Paraprofessional • Orientation Manual

College Community School District • Cedar Rapids, Iowa
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Purpose of Manual

This manual was developed by a group of teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators to assist paraprofessionals, their mentors, and their supervising teachers to communicate more effectively. The goal of this manual is to serve as a guide throughout the beginning weeks of a paraprofessional's working relationships to help each one succeed and to promote efficiency. In addition, it is intended to serve as a reference for continuous professional growth while employed by College Community Schools.
At College Community School District

our Vision is:
“Success for All”

our District Mission is:
“To ensure quality learning today for tomorrow”

our District Priorities are:
Increase student academic achievement and improve student performance on the district’s outcomes of significance.
Increase student understanding of careers and lifelong learning responsibilities.
Increase parent and public involvement in student learning.
Increase student and staff use of integrated technologies as productive learning tools.
Legal and Ethical Duties of College Community Paraprofessionals

1. Respect the legal and human rights of all College Community students and their families.

2. Respect the dignity, privacy and individual differences of all College Community students, parents, and staff members.

3. Maintain confidentiality about all College Community students’ educational records and family information.

4. Maintain a professional attitude regarding any conversation or questions concerning College Community staff.

5. Follow district policies for protecting the health, safety and well being of all students.

6. Follow the directions of your supervising teacher or other designated supervisory personnel.

7. Refer concerns expressed by College Community parents, students, or others to your supervising teacher.

8. Accept responsibility for improving skills by participating in training activities.

9. Maintain professional appearance and behave as positive role models.
Types of Paraprofessional at College Community Schools

I. Special Education Programs
   1. SCI (Self-contained with integration)
   2. BD (Behavioral Disorder)
   3. MDE (Mental Disability Educable)
   4. ECSE- (Early Childhood Special Education)
   5. One on One

II. Title 1/Reading Paraprofessional

III. General Class Paraprofessional

IV. Media Center Paraprofessional

V. Secondary At-Risk Paraprofessional

VI. Secondary General Supervision Paraprofessional

VII. Secondary Teacher/Office Paraprofessional

(For a description of types of disabilities see the reference packet in the binder.)
Special Education
Paras in inclusive special educational programs aid students with a variety of disabilities to improve academic, social and behavioral skills leading towards independence and success in general educational settings. Settings could include general or special classroom environment.

Early Childhood Special Education Paraprofessionals
Paras in early childhood special education (ECSE) work to nurture children (aged 3-6) with disabilities. They will implement teacher-developed curriculum in areas of cognitive, motor, self-help, social/play and language development. They will use group or individual instructional and behavior management techniques.

One On One Paraprofessional
One on one paraprofessionals work in a team environment to support an individual child who may have learning, physical, sensory or behavioral disabilities with the goal to foster individual independence. Settings could include general or special classroom environment.

Paraprofessionals in Title 1/Reading Programs
Paras in Title 1/reading intervention programs serve the needs of educationally challenged or disadvantaged students in coordination with regular classroom programs. They will carry out lesson plans developed by teachers for small groups or individuals, administer tests, oversee projects, reinforce and strengthen student's skills, and maintain discipline as needed.

General Classroom Paraprofessionals
General classroom paras will provide support to students and teachers in regular classroom activities. They may carry out individual or small group lesson plans developed by teaching staff, oversee projects, administer tests, reinforce learning, maintain discipline, perform clerical and classroom management tasks, and build supportive relationships with students.
Types of Paraprofessional at College Community Schools continued

- Media Center Paraprofessional
  Media center paraprofessionals will work in a team environment to support media center/library activities and maintenance of other media equipment such as audio and visual. They will also assist students and staff in locating educational and instructional materials.

- Secondary At-Risk Paraprofessional
  Paras in at-risk programming will work in a team environment to support at-risk programming/activities. They will perform various clerical duties as well as working in tutorial and student supervisory roles.

- Secondary General Supervisory Paraprofessional
  Supervisory paras will act as student supervisors and monitors to facilitate student learning. They will have the responsibility of supervising groups of students which may include before and after school programs as well as assigned student areas during the regular school day.

