



# Los Angeles Unified School District

*All Youth Achieving*



2013

## Special Education Paraprofessional Handbook

### Welcome

Welcome to the Los Angeles Unified School District special education program. As a special education paraprofessional, you will be assisting our students with disabilities in a variety of ways. As an important instructional team member, a special education paraprofessional is a representative of the program, the school, the public school system and the overall field of special education. Each paraprofessional has different duties, responsibilities, and expectations based upon the needs of the students with whom they work. You have been selected to work with students with disabilities because you possess the skills needed to fulfill these important educational responsibilities.

Los Angeles Unified School District

SCHOOLS  
FOR ALL  
CHILDREN



Division of Special Education



Program Support

2

Professional Standards

6

Working with Students  
with Disabilities

13

Characteristics of  
Disabilities &  
Instructional Strategies

23

Resources

32



# Working Together

Promoting independence, dignity, and success for all children.

## Program Support

Special education paraprofessionals are assigned to **support the special education programs and individualized instructional, behavioral, or health needs** identified for students with disabilities. All paraprofessionals assigned to a special education program are expected to work as a coordinated instructional team under the supervision of a special education teacher to implement the Individualized Education Program (IEP) for all students in the program. We refer to this model as **Program Support**. Program Support is provided to promote student independence and achievement in the Least Restrictive Environment.

The level of Program Support needed at a particular school site is based on a variety of factors. Program Support staff are allocated based on the type of special education programs on the campus, the number of students with disabilities served in those programs, and the nature and severity of individual student needs identified in each student's IEP. All special education paraprofessionals are assigned to provide Program Support. The school site administrator is responsible for ensuring that all programmatic and individual student needs are met in compliance with each student's IEP. Site administrators manage how this level of support will be provided by identifying program and individual student needs and assigning special education paraprofessionals to meet those needs in accordance with District policy and specific job **class codes** and qualifications.

You may be assigned to assist different students or classrooms throughout the school year. The school site administrator is responsible for preparing and updating the **School Matrix for Special Education Program Support** to reflect these changes. The Matrix should be made available for review by special education paraprofessionals upon request. Occasionally, a program support position is closed due to changes to the number of authorized programs, student enrollment, or other factors. In these instances, the affected paraprofessional will remain at that school site and continue to provide Program Support until the **Classified Employment Services Branch** (Personnel Commission) notifies the employee of their new assignment.





## Class Codes

What is a job class code?

A human resources code established by the Personnel Commission to classify employees by job description, responsibilities, and qualifications.

Which class codes support special education programs?

4560-Supervising Special Ed Asst.  
4571-Special Education Asst.  
4575- Special Education Trainee  
4700- Health Care Assistant  
+ several other specialized or related job classes

Where do I find out more information about my job class code/description?

For Class/Job descriptions go to:

[http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/lausd/offices/personnel/class/class\\_comp/cds/indexcd.htm](http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/lausd/offices/personnel/class/class_comp/cds/indexcd.htm)

## Special Education Paraprofessional: Definition

A special education paraprofessional may be a trainee, an assistant or a health care assistant, or other specialized classification.

### Special Education Trainee (4575)

A special education trainee assists teachers with caring for students' physical needs and presenting educational material and developmental exercises while learning the duties and responsibilities of a special education assistant through a combination of experience and formal education.

### Special Education Assistant (4571)

A special education assistant assists teachers by caring for the physical needs of students with disabilities and helping in their training and education through the presentation of educational materials or exercises. To attain this position, one must promote from the position of special education trainee. See the job description for class code 4571 for additional details.

### Health Care Assistant (4700)

A health care assistant assists teachers and nurses by helping in the training and education of disabled students by presenting educational material or exercises and applying approved medical procedures. A health care assistant also performs all the duties of special education assistants.

## Duties and Responsibilities of a Special Education Paraprofessional

For the purpose of this handbook—special education trainee, assistant, and health care assistant will be referred to as special education paraprofessional.

To promote the success of any special education program, a team approach is implemented by all personnel who support students with disabilities under the direction of the teacher. Typical responsibilities of a special education paraprofessional include, but are not limited to:

- Presents lessons or portions of lessons to a student or a group of students, checks accuracy of work and presents

(Continued)

- additional assignments
- Helps students to use books, classroom materials and equipment
- May keep routine records related to attendance, grades, test scores and lunch money
- Transfers students in and out prescribed adaptive equipment
- Assists students with all aspects of toileting which may include diapering, and lifting on and off the toilet, changing tables and mats
- Obtains food from the kitchen, serves food and feeds students or helps them feed themselves
- Assists teachers with maintaining and implementing school-wide, classroom and individualized positive behavior support
- Facilitates student's use of mobility equipment such as leg braces, walkers, mobile standers, and tricycles
- Assists teachers on field trips by helping students with physical needs, encouraging appropriate behavior, and reinforcing learning situations
- Assists bus drivers with maintaining safety and responding to the physical needs of students
- Assists teachers with directing activities and acts as play leader for assigned groups of students
- May take temperatures, administer first aid and provide basic and specific nursing care as directed or authorized by a school nurse
- Supervises a group of students during class instruction under the direction of the responsible teacher
- Implement behavior support plan consistent with teacher implementation/instruction
- Operates audio-visual equipment and prepares or uses other materials and methods to assist teachers in presenting lessons to students



### What are NOT Responsibilities for a Special Education Paraprofessional?

- 1 Be solely responsible for implementing instruction, related services, and behavior support
- 2 Select or administer formal diagnostic or psychological instruments or interpret the results
- 3 Be solely responsible for preparing lesson plans or initiating original concept instruction
- 4 Be used as a substitute teacher
- 5 Be asked to perform clerical duties on a regular basis



- Adjusts or rephrases portions of texts and classroom instructions
- Attend the IEP meeting, if requested
- Assist with translation, written or oral, with proper training and bilingual differential
- Supervise students during passing periods, recess, lunch and dismissal

In addition to performing duties typical of the special education assistant, the **health care assistant (HCA)** performs *health protocols*. These protocols may include: catheterization, gastrostomy tube feeding, oral suctioning, tracheotomy suctioning and other procedures as assigned by the school nurse. The HCA cleans medical equipment as prescribed by the school nurse, and administers prescribed medication as directed by the school nurse.

### Questions to Ask the School Administrator, Supervising Teacher(s), or Supervising Special Education Assistant (SSEA)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ✓ Which hours and days you will be working – ask for a school calendar.   | ✓ What is the line of communication and authority you are to follow?   |
| ✓ When will you take your meal and rest period(s)?  | ✓ With whom should you discuss a problem concerning relationships? School policy?                                    |
| ✓ What records are you responsible for keeping?   | ✓ What should be your response when a parent raises questions on their child's functioning in the classroom?         |
| ✓ What special services are available to the classroom and the school in which you work?                          | ✓ What pupil records are available to you?   |
| ✓ What schedules are you responsible for following?   | ✓ What is expected of you in terms of positive behavior support?   |
| ✓ When do students arrive and depart?   | ✓ What is the process for requesting information regarding the School Matrix for Special Education Program Supports? |
| ✓ What are the playground rules and regulations?  | ✓ What course should you follow if you feel that you do not have enough to do?                                       |
| ✓ For which meal period activities will you be responsible?   | ✓ How does your teacher view the teacher/paraprofessional relationship?  |
| ✓ Where are the supplies kept and how are they obtained?  | ✓ What student information is relevant to my responsibilities?   |
| ✓ How much time will you spend in general education classrooms? How much time in the special education classroom? | ✓ What is the appropriate dress code?  |

## Professional Standards

Special education paraprofessionals must follow professional guidelines when working with all students, including those with disabilities. They will be involved with many other educational personnel, parents, students, and administrators and encounter highly sensitive information concerning students and families.

