**STANDARDS FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS 2016**

**Standard 1**: The paraprofessional has knowledge of the discipline(s) taught and supports the teacher/provider in creating learning experiences that make the subject matter meaningful for students.

*The paraprofessional*

1. Demonstrates the academic skills needed to perform assignments.
2. Possesses educational terminology regarding students, programs, roles, and instructional activities.
3. Realizes how the application of learning is useful.
4. Supports direct instruction to students in a clear, focused manner, individually, in small groups, and in whole class settings under the direction of a teacher/provider.
5. Communicates how concepts connect to the big idea and essential questions with direct support from the teacher/provider.

**Standard 2**: The Paraprofessional has knowledge of how students learn and develop, and assists in providing opportunities that support the students' intellectual, social, and personal development.

*The paraprofessional*

1. Understands the distinctions in teacher/provider and paraprofessional roles in diagnosing learning needs; modifying learning activities for individuals; and identifying appropriate materials, equipment, and technology systems.
2. Supports high levels of student engagement by demonstrating passion for content and reinforcing a culture of learning in which all share a belief of the importance of learning.
3. Is responsive to students’ needs, taking the initiative to collaborate with the classroom teacher when major lesson adjustments are needed, taking the initiative to adjust teaching strategies and prompts to optimize students’ intellectual, social, and personal development.
4. Utilizes effective developmental and age-appropriate instructional strategies.

**Standard 3**: The paraprofessional knows that students differ in their approaches to learning and assists in creating instructional opportunities that are adapted to students with diverse needs.

*The paraprofessional*

1. Knows about different methods that are used by teachers/providers to accommodate individual student learning needs.
2. Has an awareness of common technology devices used to accommodate diverse student learning needs.
3. Understands variations of beliefs, traditions, and values regarding diversities across cultures, and their effect on relationships among the student, the family, and school personnel.
4. Supports the teacher/provider in using understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

**Standard 4**: The paraprofessional understands and uses a variety of strategies to assist the teacher/provider.

*The paraprofessional*

1. Locates and utilizes a variety of resources as directed by the teacher/provider.
2. Uses a variety of techniques as modeled by the teacher/provider.

**Standard 5**: The paraprofessional understands the impact of the educational environment on student learning, self-motivation, and positive social interaction and assists in creating a positive learning environment.

*The paraprofessional*

1. Understands district guidelines for protecting the safety, health, and well being of students and staff.
2. Recognizes factors and situations that are likely to promote or diminish intrinsic motivation and knows how to help students become self-motivated.
3. Has a general understanding of positive behavioral supports.
4. Values the role of students in promoting one another's learning and recognizes the importance of peer relationships in establishing a climate of learning. The paraprofessional recognizes the value of intrinsic motivation to students' lifelong growth and learning.
5. Assists in establishing a positive climate in the classroom and participates in maintaining such a climate in the school as a whole.
6. Plans for smooth transitions between activities and environments.
7. Maintains a safe and effective learning environment for academic and nonacademic settings (e.g., lunchrooms, study halls, playgrounds, and buses).
8. Assists in modifying the learning environment to manage behavior.

**Standard 6:** The paraprofessional uses a variety of communication techniques, including verbal, nonverbal, multimedia, and technology in and beyond the classroom.

*The paraprofessional*

1. Is aware of effective communication styles.
2. Understands how diversity affects community in the classroom.
3. Has an understanding of verbal and nonverbal communication.
4. Has knowledge of the basic functions of multimedia technology (e.g., computer, video, recorder, etc.).
5. Has knowledge of basic computer software and functions, e-mail, and the Internet.

**Standard 7**: The paraprofessional assists the teacher/provider by implementing teacher-designed instructional plans.

*The paraprofessional*

1. Follows teacher/provider written and verbal plans, seeking clarification as needed.

**Standard 8:** The paraprofessional supports the teacher/provider in evaluating the intellectual, social, and physical development of the student.

*The paraprofessional*

1. Understands the differences and similarities in teacher or provider and paraprofessional roles and responsibilities in facilitating the learning process.
2. Understands the skills required by paraprofessionals to objectively gather info and report on the performances and achievements of individual children and youth.
3. Seeks to ensure successful learning for all students through collaborating with the classroom teacher in monitoring and adjusting teaching strategies or lessons as needed and responding to students’ interests and questions.
4. Constantly monitoring student behavior and intervenes in a positive manner.
5. Assists the teacher and students with the seamless operations of classroom routines and procedures.

**Standard 9:** The paraprofessional engages in continued professional improvement toward an identified goal.

*The paraprofessional*

1. Has an awareness of his or her professional strengths and needs.
2. Demonstrates knowledge about resources that provide opportunities for professional growth and is committed to seeking, developing, and continually refining practices.
3. Demonstrates commitment to ongoing reflection and learning as a means of improving job performance.
4. Values constructive feedback as a learning tool, and accepts feedback from the teacher/provider.
5. Participates in and documents progress in relevant professional development opportunities in order to demonstrate current, effective practices.

**Standard 10:** The paraprofessional interacts in a professional, effective manner with colleagues, parents, and other members of the community to support students' learning and well-being.

*The paraprofessional*

1. Understands the distinctions among the roles of all stakeholders in support of student learning.
2. Knows how to respond respectfully to a parent, the community, or another educator in conflict situations.
3. Knows and demonstrates professional conduct in accordance with policies, procedures, and laws with regard to the dignity, rights, privacy and responsibilities of parents, students, teachers, professionals, and schools.
4. Knows signs of and follows policy regarding emotional distress, child abuse, substance abuse, and neglect in students and follows the procedures to notify the appropriate authorities.
5. Effectively collaborates with team members.
6. Exercises objective and prudent judgment.