- Secondary Teacher/Office Paraprofessional
  Teacher/office paras will provide clerical support to both teachers and office personnel. Duties may include a wide variety of office and clerical tasks requiring word processing and general office skills.
Expectations for Paraprofessionals

In addition to the job specific responsibilities, an effective paraprofessional should demonstrate the following competencies:

- A basic understanding of child/adolescent development.
- The ability to work as a strong team player.
- Good communication skills to collaborate with teaching staff, resource teams, students and their families, other school personnel, and possible outside agencies.
- Understand and respect of staff role distinctions.
- The ability to act professionally as a liaison between school and community.
- The ability to interact with children in a positive manner.
- Sensitivity to diversity and an understanding of the value in the integration of disabled children.
- A knowledge of students’ and their families’ legal and human rights.
Additional Paraprofessional Duties

Other duties that all paras at College Community may perform are:

- **Supervise** general classroom.
- **Instruct** general class, small groups, or individuals under teacher directions.
- **Administer** teacher developed tests.
- **Observe or assess** academic and behavioral progress.
- **Maintain discipline** as needed.
- **Perform clerical duties**.
- **Supervise** student transitions before and after school or between classes (i.e. bus duty, school assembly, etc.).
- **Support school programs** (i.e. Success Center, homework centers, etc.).
- **Supervise** recess activities (Elementary).
- **Supervise** breakfast and lunch programs.
- **Place requisitions** for supplies.
- **Assist in creating** an attractive learning environment.
- **Implement safety and health procedures** (See staff handbook for details).
- **Implement emergency procedures** (See staff handbook for details).
- **Use computer/media equipment**.
- **Serve on school and/or community planning teams**.
- **Participate in school and/or community events**.
- **Prepare** material for study projects.
- **Perform related duties** as assigned.
Role of Supervising Teacher

Checklist

1. Introduce paraprofessional to other school staff.

2. Introduce para to various written informations such as:
   a. District handbook
   b. Emergency procedures (tornado, fire, intruder)
   c. Building policies
   d. Paraprofessional handbook

3. Openly communicate the following information with Paraprofessional:
   a. Role
   b. Schedule
   c. Specific duties
   d. Behavior management techniques
   e. Classroom management techniques
   f. Special education rules and regulations

4. Make paraprofessional aware of training opportunity to enable them to enhance their performances

5. Discuss confidentiality issues.

6. Discuss performance assessments (see page 13)

7. Discuss work style preference analysis (Please see your principal for additional reference materials)

8. Discuss needs vs. skills (Please see your principal for additional reference materials)

Para to Para Checklist

Lunch
   How to set up a lunch account
   How to order lunch

Time Cards

Leaving School/Being Gone
   Getting a sub
   Floater days-what are they, how do you get them?
   Check out when leaving the building

Acronyms
   What is IEP, SSR, BD, SCI, MDE, etc.?

Union

continued
### Para to Para Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breaks, Lounge</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Superintendent’s Advisory Committee rep</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recess (Elementary):</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Playground rules</td>
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<tr>
<td>Playground video</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tour of playground (boundaries)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clipboard, red card, fanny packs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Door keys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rules on outdoor temperature and coats</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conflict managers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indoor recess procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recess handbook</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Snow Day Calling Tree</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Early Dismissal Schedule</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>One-on-one, “What if that child is gone?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>(please see principal for district guidelines)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other Duties:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Before and after school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recess</td>
<td></td>
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<td>SSR</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities:</strong></td>
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<td>Monthly para meetings</td>
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<td>Committee opportunities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parascope, Linker, etc.</td>
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<td>District sponsored inservice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational opportunities-Edutrac, ICN, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>“Getting to know the place”</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Playground tour</td>
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<td>Building tour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus tour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction to other staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where are the staff restrooms?</td>
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<td>Where to park</td>
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<td>Where’s the lounge?</td>
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<td>Where are the supplies?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where’s the elevator and who uses it?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus mail system</td>
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<tr>
<td>E-mail training</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Which computers can be used?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal and long-distance calls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Security procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire drill/tornado drill procedure</td>
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<tr>
<td>School calendar, early out, days off</td>
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<tr>
<td>District website: <a href="http://www.prairiepride.org">www.prairiepride.org</a></td>
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At College Community School District, we believe all staff members have the responsibility to help each other grow as a professional. To ensure a successful working experience, we ask that the supervising teacher, the peer mentor and the newly hired paraprofessional complete the initial review of the Para Handbook within 75 days of his/her employment. Upon completion, please return a completed copy of this page to the school principal.