*Professional standards include the following guidelines:*

### Confidentiality

All student information is confidential. This is an extremely important component of the law. There are many federal laws and state statutes that protect the privacy of educational records. The main federal law pertaining to student records is the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Information or records falling under this law must remain confidential.

Disciplinary action and legal liability can result from failure to comply with District policies and federal regulations regarding privacy. School staff must recognize that *even conversations with non-school personnel or school personnel without an educational involvement with a specific child can be a violation of this act.*

Information and records covered under this act may include, but are not limited to: personal and family data, evaluation and test data, psychological, medical and anecdotal reports, records of school achievement and progress reports, disability information, and copies of correspondence concerning students. Discussing specific facts about the students with whom you work is a violation of student confidentiality rights. Remember that matters regarding students are confidential and cannot be a topic of public discussion in any public setting, including with other paraprofessionals who do not work with the student. Even if you do not mention a student's name, talking about an incident can give identifiable information.

### Communication

No matter how well a program is designed, success depends on good communication between the teacher and the paraprofessional. Poor communication skills and negative statements are at the heart of most problems. The learning process is totally dependent upon the staff establishing and maintaining good lines of daily communication. However, communication with students and staff goes beyond verbal interaction and also includes nonverbal interaction. Your actions may actually speak more loudly than your words.

### Attitude

All employees convey an image of the school to other professionals, to parents, and to the community as a whole. We want this to be a favorable image. The special education assistant is as much a part of creating this image, as is the certificated staff member. Therefore, your actions, speech, and dress



## What kind of communicator are you?

Do you . . .

- ✓ Maintain eye contact while listening?
- ✓ Maintain a forward posture while listening?
- ✓ Use non-interruptive acknowledgments, such as head nodding, and positive genuine facial expressions to demonstrate interest?
- ✓ Avoid interrupting individuals who are speaking?
- ✓ Use appropriate voice, tone and loudness in conversations?
- ✓ Avoid leaning back with arms crossed while listening?

should be appropriate and professional at all times. Show your support for the special education program as well as your supervising teacher verbally, enthusiastically, and actively. For example, just remembering to be friendly towards others can make a difference, as well as looking for ways to assist others. When working with students, having a sense of humor, praising their efforts, and using positive statements show students that you care about them and that you enjoy what you are doing.

**Remember, special education paraprofessionals, as well as other staff members, are responsible for the welfare of ALL students.**

Be willing to take initiative. Show responsibility by looking ahead at what needs to be done. Become eager to assist the teacher. Listen to directions and if unclear about what is being asked, ask questions! Work only on teaching concepts the teacher has set for the student. If unclear, ask questions.

### Attendance Policy [LAUSD Classified Employee Handbook, page 16]

The contribution of each LAUSD employee is critical and the efforts of each and every one are needed to help LAUSD to reach its goals. Unnecessary absenteeism results in reduced productivity,

loss of service, and in significant cost to LAUSD. It is LAUSD's responsibility to ensure that employees clearly understand the expectation for performing their job duties and how their attendance impacts their performance, and that they are given a fair opportunity to succeed. Specifically:

- Employees are expected to work the number of hours they are assigned.
- Employees are expected to be at their assigned work location on time.
- Employees are required to contact their school supervisor, school administrative assistant, or other representative in accordance with school procedures for reporting absence.
- Employees are expected to comply with legal, LAUSD, and collective bargaining rules regarding reporting an absence and providing appropriate documentation.
- Supervisors are expected to provide feedback, monitor attendance, and maintain attendance records.





Illness leave benefits are provided to ease the financial burden on employees who are required to be absent from duty due to legitimate illness, injury, or personal necessity. Employees who use illness and personal necessity leave for unauthorized reasons are in violation of policy. Failure to comply with this policy can result in appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. This policy ensures that our fellow employees do not unfairly bear the burden of the workload of those who inappropriately use illness or personal necessity leave.

## SmartFind Express Substitute Request System (SFE)

**What is SmartFind Express?** SFE is a 24-hour, web-based system for school administrators and classified employees to report vacancies/absences of classified employees and request substitute coverage. SFE also enables classified employees to register as a substitute and receive coverage assignments as needed.

<http://classifiedsubs.lausd.net>, or by phone at (866) 477-3233.

**Health Care Asst. absences should be reported directly to District Nursing Services** by leaving a message on the 24 hour message line at **(213) 202-7573** or, if the absence is known in advance, call District Nursing Services at **(213) 202-7580** during regular working hours.

**Where can I find more information about the substitute coverage policy and procedures?** Current information about the substitute policy and procedures can be found in REF-1253.3: "Substitute Policy for Special Education Assistants/Trainees."

**Do classified employees report absences to SFE?** Classified employees should review their school's procedures for reporting an absence with their supervisor. It is critical that there is prompt communication when an employee is absent, or expects to be absent, so that appropriate coverage can be provided. Whether or not your supervisor requires you to utilize the SFE system, employees are still required to contact the school site and report the absence. Be prepared to give the SFE system issued job number when calling into the school.

### Dress Standards For Employees

An employee is deemed appropriately dressed when the clothing worn is neat and clean and is in reasonable conformity with the mode of dress generally acceptable as representative of the occupation or profession within the community or required by the nature of the duties assigned where the employee renders services. Dress is inappropriate when it is unsafe, detracts from the learning situation or task being performed, would reasonably tend to cause disciplinary problems with students or other employees, or would reasonably tend to cause disrepute to the employee, the Los Angeles Unified School District, or the profession. (*Board Rule 1906 - Adopted 6-14-76*).

### Ethical Responsibilities

Paraprofessionals are an integral part of the instructional team, and as such, have an ethical responsibility to work as a team member and to meet the educational needs of students. You are expected to maintain professional relationships with teachers, other school personnel, students, and the school community. The quality of these relationships not only depends on the work performed, but also on the ethical behavior demonstrated on the job. Paraprofessionals are faced with ethical issues on

a daily basis, including confidentiality, record management and the demands placed on them by students and staff. Therefore, it is imperative that paraprofessionals are exposed to and discuss ethical guidelines.

### **Ethical Standards**

Paraprofessionals often face situations where their own interest, a student's interest, or the school's interest may conflict. Ethical standards help us to become aware of the best course of action with regard to a variety of perspectives other than just our own. We need to consider the ethical implications of the decisions that we make and the potential impact on students and other school staff.

Ethics are particularly important because paraprofessionals and teachers are placed in a position of authority over students. Students are often vulnerable and have limited influence, relying on paraprofessionals, teachers, and parents to protect their best interests. Paraprofessionals are obligated to be as fully prepared as possible to function ethically, as well as legally, in the school environment. Ethical standards provide a framework for reflecting on appropriate behavior.

