

RECOMMENDED CORE COMPETENCIES FOR PARAEducATORS WORKING IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

To work in Special Education and related services programs for children and youth with disabilities, paraeducators will demonstrate:

1. understanding of the value of providing instructional and other direct services to all children and youth with disabilities.
 - Awareness of historical perspective of students with disabilities, including IDEA, 504, ADA, value and benefit to schools, staff, students and general community, and modeling an integrated community.
 - Knowledge of the purpose of Special Education programs and education for students with disabilities.
 - Understanding of the philosophy that all students can learn and contribute.
2. understanding of the roles and responsibilities of certificated/licensed staff and paraeducators.
 - Knowledge of certificated/licensed staff roles and responsibilities for program development and evaluation and for instructional supervision of paraeducators, including legal requirements and district policies and procedures.
 - Understanding of district chain of command and paraeducator's role in relation to other school employees.
 - Understanding of the value of paraeducators in educational programs.
 - Understanding of paraeducator's roles and responsibilities, including legal requirements and district policies and procedures.
 - Understanding of shared roles and responsibilities, including teaming and collaboration.
 - Understanding how to do self-evaluation and/or reflection as it applies to the paraeducator's role.
3. knowledge of (a) patterns of human development and milestones typically achieved at different ages, and (b) risk factors that may prohibit or impede typical development.
 - Awareness of learning theory and different approaches certificated staff may use.
 - Awareness of and respect for the impact on families having children with disabilities.
 - Knowledge of the developmental continuum birth to 21 years in the following areas: communication, self-help, physical development, social/emotional development, and cognitive development.
 - Knowledge of and respect for the influence that families have on student learning and development.
 - Knowledge of issues and requirements surrounding transition for children, youth, and families.

4. ability to practice ethical and professional standards of conduct, including the requirements of confidentiality.
 - Ability to comply with the requirements of confidentiality for educational and medical records.
 - Ability to comply with legal requirements regarding the reporting of abuse, discipline, and inappropriate conduct, such as, touching.
 - Ability to comply with district policies and procedures regarding delegation and supervision, and issues of insubordination.
5. ability to communicate with colleagues, follow instructions, and use problem solving and other skills that will enable the paraeducator to work as an effective member of the instructional team.
 - Ability to use communication methods to increase understanding.
 - Ability to use techniques/strategies for problem solving and negotiation.
 - Ability to recognize learning and communication styles.
 - Ability to do self-evaluation and reflection as it pertains to working as an effective member of the instructional team.
 - Ability to advocate for oneself.
6. ability to provide positive behavioral support and management.
 - Understanding of how disabilities can impact behavior.
 - Understanding of the legal requirements and district policies and procedures for discipline.
 - Ability to promote the development of social skills.
 - Ability to use prevention and intervention skills.
 - Ability to use reinforcement strategies.
 - Ability to use data collection and observation techniques.
 - Understanding of the use of crisis intervention and restraint techniques.
7. knowledge of the legal issues related to the education of children and youth with disabilities and their families.
 - Knowledge of the intent of IDEA, including historical perspective, impact of legal decisions, and value of legislation.
 - Knowledge of IDEA – parts B and C, ADA and 504.
 - Knowledge of definitions, such as Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), Individual Education Program (IEP), 504 plans, and the implications for paraeducators in relation to legal requirements, district policies and procedures, and contract provisions.
 - Knowledge of Washington’s special education requirements in general terms including definitions, qualifications, and service options.
8. awareness of diversity among the children, youth, families, and colleagues with whom they work.
 - Awareness of how the different aspects of diversity enhance opportunities for learning.

- Awareness of cultural biases and personal differences that affect working with students, families, and other team members.
9. knowledge and application of the elements of effective instruction to assist teaching and learning as developed by the certificated/licensed staff in a variety of settings.
 - Ability to use reinforcement strategies.
 - Ability to use instructional techniques.
 - Ability to use data collection and observation techniques.
 10. ability to utilize appropriate strategies and techniques to provide instructional support in teaching and learning as developed by the certificated/licensed staff.
 - Ability to apply small group instructional techniques for management and support of student learning.
 - Ability to apply specific instructional techniques to support academic areas.
 - Ability to apply techniques that support instruction in academic areas.
 11. ability to motivate and assist children and youth.
 - Ability to use appropriate interest and ability level material and to modify material as necessary.
 - Ability to use appropriate reinforcement strategies.
 12. knowledge of and ability to follow health, safety, and emergency procedures of the agency where they are employed.
 - Knowledge or basic first aid.
 - Ability to use infection control and universal precautions.
 - Understanding of district policies and procedures, contract provisions, and state requirements.
 - Understanding of the legal requirements of delegation and supervision.
 - Understanding of the legal requirements and district policies and procedures for chain of command.
 - Ability to use lifting, carrying and transferring techniques.
 13. awareness of the ways in which technology can assist teaching and learning.
 - Awareness of assistive communication.
 - Awareness of technological equipment.
 14. awareness of personal care and/or health related support.
 - Awareness of legal requirements providing health related care in the schools.
 - Awareness of types of personal care and health related support tasks.
 - Awareness of district policies and procedures, the legal requirements for delegation, training and supervision, and the issues of insubordination.