



Central resource for school district
employee test materials.

CODESP

PARAEDUCATOR EXTENSION

Pressed by several congressmen and two major national teacher's unions, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) announced that it will give paraprofessionals an additional semester to show that they meet the teacher quality standards of No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

The additional time-and extension from January 2006 to the end of the 2005-06 school year offers particular relief to paraprofessionals in rural schools and in new Title 1 programs who are having trouble meeting NCLB's minimum qualifications. This is a six-month extension.

It has been noted that also while teachers have until the end of the 2005-06 school year to become highly qualified, paraprofessionals were given a deadline of four years from the date of the law's enactment—January 8, 2006. This means that paraprofessionals now have until June 30, 2006 to comply with the NCLB Act requirements.

Kent Gerlach, a professor of special education and expert on Paraeducators, called the original deadline "unrealistic" and said he was "pleased" by the ED's flexibility.

"This seems to be a matter of fairness to those paraprofessionals who are working hard to comply with the law," he said. "It also would be of great help to those paraeducators who are working in states that have provided little or no guidance on the different ways to meet the qualifications."

The full text of the AFT's letter to Spellings can be viewed at www.aft.org/topics/nclb/downloads/SpellingsLetter.pdf.

WHAT IS CODESP DOING TO HELP?

Executive Director Marianne Tonjes provided four presentations during the Pareducator Conference in April sponsored by CSEA. She will also be conducting a presentation on Test Taking Skills at the CSEA conference in Las Vegas on July 31.

CODESP provides a tutorial for member districts and provides information to those who are setting up classes to assist Paraeducators in their quest to become qualified. CODESP supports classified employee training programs.

PARAEDUCATOR PEER-MENTORING

CODESP strives to help school districts select the best Paraeducators possible through the use of our custom-made tests. Once selection has been made though, a great way for school districts to capitalize on their investment and continue the training of these essential classified employees is through the use of a mentoring program. An example of one such successful mentoring program in a school district is described in an article on pages 2 - 3.

Paraeducator Peer-Mentoring: Working Together for Student Success in Washington

Paraeducators play an important role in the support of at-risk students. Under the supervision of certified/licensed staff, paraeducators work to increase student learning and to help students reach their established goals. Meeting these challenges is a difficult task for all paraeducators, but especially for ones that are newly hired. One effective way for administrators to meet the needs of new paraeducators is through a mentoring program.

The Purpose of a Paraeducator Mentoring Program

New paraeducators often have little or no training or experience when they begin working with the most challenging students. The specific goals of such a mentoring program are as follows:

- To support new paraeducators in the development of knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to meet district and state goals.
- To increase knowledge of instructional and behavioral intervention strategies that promote student achievement.
- To increase collaboration and employee job satisfaction, and decrease isolation of paraeducators.
- To maximize the recruitment and retention of quality paraeducators.

A well-organized and supervised peer-mentoring program increases collaboration and decreases isolation of paraeducators. It improves the quality of the paraeducator's work with both students and staff, helping the paraeducator feel and be more competent and confident. Districts that have peer-mentoring programs find recruitment and retention of competent, well-trained and dedicated staff is improved.

A Model of Peer-Mentoring for Paraeducators

The Puget Sound Educational District of Washington State has developed and piloted an online peer-mentoring program, "Strengthening the Paraeducator Community Regional Mentoring Program."

The components of the mentoring program are as follows:

- Selection of Mentors.** A mentor is an established and experienced paraeducator who is willing to share his or her expertise with new paraeducators.
- Identification of New Paraeducators.** Identification of new paraeducators is done through the District Human Resource Department or school principal.
- Team Contact Time.** A time is set aside weekly for the team (mentor/new paraeducator) within a school to address concerns, exchange information, discuss online topics, problem solve, and develop strategies.
- Online Support.** Mentors have access online to specific information and strategies to help them support new paraeducators. Working together, mentors and new paraeducators are able to cover the following topics online: Getting Started, Confidentiality/Ethics, Professionalism, Role Clarification, Instructional Strategies, Communication, and Pro-active Behavior Management
- Mentor Meetings.** Three meetings are held throughout the year for mentors. Information and topics are covered that the mentors can take back to share with the new paraeducators.



Benefits of a Mentoring Program

The district found that there are numerous benefits of paraeducator peer mentoring, including the following:

To the District

- Provides a method to assist paraeducators in meeting state competencies.
- Communicates accurate information to new employees more quickly.
- Increases student learning with the use of trained paraeducators.
- Aids in recruitment and retention of qualified staff.
- Promotes professionalism amongst classified staff.
- Helps paraeducators to feel part of the district/school and its culture.
- Encourages the understanding of classroom, building and district policies and procedures.



To the New Paraeducator

- Provides a method to assist paraeducators in meeting required competencies.
- Provides a set of clear expectations of the roles and responsibilities.
- Offers a forum to ask and answer questions, and an avenue to acquire needed materials and resources.
- Provides encouragement and emotional support.
- Helps new and experienced staff to feel valued and part of a team.
- Provides the modeling and sharing of useful strategies.
- Begins the understanding of and value for continuous learning.
- Reinforces learning from classes and inservices.
- Allows for acquisition of management and discipline skills.
- Gives up-to-date information about ongoing training opportunities.
- Provides a broader view of paraeducator job opportunities.

To the Experienced Paraeducators (Mentors)

- Increases job satisfaction by helping others.
- Motivates the mentor to be more professional and to improve his or her own instructional skills.
- Provides pride and recognition.
- Helps to establish rapport with co-workers.
- Encourages a sense of team spirit.
- Gains new ideas and strategies for working with students.
- Keep current with building, district, state and national issues.
- Develops increased confidence, communication and problem-solving skills.
- Expands career opportunities.