The [Council for Exceptional Children \(CEC\)](http://www.cec.sped.org/Standards/Paraeducator-Preparation-Guidelines) is a national organization that has compiled a list of professional standards for paraprofessionals in collaboration with the [National Resource Center for Paraeducators](http://www.cec.sped.org/Standards/Paraeducator-Preparation-Guidelines), which includes professionalism and ethical practices. Resources provided through both of these national organizations can be useful for your professional growth and development. *The CEC professional standards for paraprofessionals can be found on the CEC website at:*

<http://www.cec.sped.org/Standards/Paraeducator-Preparation-Guidelines>

### **Considerations for Working with Students with Disabilities**

As an important part of the educational team, paraprofessionals have a commitment to maintain ethical standards of behavior in their relationships with students, parents, their supervisor, and other school personnel. Teachers have a responsibility to help the paraprofessional develop ethical responses to situations that arise. A code of ethics, such as the one provided below, can establish guidelines for appropriate behavior.

#### **Basic ethical responsibilities:**

- Engage only in non-instructional and instructional activities for which qualified or trained.
- Do not communicate progress or concerns about students directly to parents.
- Do communicate progress and concerns to supervising teachers.
- Refer concerns expressed by parents, students, or others to your teacher or supervisor.
- Recognize that a supervisor has the ultimate responsibility for the instruction and behavior support of students and follow the directions prescribed by a supervisor.

#### **Relationship with students and parents:**

- Discuss a student's progress, limitations and/or educational program only with the supervising teacher in the appropriate setting.

- Discuss school problems and confidential matters only with appropriate school personnel, and only when students are not present.
- Do not engage in discriminatory practices based on a student's disability, race, sex, cultural background, religion or sexual orientation.
- Respect the dignity, privacy and individuality of all students, parents, and staff members.
- Present yourself as a positive role model.
- Use positive behavior support strategies that are consistent with standards established by the classroom teacher, school, and local district.

**Relationship with the teacher:**

- Recognize the role of the teacher as the instructional leader in the class.
- Recognize your own verbal, as well as non-verbal, communication style.
- Express differences of opinion only when students are not present.
- Discuss concerns about the teacher or teaching methods directly with the teacher.
- If issues are not resolved, then discuss concerns only with the teacher's supervisor.
- Do not discuss problems with the teacher with students, other teachers, other paraprofessionals or parents.
- Follow the positive behavior support plans established by the teacher.

**Relationship with the school:**

- Accept responsibility for improving your skills.

- Become familiar with school policies and procedures.
- Represent the school and its programs in a positive manner.

The paraprofessional should refrain from:

- Airing school problems and confidential matters, including personality conflicts, outside of the school and/or with those not directly involved with the issue.
- Discussing administrative, interdepartmental and interschool problems in the presence of students and/or parents.
- Gossiping about problems with those who cannot assist with the solution.

Ultimately, these ethical guidelines mean that both the teacher and the paraprofessional must take responsible actions to ensure that the best interests of the individual students are being met. The ethical responsibility for the proper use of paraprofessionals rests with the special education teacher and administrator. The paraprofessional must be specifically prepared to uphold the ethics of the teaching community.

**Advocacy**

Advocates are persons who support the rights and efforts of themselves and/or others not only philosophically, but also through real-life involvement and day-to-day actions. A variety of definitions, classification systems, and names for types of advocacy have been developed. All of these formats in human services advocacy point out the link of advocacy with action. The ideal for each person is to be able to self-advocate and handle most life situations as independently as possible. This is important when viewed through the filter of how much a paraprofessional may do *for* a student. It is important to continuously review how much the student is able to be independent and how much the student continues to need individualized support.



# Independence

**Advocating for students with disabilities:** The term “advocacy” has been defined in a variety of ways.

“Advocacy: the act of pleading for, supporting or recommending; active espousal”

*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*

“Pure advocacy refers to action taken, usually on behalf of someone else, to ensure some right, secure some benefit, or enhance the advocate’s wellbeing.”

*Akerley, M (1978) A Philosophy of Advocacy*

“The representations of rights and interests of oneself or others in an effort to bring about changes which will eliminate barriers for meeting identified need.”

*Joint Accreditation Council of Services for MR and Other Developmentally Disabled Persons*

“Advocacy means representing other people’s interest as your own. Advocacy strategies involve working on behavior of or with those ‘other’ people.”

*Bilken, D. & Zollers, N. (1986). The focus of advocacy in the LD field. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 19(10), 576-586*



## Working with Students with Disabilities

### Supporting Instruction

Become aware of the specific needs of the students you are assigned to. Understanding each student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals helps eliminate confusion and provides a better understanding of what the expectations are for the student. It is important to know specifically what each student’s limitations are. At the same time, however, it is equally important to know what their abilities are so that they receive the appropriate level of assistance. Our students need to be as independent as they can possibly be. “Hovering” over them and doing too much for them can hinder their progress toward independence.

You are always encouraged to give verbal praise to children or high fives for good work. Be mindful of physical contact with students. Using hand over hand procedures or any physical prompts should never occur unless you are trained and the teacher has approved such action. Also, never verbally berate a child or call them negative names. If in doubt, ask the classroom teacher for guidance.

### Supporting Behavior Intervention Implementation (BII)

Behavior Intervention Implementation (BII) is a Tier III, data-driven behavioral related service that supports individual students with serious behavior in their educational environment. BII services emphasize direct support of a student’s program through the implementation of the Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) and/or Behavior Support Plan (BSP). The BII provider participates in the

implementation of the plan, not the development of the plan.

The BII provider is the staff member, usually a special education assistant or trainee, assigned to provide BII services to a student at the frequency and duration specified in the student's IEP. This duty is in addition to other duties performed by these paraprofessionals.

### **Behavior Intervention Implementation Provider Responsibilities**

All BII providers are required to do the following:

- Obtain authorization from school site administrator to access the Welligent System with the DIS/BII Paraprofessional role.
- Enroll in and complete the "Online BII Tracking" course in the Learning Zone and provide the certificate of completion to the school site administrator.
- Document in Welligent the BII services delivered to student(s) assigned at the frequency and duration indicated in the student's IEP on at least a weekly basis.

*Note: In the event that multiple individuals are assigned to provide BII services to a student, the individual who is named on the school's matrix will be the provider responsible for service documentation in Welligent.*

### **Supporting Students on the School Bus**

Some students with disabilities require paraprofessional support on the school bus per their IEP for health or behavior needs. A special education trainee/assistant or HCA may be assigned to the school bus to ensure the health and safety of the student. If you are assigned this duty, check with your administrator as to where you are to board the bus and at what time. Paraprofessionals are paid from the scheduled pickup time of the assigned student with the IEP service. In some instances, a HCA may be assigned to arrive 10 minutes before the pickup time in order to allow time to go through the equipment checklist and ensure that the student's equipment is there and in working order. Please work with your school nurse to verify what supplies, equipment and emergency medication is needed for the specific student.

The paraprofessional will provide the assistance, care or supervision required by the student's IEP and assists the driver with the following typical duties; lifting students on/off the bus, maintaining discipline, responding to physical needs of students, making minor adjustments of special equipment, supervising students, administering first aid, and assisting students to use mobility equipment, assisting students with toilet use. The paraprofessional should select seating on the bus keeping in mind proximity and student needs. Although the bus driver is responsible to load and secure students in their seats and wheelchair spaces, the paraprofessional should continuously monitor that seatbelts are secure and students' chairs are not moving while en route. If there is an emergency on the bus please alert the driver immediately of the situation so that he can pull over and assist you.