- I, ________________________________, the supervising teacher have reviewed the Paraprofessional Handbook with ________________________________.
  Date: ________________

- I, ________________________________, the peer mentor have reviewed the Paraprofessional Handbook with ________________________________.
  Date: ________________

- I, ________________________________, (the newly hired paraprofessional), have reviewed the Staff, Playground and Paraprofessional Handbooks. I understand my roles and job responsibilities.
  Date: ________________
### Paraeducation Performance Assessments

#### PERFORMANCE ELEMENTS EXEMPLAR PROFICIENT DEVELOPING NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

**INTERPERSONAL SKILLS** (empathy, respect, relationships, flexibility, communication, etc.)
- Uses a positive rapport to further student/self & staff learning.
- Is recognized as a model by colleagues
- Communicates effectively in all professional relationships with staff, students, & parents.
- Can model respectful behaviors in all environments.
- Seeks to understand others’ point of view and needs.
- Can relate with compliant students and most staff.
- Mood swings can be difficult to read by staff and students.
- Unable to communicate and interact effectively with most staff and students.
- Can be argumentative or confrontive with others of a different opinion.

**SELF-DIRECTED** (problem solver, professional growth, etc.)
- Actively seeks learning opportunities to assist learning.
- Seeks out new tasks that go above and beyond expectations.
- Is proactive in dealing with potential problems.
- Attends workshops provided by district & GWAEA.
- Able to begin and complete all tasks efficiently.
- Is able to resolve problems as they arise.
- Participates in district workshops with prompting.
- Can complete routine tasks but needs prompting to start new tasks.
- Has difficulty resolving problems as they arise.
- Does not participate in district workshop opportunities.
- Needs constant reminders to begin and complete tasks.
- Inability to deal with routine problems as they arise.

**PROFESSIONALISM** (confidentiality, loyalty, attendance, etc.)
- Encourages others to maintain confidentiality in all situations.
- Defends district and its staff to the community.
- Is on the job daily and is on time.
- Maintains confidentiality in all situations.
- Communicates positive aspects of the school and addresses concerns appropriately.
- Regular attendance is a high priority.
- Will sometimes break confidentiality in some situations at school and in community.
- Complains about school issues in the community.
- Feels that personal days and floater days are there to be taken even if not needed.
- Shares confidential information freely in any situation.
- Complains about job and staff to others in the community.
- Often late or absent due to personal issues.

**TECHNICAL / CLERICAL SKILLS**
- Ability to model or teach computer skills to others.
- Collaborates w/teachers to design and produce data driven decisions.
- Uses all aspects of e-mail system in a professional manner.
- Capable of assisting students w/computer skills and programs.
- Collects & organizes student data.
- Can use district e-mail independently and in a professional manner.
- Willing to learn and can assist students with some computer skills.
- Can perform only simple routine record keeping tasks.
- Willing and learning to use e-mail.
- Unable to use or fears using computer or software.
- Unable to effectively record data for staff.
- Refuses to use e-mail.

**MANAGEMENT & SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS**
- Enhances learning environment due to positive student management.
- Is recognized as an authority figure by all students.
- Provides leadership and is a role model for others.
- Skillful at preventing & deescalating student problems.
- Is recognized as an authority figure by most students.
- Helps promote a positive learning environment.
- Able to supervise small groups of well behaved students.
- Is not always seen as an authority figure by students.
- Can assist others in promoting a positive learning environment.
- Has little or no impact on student behaviors.
- Inability to establish self as authority figure with students.
- Escalates student misbehavior.

**WORK HABITS**
- Willing to be flexible and performs beyond expectations.
- Volunteers to help other staff.
- Follows written & verbal directions.
- Is always on time for work and makes full use of work day.
- Needs occasional reminders to follow directions.
- Is not always at work on time.
- Occasionally uses work time to complete personal business.
- Inability to follow directions or perform tasks.
- Frequently late for work or not in assigned area.
- Abuses work time to complete personal business.

**PROPER CERTIFICATION** (Meds., Child Abuse, Chauffeurs, CPI, & others)
- Views training as a continuous improvement opportunity.
- Actively seeks classes to help self and children.
- Trained and certified in the areas required to fulfill job requirements.
- Working towards obtaining proper certification to fulfill job requirements.
- Has not made satisfactory attempt to obtain training and certification necessary for job.

**BASIC UNDERSTANDING OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT** (age appropriate)
- Applies knowledge of child development to learning situations on many levels.
- Understands physical and mental development of children at various age levels and applies to most of the settings.
- Demonstrates basic awareness of child development and applies that to limited settings.
- Demonstrates little or no awareness of child development and uses negative reinforcement with students.