To Student Learning

- Increases student success because they are working with a trained paraeducator.
- Establishes more consistency in student services because of lower staff turnover.
- Offers a wider range of instructional and management strategies.
- Enhances student safety through supervision by well-trained and confident paraeducators.
- Gives students the opportunity to work with another nurturing, skilled, and caring adult.

Conclusion

Competent paraeducators are important to the delivery of the best possible educational services for at-risk students. Through mentoring, new paraeducators can get the support to successfully meet the diverse needs of students. Working together, peer-mentoring is about forming relationships and offering support and encouragement. Opportunities for collaboration, and to increase skills, knowledge and confidence are important for success. Who benefits from a mentoring program? Administrators, teachers, paraeducators and most importantly the students!

Note: General mentoring information in this article was gathered from the “Passing on the Message” mentoring project developed in cooperation with the Puget Sound Education Service District, WEA, and supported by the Washington Education Association and the National Education Association. *Beverly Mathews is a Paraeducator and Mentor Coordinator in the Federal Way School District, in Federal Way, Washington. She may be reached at 253/945-3800 or by e-mail at bmathews@fwsd.wednet.edu. For further information about the Strengthening the Paraeducator Community Regional Mentoring Program, contact Jane Robb-Linse, Regional Mentor Co-ordinator and Director of Teaching and Learning, Paraeducator and Teacher Programs, at 206/439-3636 or by e-mail at jrobb@psed.wednet.edu.*



UPCOMING WRIPAC TRAINING

Lake Natoma Inn Folsom

September 21 Training September 22—23 Conference

WRIPAC will be offering training in Folsom (near Sacramento). Two one day training topics will be offered including **Workforce Planning** and **Item Writing**. The regular 2 day WRIPAC meeting will follow on the 22nd and 23rd. Speakers during the conference will focus on human resource topics related to assessment. For registration information go to www.wripac.org (new website will be available soon). Email marcodesp@aol.com for questions.

DIRECTOR OPENINGS

Director, Classified Personnel

Los Angeles COE

Annual salary up to \$124,404

www.personnelcommission.com

Apply by: Friday, September 2, 2005

This position will plan, organize and direct the functions of the Personnel Commission at the LA County Office of Education including planning, developing, and implementing and administering specific personnel management systems for the classified service. The Director will formulate specific programs in accordance with the policies for the Personnel Commission and will serve as staff and secretary to the Personnel Commission.

The Director requires a master's degree with major coursework in business or public administration, human resources, industrial, or organizational psychology or a related field; and seven years of experience in a professional level human resources administration, including at least three years experience in a public agency and including four years in a management position.

**DON'T FORGET TO UPDATE
YOUR CATS USER'S PAGE!**

Director Classified Personnel

San Ramon Valley USD

\$85,695 - \$116,231

Contact: Marion Stout (925)552-2929

Apply by: July 26, 2005

Personnel Commission Director

Ukiah USD

\$58,647 - \$64,847

Contact: Linda McDonald (707)463-5205

Apply by: July 22, 2005

Director, Classified Personnel Services and Secretary to the Personnel Commission

Victor Valley Union High School District

\$74,627 - \$90,944

Contact: Bob Findling: (760)955-3200

Apply by July 22, 2005

Director Changes:

John Caldecott: Newport-Mesa USD

Cheryl Walpole: Lompoc USD

CONGRATULATIONS!!

TRAINING/EVENTS

Logon and Click on **Events** to Register Online
Registration online is **NOW** available to Guests Also

Member Login

Before registering, please log in to access your account.

Login:

Password:

Login

[I Need Help Logging In!](#)

 If you are registered for CATS, please log in above. If you are not registered in the CATS system, fill in and submit the form below to register for this event.

NEW FEATURE



First Name:*

Last Name:*

Email:*

Address:*

City, State, Zip:* CA

District:*

Phone:* () - ext:

Fax: () -

Register

TRAINING MOVED TO SANTA BARBARA COE

Training

[Santa Barbara County Education Office - Sexual Harassment Register Now!](#)

07/25/05

Location: Santa Barbara County Education Office

Address: 4400 Cathedral Oaks Road
Santa Barbara, CA
Board Room

Starts: 07/25/05 - 9:30 - 12 noon

Contact: [Marianne Tonjes](#)
(714) 374-8644

INVOICE

Please submit to your Business Office for payment.

Cooperative Organization for the Development of Employee Selection Procedures

20422 Beach Blvd. Suite 310 Huntington Beach, CA 92648
(714) 374-8644 Fax (714) 374-8225

(note new address above and new federal taxpayer ID below)

E-Mail: tests@codesp.com

ITEM DESCRIPTION	COST
<p data-bbox="131 848 1214 974">Contractual fee for participation in the Cooperative Organization for the Development of Employee Selection Procedures beginning July 1, 2005 and ending June 30, 2006.</p> <p data-bbox="123 1434 542 1465">Taxpayer ID No. 54-2166843</p>	<p data-bbox="1308 909 1451 940">\$1,750.00</p>

PLEASE RETURN ONE COPY OF THIS INVOICE WITH YOUR REMITTANCE

Make check payable to: **CODESP**

Payment by check is expected within 45 days of our receipt of a purchase order. If a Purchase Order or Check is not received by current members by September 30, 2005, CODESP and CATS services/access will be discontinued. Returning members must submit an Intent to Rejoin if the check or PO is not received by July 1, 2005. Go to www.codesp.com and click on Resources.