Although you may be assigned to a specific student, you are responsible to assist in maintaining the discipline on the bus. In many cases, the assistant will be assigned to multiple students requiring program support on the bus.

### Paraprofessionals and Related Services

Related services are developmental, corrective and/or other supportive services that are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education. Related services include but are not limited to: adapted physical education, transportation, speech-language pathology and audiology services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation therapy, counseling services, rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, school health services, social work services in school, and parent counseling and training.

The role of related services is to support the unique needs of the special education student in their educational program. The foundation of this approach is the collaboration between general education and special education teacher and service providers. There are ten things every paraprofessional needs to know about related services:

1. Related services support a student's access to their curriculum that cannot be provided by the classroom teacher.
2. Related services programs include audiology (AUD) and the deaf and hard of hearing (DHH); occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), and adapted physical education (APE); speech and language (LAS); vision impairment program (VI); orientation & mobility (O&M); orthopedic impairment (OI) and assistive technology (AT).
3. Related services are given in accordance with the time and frequency identified on the student's IEP. Services are based on assessed needs.
4. Paraprofessionals have an important role to play in supporting students who have disabilities and should work under the direction of the related service providers to know what supports to provide.
5. Paraprofessionals should develop sensitivity to the specific disability exhibited by the student and respect and maximize the student's need for independence to the fullest extent possible (i.e., to not do everything for the student).
6. Paraprofessionals should ask specific questions of the related services provider(s) to know what to do or say to support the student's skill development.
7. Paraprofessionals should expand opportunities for skill development outside of the classroom (i.e., on the playground, in the lunchroom or in the locker room).
8. On the playground, the paraprofessional can help the nonverbal child use an alternative augmentative communication (AAC) device to ask for a turn at bat; help the child in the wheelchair play basketball; help the child who is hard of hearing focus on the direction of the game; help the child who is visually impaired get around the playground.
9. In the lunchroom, the paraprofessional can help the nonverbal child use his or her communication system to make a food choice; help the child with fine motor delays use the techniques designed by the occupational therapist to open a milk carton; help the child who is hard of hearing find a quiet place to sit to talk to his friends; help the child who is blind use braille to make a food choice.
10. During physical education (PE), the paraprofessional working with a student can provide supervision for a student and assist with dressing and opening lockers;



attend the PE class and participate with the student providing the necessary motor support needed, provide assistance to the PE teacher.

In summary, the paraprofessional provides important support for students with disabilities with regard to related services. The paraprofessional encourages students to participate in school activities without unnecessary assistance. The paraprofessional reinforces strategies and skills designed by the student's related services providers(s). The paraprofessional documents and communicates student skill development to related services provider(s) and classroom teacher(s).

## **Managing the Health Needs of Students in School**

### **First Aid & CPR**

Every special education paraprofessional must have a current first aid & CPR certificate. A first-aid and CPR certificate issued by a recognized first aid training program must be obtained within 60 days after appointment and must be kept valid during the term of employment.

The paraprofessional should learn the location of the first aid equipment and supplies and become familiar with the first aid book. You may be required to administer minor first aid for your students (e.g., providing seizure care, treating scratches, scrapes, burns, splinters, etc.). Be sure your teacher and school nurse is informed of any first aid given to a student.

### **Food Handler's Certificate**

An LAUSD Food Handler's Certificate shall be obtained upon assignment as a trainee and it should be renewed annually. Anyone who assists in preparing food or feeding students is required to have this certificate. The school nurse will assist with this process.

### **Medical Confidentiality**

All student information, including medical information, is confidential and should only be discussed with appropriate personnel as necessary. Medical confidentiality is required for all situations including AIDS, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C infections. Disclosure of any medical information without the parent or guardian's or infected person's permission is against the law and subject to both criminal and civil penalties.

### **Universal Precautions**

All employees are required to consider blood and other body fluids as infectious material. Blood borne pathogens are disease-producing organisms that are transmitted through blood, other potentially infectious material, mucous membranes, and sexual contact. District employees that are reasonably anticipated to incur an occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious material (OPIM) during the performance of their job duties are considered to have primary exposure and are offered the Hepatitis B vaccine. Some typical district job classifications that would fall into this primary exposure category include doctors, nurses, plant managers, special education and children's center staff.

## Hands must be washed:

- Before putting on protective equipment prior to working with students
- Before drinking or eating
- Before handling clean utensils or equipment
- Before and after handling student's food
- Before and after assisting or training the student in toileting and feeding
- Before and after going to the bathroom yourself
- After contact with bodily fluids
- After handling diapers, garments or equipment that may be soiled
- After caring for any person
- After removing disposable gloves
- After removing protective equipment

## Work Practice Control

For the health and safety of everyone in the work community, work place controls have been established. These include minimizing exposure from splashing, spraying, and/or splattering of droplets for procedures that involve blood and OPIM. Employees are not to eat, drink, apply cosmetics/lip balm, or apply contact lenses in any area of potential exposure.

Employees need to wear personal protective equipment (PPE). Infectious/biological material waste needs to be discarded appropriately or stored in a labeled container, in a separate and designated location. Personal protective equipment (PPE) includes gloves, face shields, protective clothing, respiration/CPR masks or barriers.

The school nurse will instruct you on which PPE are required for the student you are working with. Prior to leaving the work area, the paraprofessional must clean and disinfect the work area and all PPE should be removed and or discarded and hands washed. When supporting multiple students, this routine must be followed between each procedure.

Gloves are non-latex, single use and disposable. They must be changed or discarded as needed; before, during, and/or after each task, incident, or person is addressed. All District personnel must wear gloves when administering first aid involving blood and/or OPIM and during clean up after an emergency. It is important to remove soiled gloves in a manner that will prevent cross-contamination. This is accomplished by making sure that contaminated surfaces only touch other contaminated surfaces and clean, bare hands should only touch

clean areas inside the glove.

Hand washing is the single most effective practice to prevent the spread of germs and disease. To effectively wash your hands, use warm running water and soap. Move and rub your hands vigorously for at least 15 seconds before rinsing and drying them.

### Soiled Students

Your actions and your language should communicate a kind, respectful attitude towards the student who has soiled himself. Changing soiled students should be a priority and handled with dignity and discretion.

Always use disposable gloves when changing or cleaning students. Clean, dry, and change the student. Send the soiled clothing home in a plastic bag. Place soiled or wet disposable diapers in a

double plastic bag. Put sealed bags in a lined covered receptacle. If necessary and possible, have the student take a shower. Always wash your hands thoroughly after handling soiled children or materials and disinfect tables, toilets, etc. Do not attempt to wash or clean soiled clothing before bagging. This will spread infectious material.

### **Diapering**

Whenever providing personal care services to a student, it is important to be respectful and encourage independence. Even if the student cannot assist in the procedure, the paraprofessional should communicate with the student. When diapering a student, always remember to use universal precautions and personal protective equipment. Have the following supplies ready for use before disrobing the student.



