform the para in question and the regional administrator of their decision.

Notification of this request must be made when the decision is made. The supervising teacher must document the conference with the para.

Teacher transfers/new teachers

When a teacher transfers to a new position or a new teacher moves into the classroom it is the recommendation of ANW administration for existing paras to remain in their present position. It is ANW philosophy that experienced para in a classroom with a new teacher will provide additional stability to the setting. When a new teacher requests a change in paras and provides a valid reason for the change the request may be granted. Unassigned paras with excellent previous evaluations will be recommended to teachers seeking a para.

Paras requesting a transfer policy

- 1. The para must first express their desire to transfer to their supervising teacher. All parties must be in agreement of the change of placement prior to the transfer. (all parties is defined by building principal, supervising teacher(s), and para)**
- 2. The para must then either by phone or by written request, ask to be considered for a transfer and direct that request to their regional administrator. Then, the formal para transfer request form must be filed in the ANW Coop Central office. This form is located in the ANW Forms Book and also a part of the ANW Coop web page.**
- 3. Once a replacement for the leaving para has been found and all training has occurred, only then, will the transferring para be allowed to make that transfer.**
- 4. The ANW administration does reserve the right to move or reassign all staff as it deems necessary to provide for student services.**

Para Educators

Para educators shall follow all applicable Cooperatives policies, rules and regulations and shall be under the general supervision of the Cooperative administration.

Para educators shall have a duty free lunch each day.

The board reserves the right to assign, reassign, or transfer all non-certified employees.

Suspension

Non-certified employees may be suspended by the director or designated representative for cause.

The board shall review each case of suspension and provide for probation or termination, as it deems necessary.

Resignation

Non-certified employees may resign from their jobs in accordance with the employment agreement and board policies.

Non school employment

Non-certified employees shall not be excused during their regularly assigned time schedule to perform outside work. Non-certified employees shall engage in no outside employment which, by nature or duration, will impair the effectiveness of their assigned duties.

Complaint Procedure

Every school system has grievances and complaints. If allowed to go unresolved, they have a damaging effect on teaching efficiency. They normally arise from misunderstanding or miscommunication rather than from bad intentions. A good procedure for resolving them is of extreme value to this Cooperative and to the communities it serves. The purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible level, clarification of and equitable solutions to problems. Problems can be approached through informal and/or formal procedures. No reprisals of any kind will be taken against an employee as a result of positive participation in the process of resolving concerns. ADMINISTRATION AND THE EMPLOYEES SHALL MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY AT ALL LEVELS AND AT ALL TIMES. Any breach of confidentiality can be subject to disciplinary action.

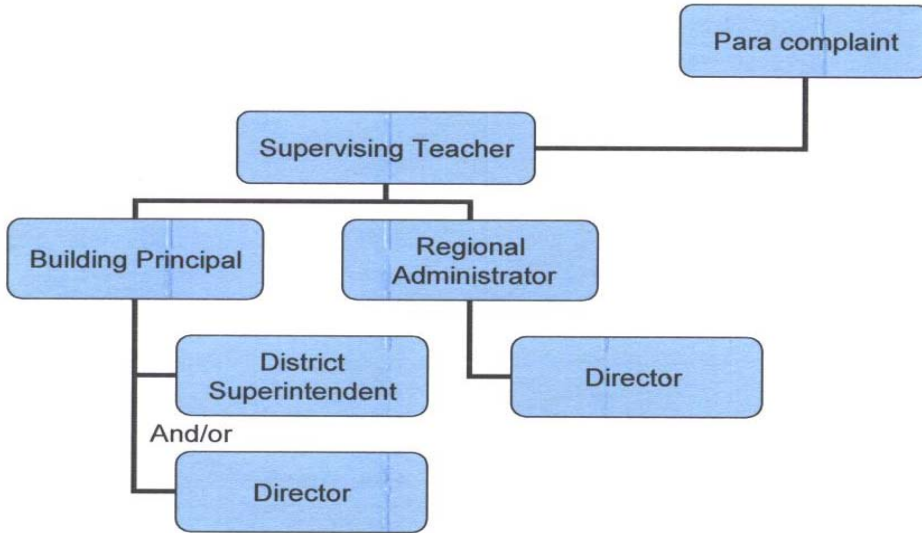
- 1) If you register an unwritten complaint regarding an employee(s) of ANW, the complaint is considered to be informal. Every effort shall be made by the ANW administration to resolve the complaint quickly and with the least amount of disruption while at the same time, protecting employees as much as possible from verbal and physical abuse or public defamation.
- 2) If you desire to file a formal complaint regarding an employee(s) of ANW, such complaint shall be in writing, stating the nature of the allegation with specific facts related to the charge, including the name of the individual(s) making the complaint. The determination of putting the formal, written complaint in the employee's file shall be made by the ANW administration.

The employee shall receive a copy of and will have the opportunity to respond orally or in writing to any formal complaint which may be placed in the employee's personnel file.

Chain of command follows

(revised 5/20/2008)

Chain of Command for Para Complaint regarding a Non-Certified Professional



Chain of Command for Para Complaint regarding a Certified Professional

