

School Paraprofessional Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

September 21, 2010

CAS

In attendance: Donna Morelli, CREC; William Walkauskas, SEIU, Marcia Cattanach, AFT Connecticut; Ellen Tyler, Region #13, Iris White, CSDE.

Minutes from May meeting were approved.

CREC Update:

- CREC will offer another train the trainers in November. Peg MacDonald is currently reviewing a new Teacher Supervision module (still working on the name since “supervision” can be upsetting to some folks). They presented SRBI during a full day in Manchester at the end of August. The new Health and Wellness and Reading modules are still under revision. CREC continues to get some requests from districts for training (Deep River, train the trainer for Old Saybrooke). CREC is currently developing an online training for the Basic module; the hope is to have the first one up in January.

SERC Update:

- SERC is having their annual conference on October 26th. Registration is low, but it is early. Thank you to Tony Maida for suggesting presenters. Our own council member, Annie MacDonald, will be presenting! SERC is in the process of printing the brochure. An email blast was recently sent out. Brochure was just posted online. SERC is planning to have a birthday cake and door prizes at the extended lunch to celebrate the 15th annual conference. CSDE is able to provide fee waivers to all priority school districts (Ansonia, Bridgeport, Bristol, Danbury, East Hartford, Hartford, Meriden, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Norwalk, Norwich, Stamford, Waterbury, and Windham).
- SERC and CAS have collaborated to offer a Supervision and Evaluation of Paraprofessionals: What Administrators Need to Know workshop on October 27th at CAS. Kent Gerlach, Professor, Pacific Lutheran University will be the presenter.
- SERC is offering two sessions, collaborative efforts with the Early Childhood Initiative and Focus on Autism Initiative.

CSDE Updates:

Perri and Iris have begun to revise and make additions to the CT Guidelines for the Training and Support of Paraprofessionals. They are waiting to possibly include ruling on the PJ Case.

District Contact for Paraprofessional Issues Survey

- 45 districts responded to the survey. Not much representation from the larger districts. It is hard to get participation without a mandate.

Connecticut Paraprofessional of the Year:

The council began to flesh out what a Paraprofessional of the Year Program would look like. We don't want it to be as extensive as the Teacher of the Year, but we do want it to be credible. To get started, Iris will email the district contacts and the union representative to ask if they would be interested in participating. The district and/or the union could nominate the paraprofessional. The concern was if we just ask the district contact we will not get a response and some paraprofessionals would not have a chance to participate.

A Paraprofessional of the Year would have the following attributes:

-advocate for their students

-be a team player

-seeking to improve their knowledge base (evidence of attendance at professional development)

-positive attitude

We would require nominees to respond to a brief prompt and explain why they became a paraprofessional and what keeps them in the profession. They should also submit letters of recommendation.

We still need to flesh out who would be on the panel to review applications.

Next meeting: Tuesday, November 16, 2010, 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. at CAS, Cheshire

Respectfully submitted by Iris White, CSDE.