#### ***Equipment and supplies needed:***

- Wet disposable wipes or peri-wash
- Disposable diapers
- Plastic disposable bags
- A changing table, appropriate to the age/size of student
- Roll paper and large disposable towels
- Plastic lined covered receptacle
- Disposable gloves
- Disinfectant for cleaning changing table

#### ***Guidelines for diapering:***

- Cover table with roll paper and place all materials in a convenient, close location before starting the procedure.
- For students who use wheelchairs, be sure to position the chair in a direction that will allow for a safe transfer and lock brakes prior to removing safety belts and lifting the student to and from their chair.
- Place the student on the covered table with their bottom on a large disposable towel.
- NEVER leave a student unattended on the table.
- Put on gloves.



- Remove dirty diaper and place in plastic bag already on changing table.
- Cleanse soiled area from front to back using a wet wipe (using each wipe only once).
- Wipe the buttocks area.
- Remove toweling.
- Remove and discard gloves before you handle a clean diaper. Dispose of the gloves in the plastic bags.
- Put on a pair of clean gloves.
- Place a clean diaper on the student and redress the student.
- Remove the student from the table. If you have moved the chair, make sure brakes are reapplied and secure the student in the chair before cleaning work area.
- Dispose of waste in a lined covered receptacle.
- Wash the table top with disinfectant; rinse and dry the surface; remove gloves and place in plastic bag; tie plastic bag and place in a lined trashcan with lid.
- Wash the student's and your hands.

### **Toileting**

Independence should be encouraged in the use of the bathroom. Both teachers and assistants are to supervise during the toileting period if necessary. All bathroom incidents or mishaps are to be reported to the teacher or administrator immediately. Stress to students that they should wash their hands after toileting. Encourage students to use soap dispenser properly; turn sink water off; clean up the area; and put paper towels in the trashcan. Changing tables should be covered with disposable towels and disinfected after each use.

Again, there should always be adult supervision whenever toileting is involved. As with diapering, place all materials in a close, convenient place before starting. Never place clean supplies on the floor.

A student should use the same potty chair each time, if possible. A male student who uses a portable urinal must have his own urinal marked with his name, cleaned after use, and kept in the bathroom on a shelf and not on the floor. A student should not sit on the toilet for any longer than (10) minutes.

#### ***Key points for toileting:***

- The portable toilet or urinal should be emptied and cleaned after each student use.
- Always wear gloves when assisting with toileting.
- You will need to supervise continually until the student has mastered the procedure.
- Place any soiled diapers in a plastic bag, tie the bag, and place it in a plastic lined receptacle.
- Never leave a soiled diaper on the floor.

- Teach the child to wipe from front to back and to discard toilet tissue into toilet or portable toilet.
- Do not flush wipes or disposable pads. These items must be placed in a plastic bag, tied off and discarded in a plastic lined receptacle.
- If the rectal area is still unclean, clean the area with wet disposable towels or peri-wash (from front to back).
- Remove your gloves and wash your hands and the student's hands.

### **Transferring Students with Disabilities**

It is imperative to learn how to transfer students safely to prevent injury to the student and yourself. There are (8) types of transfers: floor to wheelchair; from wheelchair to chair; to a toilet; to a changing table; to a standing table; to a walker; to a tumble form; and from a wheelchair to a vehicle.

Regardless of the type of transfer, there are (10) guidelines or “Ten Commandments of Body Mechanics,” to be followed:

1. Do not attempt to lift alone if there is any doubt about your ability to do so.
2. Check your footing; it should be firm and secure. Your feet should be shoulder width apart with one foot slightly forward to give a broad base of support.
3. Get a secure grip on the person being transferred.
4. Keep your back straight, bend your knees, hips, and ankles; and then, lift by straightening your legs.
5. Take a deep breath and contract your stomach muscles.
6. Keep the weight being lifted close to your body.
7. Lift smoothly with no quick or jerky motions.
8. Do not over reach or stretch; keep your arms at normal height and your elbows close to your body.
9. Place one foot in front of the other; move by shifting your body weight from one foot to the other.
10. Do not twist your body; but rather, shift the position of your feet.



Remember, when transferring a student, you need to plan ahead before moving them. Wheelchair should be positioned as close as possible to the place you are transferring to and in a direction that will give you the best access to the student once transferred. Concentrate on the student and not the disability and always let the student know what you are doing before you do it. Each student has different needs, and all staff members must maintain good physical and mental health. For the safety of the student and the paraprofessional, it is important to always maintain proper body mechanics.

### Medication

**Medication should not be administered by any school personnel without a written order from a physician.** This includes all prescription and non-prescription medications, such as aspirin, ointments, drops, etc. The parent must provide the school with the name of the medication and the instructions for how it is administered. Be sure to follow the school's policy regarding storing and dispensing medication. Paraprofessionals must be assigned and trained by the school nurse before dispensing any medications to students. Notify the school nurse or school administrator if the student is in possession of any medication in order to determine if it is authorized.

BUL-3878.1: "Assisting Students with Prescribed Medication at School"

### Seizure Management

First aid for seizures includes:

- Remaining calm (note the time)
- Protecting the student from injury
- Positioning the student on their side
- Do not put anything in the student's mouth
- Do not offer the student anything by mouth until they are fully awake

#### *During a generalized seizure*

When a student is having a seizure, he/she needs to be observed. The physical conditions that you are watching for: stiffening, jerking, extremities involved, response to verbal stimuli, falls, incontinence of urine or stool, staring and sleeping afterwards. It will be necessary to call 911 if the seizure lasts for more than 5 minutes with no Diastat order, there is a presence of cluster seizures, there is a change in seizure pattern, the student has trouble breathing or if the student is seriously injured.

If Diastat is ordered, administer after (5) minutes of seizing or as ordered by a doctor. (NOTE: Never administer Diastat unless trained by the school nurse). Remain with the student and observe him/her for breathing difficulty or change in color. The seizure should subside in fifteen (15) minutes. If the seizure worsens or the student has breathing difficulty, call 911.



*After a seizure:*

Stay with the student until he/she is fully recovered or until the paramedics arrive. The student should be allowed to rest. Observations need to be recorded on a seizure log noting time of onset and duration, body movement, treatment given, and condition after seizure. The school nurse should be notified immediately. If this is the first seizure episode, the parents should be notified immediately by the school nurse or administrator. If there was a change in the seizure pattern, the nurse should send home a copy of the seizure log for the parent. The school nurse always needs to be informed when a seizure has occurred. The nurse needs to be consulted for follow-up with the parent.

**Epi-Pen/Epinephrine Injection Administration**

An allergic reaction is a hypersensitive response to a foreign substance. Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction, which may be fatal, and usually involves more than one part of the body. It can occur immediately or up to one hour after exposure. The shorter the interval between exposure and reaction, the more serious the reaction will be. The symptoms of anaphylaxis are: hives; swelling of the eyes, skin, face, tongue or throat; difficulty in breathing; nausea, vomiting, diarrhea; and/or fainting. Paraprofessionals should be aware of all student allergies. Common food substances that may cause anaphylaxis are peanuts, dairy products and shellfish. Other substances that cause this type of reaction are medications, venom from insect bites and stings, latex products, pollens, molds, animal dander, mites, chemicals and exercise.

If the Epi-Pen/Epinephrine injection needs to be used, call 911. Remove the grey cap and place the black tip on the outer thigh pushing firmly and counting to ten (10). The used Epi-Pen is to be placed back in the amber case and sent with the paramedics. After administering the Epi-Pen, reassure the student and cover him/her with a blanket while waiting for the paramedics to arrive. Then, document on the school Medication Record and complete an incident report. You'll receive child specific training from a District Registered Nurse if there's a child at your school who requires an Epi-Pen.

**Managing Diabetes at School**

Diabetes affects the way the body converts food into energy. Sugars and starches in food are broken down into glucose. Insulin, a hormone produced in the pancreas, is needed for glucose to be converted to energy in the body's cells. In diabetes, the pancreas does not produce enough insulin or the insulin produced is not used effectively. Diabetes Mellitus is a chronic condition that requires life long treatment and management. The number of students with Diabetes Mellitus has been increasing. The goal of diabetes management is to prevent long term complications by keeping blood sugar levels as close to normal as possible. This requires more frequent blood testing and insulin administration; otherwise students may experience more episodes of low blood sugar. There can be several long-term complications from diabetes. These include blindness, kidney disease, heart disease, stroke and amputations. **A licensed provider can only administer insulin.**

There are three types of Diabetes:

- Insulin Dependent (Type I)
- Non-insulin Dependent (Type II)
- Gestational Diabetes

Type I Diabetes is managed by balancing diet, physical activity, and insulin and by testing blood glucose levels and treating low blood sugar.

#### ***Low Blood Sugar (Hypoglycemia)***

Low blood sugar, also known as hypoglycemia, is caused by a lack of food consumption, too much insulin or increased physical activity. Because hypoglycemia comes on quickly, the student must have prompt treatment, as this does NOT go away by itself. Mild signs of hypoglycemia are sweating, shaking and hunger. Moderate signs, in which the student will need assistance to treat, are headache, fast heart beat and mood changes. Signs of severe low blood sugar, which is a life-threatening emergency, are unconsciousness and/or convulsions.

Treatment of low blood sugar includes testing the blood sugar, if equipment is available; eating foods with fast acting sugar, like glucose tabs, fruit juice, regular soda, hard candy or sugar packets or glucose gel; retesting the blood sugar in 15 minutes; then eating a meal or complex carbohydrate snack.

#### ***High Blood Sugar (Hyperglycemia)***

High blood sugar, also known as hyperglycemia, is caused by excessive consumption of food, not enough insulin, and/or stress or illness. Unlike hypoglycemia, high blood sugar has a gradual onset. The signs of hyperglycemia include extreme thirst and/or hunger, frequent urination, blurred vision and/or nausea.

The goal for students with diabetes at school is to make them as independent as possible. Students may need accommodations while at school which could include the following: access to water and use of the restroom when needed, allowing them to eat snacks as needed and/or allowing them to test their blood sugar level when/where it is necessary. All of this can be accomplished when there is a team of trained staff members trained by the school nurse to assist a student with their diabetes management.

# Characteristics of Disabilities and Instructional Strategies

## Learning About Students With Special Needs

The following information is meant to serve only as an introduction to students with special needs. Each student will have unique needs and may not fit the general descriptions nor will they be educated in the same way. Talk in depth with your supervising teacher to learn the best way to work with each student. The overall goal of each student is to develop skills that will enable them to function as independently as possible in society and their environment.

Here are some guidelines worth remembering:

- Treat each child as an individual.
- Be kind, consistent, and firm.
- Allow each student to be as independent as possible.
- Be positive with each student! Give frequent positive feedback.
- Ask your teacher to demonstrate new tasks or skills.

## Characteristics Of Disabilities And Instructional Strategies

### Autism (AUT)

Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorder-NOS (not otherwise specified) are developmental disabilities that share many of the same characteristics. Usually evident by age three, autism and PDD-NOS are neurological disorders that affect a child's ability to communicate, understand language, play, and relate to others

#### *General Characteristics:*

- Communication problems (for example, with the use or comprehension of language)
- Difficulty relating to people, things, and events
- Playing with toys and objects in unusual ways
- Difficulty adjusting to changes in routine or to familiar surroundings
- Repetitive body movements or behavior



*Instructional Strategies:*

- Need highly structured and predictable schedule
- Student needs time to prepare if schedule changes
- Be consistent with student
- Allow enough time for the student to respond
- Give lots of praise

**Emotional Disturbance (ED)**

Many terms are used to describe emotional, behavioral or mental disorders. Currently, students with such disorders are categorized as having an emotional disturbance, which is defined under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act as follows: "...a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

*General Characteristics:*

- Hyperactivity (short attention span, impulsiveness)
- Aggression or self-injurious behavior (acting out, fighting)
- Withdrawal (not interacting socially with others, excessive fear or anxiety)
- Immaturity (inappropriate crying, temper tantrums, poor coping skills)
- Learning difficulties (academically performing below grade level)

*Instructional Strategies:*

- Be very consistent when dealing with behaviors.
- Learn what might trigger a student's non-compliant behavior and work with the student to de-escalate any problems.
- Learn, use, and follow the student's Behavior Support Plan.
- Check with the teacher so that you know what to do when behaviors occur.
- NEVER use physical restraint unless you are trained and approved by supervising teacher.
- Remember, the student misbehaves because he/she has a disability; the student may or may



not be able to voluntarily control the behavior.

- Help the student to determine both positive and negative behavior.
- Don't hold grudges or take issues personally; start each day with a "clean slate."
- Continue to show respect to the student in spite of continued behaviors.
- Allow enough time for the student to respond.
- Give lots of praise.

### **Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH)**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) includes "hearing impairment" and "deafness" as two of the categories under which children with disabilities may be eligible for special education and related services programming. While the term "hearing impairment" is often used generically to describe a wide range of hearing losses, including deafness, the regulations for IDEA define hearing loss and deafness separately.



#### ***General Characteristics:***

- Language and speech delay
- Different voice characteristics
- Misunderstand information presented
- Difficulty understanding concepts that are not concrete
- Takes things literally

#### ***Instructional Strategies:***

- Use as many visual cues as possible.
- Speak clearly and at a normal pace.
- Face the student when talking.
- Get the child's attention before speaking.
- Make sure the child is seated close to speaker.
- Allow enough time for the student to respond.
- Give lots of praise.

### **Specific Learning Disability (SLD)**

Learning disability is a general term that describes specific kinds of learning problems. A learning disability can cause a person to have trouble learning and using certain skills. The skills most often affected are: reading, writing, listening, speaking, reasoning, and doing math. Students may have poor achievement in one or more academic areas. Students may have difficulty processing information either visually or through spoken language. The specific learning disability varies from person to person.

#### ***General Characteristics:***

- Usually average to above average intelligence
- Distractible / easily frustrated
- Low self-esteem

#### ***Instructional Strategies:***

- Teach the student compensation strategies.
- Allow extra time.
- Use the students' strengths to work on difficult areas.
- Allow enough time for the student to respond.
- Give lots of praise.



### **Intellectual Disability (ID)**

Intellectual Disability is a term used when a person has certain limitations in mental functioning and in skills such as communicating, taking care of him or herself, and social skills. These limitations will cause a child to learn and develop more slowly than a typical child. Children with intellectual disabilities may take longer to learn to speak, walk, and take care of their personal needs such as dressing or eating. They are likely to have trouble learning in school. They will learn, but it will take them longer.

#### ***General Characteristics:***

- Difficulty communicating with others
- Often needs assistance with taking care of personal needs (dressing, bathing, going to the bathroom)
- Difficulty with reasoning and judgment
- Impacted social skills (manners, knowing the rules of conversation, getting along in a group, playing a game)
- Delays in reading, writing, and basic math



- Difficulty with skill retention and delays in processing

***Instructional Strategies:***

- Keep instructions concrete.
- Provide lots of practice opportunities.
- Demonstrate to student; don't just tell them.
- Allow student to be as independent as possible.
- Allow enough time for the student to respond.
- Give lots of praise.

**Multiple Disabilities (MD)**

People with severe disabilities are those who traditionally have been labeled as having severe to profound intellectual disabilities. These people require ongoing, extensive support in more than one major life activity in order to participate in the integrated community setting and enjoy the quality of life available to people with fewer or no disabilities. They frequently have additional disabilities, including movement difficulties, sensory losses, and behavior problems.

***General Characteristics:***

- Limited speech or communication
- Difficulty in basic, physical mobility
- Tendency to forget skills through disuse
- Trouble generalizing skills from one situation to another
- A need for support in major life activities (e.g., domestic leisure, community, use, vocational)

***Instructional Strategies:***

- Respect each student's dignity.
- Learn how each student communicates.
- Celebrate current skills and accomplishments.



- Allow enough time for the student to respond.
- Give lots of praise.

### **Orthopedic Impairment (OI)**

Physical (motor) difficulties in mobility, writing, sitting; common physical disabilities are cerebral palsy & spina bifida.

#### ***General Characteristics:***

- Hard to control limbs
- Involuntary movements
- May need assistance with toileting, eating and general life skills

#### ***Instructional Strategies:***

- Remove or accommodate barriers for student.
- Allow students to be as independent as possible.
- Speak to person on their level (sit down if they are in wheelchair).
- Allow enough time for student to respond.
- Give lots of praise.

### **Speech/Language Impairment (SLI)**

Speech and language disorders refer to problems in communication and related areas such as oral motor function. These delays and disorders range from simple sound substitutions to the inability to understand or use language or use the oral-motor mechanism for functional speech and feeding. Some causes of speech and language disorders include hearing loss, neurological disorders, brain injury, intellectual disabilities, drug abuse, physical impairments such as cleft lip or palate, and vocal abuse or misuse. Frequently, however, the cause is unknown.

#### ***General Characteristics:***

- Improper use of words and their meanings
- Inability to express ideas verbally
- Inappropriate grammatical patterns
- Reduced vocabulary
- Inability to follow directions

***Instructional Strategies:***

- Model good speech and language at or slightly above student's level.
- Don't talk for student.
- Encourage student.
- Ask student to repeat if you did not understand.
- Allow enough time for student to respond.
- Give lots of praise.

**Visual Impairment (VI)**

The terms partially sighted, low vision, legally blind, and totally blind are used in the educational context to describe students with visual impairments. They are defined as follows: "Partially sighted," "Low Vision," "Legally Blind."

***General Characteristics:***

- May tire easily visually
- May need assistance in moving from place to place

***Instructional Strategies:***

- Don't lead child if assisting in walking (sighted guide).
- Let the student take hold of your arm.
- Speak directly to the child and let child know who you are if unfamiliar.
- May need magnifying glass, large print books or braille.
- Allow enough time for student to respond.
- Give lots of praise.

**Additional Strategies When Working with Students:**

- Read aloud to a student or group of students.
- Encourage the student to read aloud to you.
- Help the student to select books from the classroom library.
- Help the student learn how to use individualized materials.

- Work with a student or a small group of students on facts to reinforce skills.
- Monitor small group work.
- Prepare daily positive feedback reports.
- Assist students in use of clay, finger paint, woodworking, etc.
- Check on goal setting and provide feedback to student.
- Help a student to use reading labs, manipulative math materials, etc.

**Additional Duties When Working with a Teacher:**

- Make instructional aids.
- Put up students' work for display.
- Create bulletin boards.
- Encourage students to keep the learning environment clean.
- Operate audio/visual equipment and assistive technology equipment.
- Ready easel, clay, finger paint, and other projects.
- Participate in discussions and lessons.

**Effective Behavior Support Techniques**

- Students should be taught behavioral expectations.
- Students should be reinforced for rule-following behavior.
- Be firm; communicate that you mean what you say.
- To increase compliance, use clear commands with less than 5 words in the sentence.
- Offer choices.
- Reinforce attempts to comply (shaping behaviors) consistently; Follow through with all discipline and reward situations.
- Give immediate feedback; encourage students to correct mistakes.
- Let the students know when they do well; show enthusiasm.
- At all times, encourage students to think through situations and be independent.
- Talk to student regarding specific behaviors, not about the student.
- Give one direction at a time.



### Here are some thoughtful ways of dealing with students with disabilities

- See the person who has a disability as a “person”—like anyone else.
- Recognize the abilities of the person.
- Always ask a person with disability if they want assistance before you help them. Sometimes they want to do things for themselves.
- Be tolerant of differences.
- Speak directly to the person with a disability rather than through a third party.
- Encourage the person to socialize and participate with peers.
- Allow for person to take the time needed to process information and complete tasks based on their unique abilities.
- Treat all people with respect and courtesy.

### Communicating With Students

Every aspect of good communication skills is important with students with disabilities. **The driver should remember to follow these guidelines:**

1. Make sure only one person gives instructions.
2. Use simple words and sentences to give directions.
  - Good Example: “Sit in your seat.”
  - Poor Example: “Settle down, right now!”
3. Try to assess whether the student is paying attention.
4. Provide structured choices where the student can choose from two preferred options. “Would you like to finish your assignment or participate with the group activity?”
5. Allow time for the student to respond to the directions or question.
6. If necessary, repeat the directions calmly.

PROPER PHRASE	IMPROPER PHRASE
“A student with hearing impairment”	“A deaf or hard of hearing student”
“A student with learning disabilities”	“A learning disabled student”
“A student with a wheelchair”	“A wheelchair student”

7. Avoid hurting feelings.
8. Model appropriate behavior
9. Use good judgment in what you say around or about students.
10. Be patient and supportive.
11. Reinforce appropriate behavior.

12. Assist students only as required.
13. Develop a strategy to communicate with students who do not speak or do not speak your own language. Use this strategy in emergencies. For example: communicate with the student through another student or adult on the bus.

### **Communicating With Parents And Staff**

Parents and school staff expect a professional approach to all communications concerning the needs of children. Communications should be expressed as caring concerns aimed at problem solving. Factual statements free of put downs, accusations, and anger will assist in achieving positive communication. Positive communication with parents and teachers will aid the development of plans for handling difficult situations. Good communications with parents and teachers supports a safe and pleasant school day.

### **Qualities Of An Effective Special Education Paraprofessional\***

- Needs to be able to accept and deal with changes. Schedules, student assignments, techniques, and routines are all subject to change.
- Follows through with instruction of supervisor and team of professionals. Regards all team members with respect, realizing all are important contributing members to the students' progress.
- Needs to be a willing learner. Listens, asks questions, follows instruction and asks for clarification from supervisor. Always directs questions and concerns to the supervisor first, who then routes questions and information.
- Keeps accurate records as instructed by supervisor and team, such as program data, contacts from parents and any concerns or observations about a child's health and safety, etc.
- Keeps information about a student and their family private and confidential, as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and FERPA. Knows what is heard and seen in school stays in school. Remembers information is not to be used as conversation or gossip in the lounge with school staff or in the community.
- Views work as a challenge not as insurmountable obstacles. Utilizes follow-through, creativity and persistence.
- Has a strong belief in the importance of work with students. Realizes the negative to positive image one can give to others through comments, gestures, expressions, and behaviors. Therefore, chooses to emphasize the positive attitude knowing that trying on a daily basis eventually leads to success.

\*Source: Paraeducators in Special Education: A Growing Necessity and Responsibility, Arizona Department of Education

## Resources

**LAUSD/Division of Special Education:** <http://sped.lausd.net>

The website provides Division updates on current programs and services as well as a comprehensive list of supports and services, information on disabilities, parent resources, professional development, research-based practices, web-links, e-library (for memoranda, reference guides, and bulletins), calendar of events and employment opportunities.

Telephone: (213) 241-6701

**LAUSD Personnel Commission:** <http://home.lausd.net>

The Personnel Commission is the merit system agency of the Los Angeles Unified School District, operating in cooperation with, but not under the jurisdiction of, the Board of Education. It provides a system of procedures related to the hiring, assignment, retention, and discipline procedures for classified employees.

Telephone: (213) 241-7800

**Classified Employment Services Branch (CESB)**

This branch of the Personnel Commission provides information regarding assignments and placements of employees, change of class, reassignments and substitutes.

Telephone: (213) 241-6300

**Employee Service Center:** <http://employeeservice.lausd.net>

The Employee Service Center (ESC) has been established to assist all current and displaced District employees to address a variety of work related questions and to access resources. The goal of the ESC is to ensure that each employee receives exceptional customer service and an efficient response to concerns, while continually incorporating the wellness needs of each individual.

Telephone: (213) 241-6670

**Organizational Excellence:** <http://www.oetraining.net>

The unit provides continuous and customized training services for classified employees. Classified employees attend top quality training sessions in convenient locations and at no personal cost. The training covers a wide range of topics that include customer service, telephone courtesy, communication, interpersonal relations, time management, conflict management, workplace diversity, supervision, leadership and more. Organizational Excellence programs are designed to offer the latest strategies, tools, and information to classified employees.

Telephone: (213) 241-3440

**Learning Zone:** <https://lz.lausd.net>

Provides a list of current training and professional development opportunities for district employees, including online and direct instruction courses. Several courses are available for classified employees throughout the year.

**The Career Ladder:** <http://www.teachinla.com/ladder>

Career Ladder provides current participants and persons interesting in joining the program with what they need to get on track and stay on track towards their degrees and teaching credentials. These include Ladder Forums, Annual Conferences, Education Advisement, CBEST and CSET Preparation Seminars, Hiring Assistance, and Tuition reimbursement.

Telephone: (213) 241-4571

**Talent Acquisition and Selection Branch:** <http://lausdjobs.lausd.net/>

The Talent Acquisition and Selection Branch provides current and prospective employees with information and resources for classified positions available within LAUSD. Employees can seek assistance from one of the locations listed below:

***Main Employment Office***

Talent Acquisition and Selection Branch  
(Mon-Fri 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM)

333 South Beaudry Ave.  
Los Angeles, CA 90017  
Tel: (213) 241-3455

***Area Employment Offices***

"Mid-Cities" Classified Employment Office  
(Mon-Fri 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM)

944 West 77th Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90044  
Tel: (323) 753-3321 Fax: (323) 752-2673

"Valley" Classified Employment Office  
(Mon-Fri 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM)

6505 Zelzah Avenue  
Reseda, CA 91335  
Tel: (818) 654-1600 Fax: (818) 609-1012

**SmartFind Express substitute request system**

<http://classified.subs.lausd.net>

New Registration (employees & substitutes): (213) 202-5775

Sub Request Mainline: (866) 477-3233

Helpdesk: (213) 241-7808 or (213) 241-3362

**Local 99/SEIU**

<http://www.seiu99.org/>

**CalPERS (California Public Employees' Retirement System)**

<http://www.calpers.ca.gov/>



**Los Angeles Unified School District**  
333 S. Beaudry Ave, 24<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, CA, 90017

**OFFICE OF THE  
SUPERINTENDENT**

**Dr. John E. Deasy**

**Tel:** (213) 241-7000  
**Fax:** (213) 241-8442

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Web:** <http://laschoolboard.org>

**Tel:** (213) 241-6389

**Fax:** (213) 241-8953 or (213) 241-9023

District 1, (213) 241-6382

Ms. Mónica Garcia, District 2, (213) 241-6180

Ms. Tamar Galatzan, District 3, (213) 241-6386

Mr. Steve Zimmer, District 4, (213) 241-6387

Mr. Bennett Kayser, District 5, (213) 241-5555

Mrs. Mónica Ratliff, District 6, (213) 241-6388

Dr. Richard Vladovic, District 7, (213) 241-6385

## EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTERS

### ESC-NORTH

6621 BALBOA AVE.  
VAN NUYS, CA. 91406  
(818) 654-3600

### ESC-EAST

2151 NORTH SOTO ST.  
LOS ANGELES, CA. 90032  
(323) 224-3100

### ESC- WEST

11380 W. GRAHAM PLACE  
LOS ANGELES, CA. 90064  
(310) 914-2100

### ESC- SOUTH

1208 MAGNOLIA AVE.  
GARDENA, CA. 90247  
(310) 354-3400

### ISIC

333 S. BEAUDRY AVE., 11<sup>th</sup> FLOOR  
LOS ANGELES, CA. 90017  
(213) 241-0100



**Los Angeles Unified  
School District**

**Division of  
Special Education**

**Sharyn Howell  
Executive Director**

**333 S. Beaudry Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90017**

<http://sped.lausd.net>

**Special Education Program Support Handbook**

**2013**

## References

### **LAUSD Classified Employee Handbook**

[http://www.lausd.net/lausd/offices/personnel/class/misc\\_pub/Handbook.PDF](http://www.lausd.net/lausd/offices/personnel/class/misc_pub/Handbook.PDF)

### **LAUSD Reference Guides**

- REF-1932.0: "Instructional Roles and Responsibilities Delivering Special Education Services"
- REF-5104.2: "Directions for Completing the "School Matrix for Special Education Program Supports"

### **Class Descriptions:**

[http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/lausd/offices/personnel/class/class\\_comp/cds/indexcd.html](http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/lausd/offices/personnel/class/class_comp/cds/indexcd.html)

### **Collective Bargaining Agreement: Unit B**

[http://notebook.lausd.net/portal/page?\\_pageid=33,208424&\\_dad=ptl&\\_schema](http://notebook.lausd.net/portal/page?_pageid=33,208424&_dad=ptl&_schema)

### **External References**

*Paraeducator Handbook*, Sedgwick County Educational Services Interlocal Cooperative #618, 620 Industrial Rd., Goddard, Kansas 67052, 2001-2002

*Paraeducators in Special Education: A Growing Necessity and Responsibility*, Arizona Department of Education

*The NEA Paraeducator Handbook, Making Public Schools Great for Every Child*, NEA

*ESP Quality*, 1201 16<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Washington DC 200036, 2003