

Ledyard Public Schools



Paraprofessional Handbook 2017-2018

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Table of Contents

Attendance.....	2
Child Abuse (Reporting of).....	2
Compensation (Pay Scale).....	2
Complaint Procedure.....	3
Disciplinary Procedure.....	4
Electronic Mail.....	4
Employment Policy (Paraprofessional).....	2
End-of-Year Notification.....	4
Evaluation.....	4
Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).....	4
Family and Medical Leave.....	4
Handbook Revisions.....	2
Job Descriptions.....	4
Job Postings.....	4
Lunch.....	5
Management Rights.....	5
Mission Statement.....	2
Paraprofessional Representatives.....	5
Paraprofessional Working as a Substitute.....	5
Payroll Procedures.....	5
Reduction in Force.....	6
Seniority.....	6
Sick Leave.....	6
Worker’s Compensation.....	6
Appendix A—Paraprofessional Leave Request.....	7
Appendix B—Paraprofessional Preference Sheet.....	8
Appendix C—Evaluation Form.....	9

MISSION STATEMENT

Ledyard Public Schools facilitates experiences for our community that cultivate a joy for learning, perseverance, independence, and social responsibility through innovative teaching practices.

PARAPROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT POLICY

This handbook neither implies nor establishes a contract between the Ledyard Public Schools district and the paraprofessionals. The contents of this handbook are intended as guidelines only. Nothing in this handbook should be construed as a guarantee of continued employment, but rather, employment in the Ledyard Public Schools is on an at-will basis. This means that the employment relationship may be terminated at any time by either the employee or the district for any reason not expressly prohibited by law. Any written or oral statement to the contrary by a supervisor or other agent of the district is invalid and should not be relied upon by any prospective or existing employee. All paraprofessionals must follow Board of Education policies.

HANDBOOK REVISIONS

If any changes are to be made to this handbook, paras will be notified before said changes are made and have the opportunity to discuss it with the Superintendent first.

ATTENDANCE

When paraprofessionals are hired to work in Ledyard Public Schools, the expectation is those individuals will work the 180 days school is in session for that year, plus designated professional development time that may be required. The Board understands that continuity of programs is important for learning; as a result, vacations should be taken during school holidays. When it is not possible, vacations may be taken with adequate written notice and approval of the principal. From time to time, family and other personal obligations may arise; paras will notify their principal of any days missed due to illness or personal leave. **(See Appendix A— Paraprofessional Leave Request).**

CHILD ABUSE (Reporting of)

Paraprofessionals must abide by the BoE Policy 5141.4 – Reporting of Child Abuse & Neglect.

COMPENSATION

Pay Scale	<u>2017-2018</u>
Step 1 – Year One	\$11.46 per hour
Step 2 – Year 2 to Year 4	\$13.92 per hour
Step 3 – Year 5 and 6	\$14.49 per hour
Step 4 – Year 7 and 8	\$15.34 per hour
Step 5 – Year 9 to Year 14	\$15.91 per hour
Step 6 – Year 15 forward	\$17.32 per hour

In 2017-2018 Paraprofessionals will receive \$.25 increase or step as noted above.

2018-2019

Year One - \$12.28 (hired after June 30, 2018)

*Steps will be eliminated for all new employees after June 30, 2018. Employees hired after June 30, 2018 will receive a standard rate for the 2018-2019 school year; increases to this rate may be considered by the Board of Education through the budget development and approval process.

**Employees hired prior to July 1, 2018 will be grandfathered at the wage effective for the 2018-2019 school year. Increases to this wage may be considered by the Board of Education through the budget development and approval process.

A Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) paraprofessional position shall be defined as 30 hours per week.

In 2017-2018, Paraprofessionals returning to Ledyard Public Schools after a break in employment will be placed on Step 1. Exceptions will be considered for those whose employment break was caused by an unavoidable exceptional circumstance. If a paraprofessional has continuous service in the Ledyard Public Schools as a LEARN employee for at least one year and then becomes an LPS employee, the person would be hired at Step 2.

The Superintendent, or designee, may determine salary based on, but not limited to: experience as a paraprofessional or teacher; educational background, skills, and certification; or the requirements of the paraprofessional position. For employees hired after June 30, 2017, a stipend may be added to the standard rate in certain specific instances of student need. This may include, but is not limited to, braille, sign, behavioral intervention, language facilitation, or autism spectrum disorders.

There is no compensation for delayed start and early dismissals. Paraprofessionals will be paid for actual time worked.

For the purposes of salary step placement, those paraprofessionals hired between July 1, 2017 to January 31, 2018 will be credited with one-full year in the step on the pay scale.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

The Board has authorized that paraprofessionals may be compensated for up to 10 hours each for professional development and training pertinent to their roles and responsibilities. These additional 10 hours must occur outside of the paraprofessionals regularly scheduled work hours. Such training may be held on professional development days, regional PD days, and before or after school hours.

The topics for professional development and training will be selected to meet the needs of the students and to address district and school goals. Examples of training and topics may include, but are not limited to: literacy instruction and intervention; mathematics instruction and intervention; behavior management strategies; physical and psychological management (PMT); or supporting technology acquisition.

School principals and central office administrators have the authority to require paraprofessional participation in professional development and training. School principals and central office administrators have the authority to determine the relevance of professional development topics to a paraprofessional's assigned roles and responsibilities.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

A complaint shall be defined as a disagreement between a paraprofessional and a teacher or administrator arising out of a specific section of this Paraprofessional Handbook.

If a paraprofessional has a complaint, the matter shall first be discussed with the building principal and/or administrator within five (5) days of the incident in an effort to resolve the matter informally. The principal and/or administrator will render a decision within five (5) days. "Days" herein shall mean days when the Board of Education office is open for business.

If the paraprofessional is not satisfied with the outcome of the informal procedure, he/she may submit a written request for a review by the Administrator of Human Resources within ten (10) days after the date of the informal decision. Within five (5) days of the receipt of such request, a conference with the complainant, a paraprofessional representative (if requested by the complainant), and the building principal and/or administrator shall be scheduled to take place. If

the matter is not resolved at the conference, the Administrator of Human Resources shall within five (5) days express a decision in writing with copies to the complainant and the building principal and/or administrator.

If the decision of the Administrator of Human Resources is not accepted by the complainant, he/she shall make a written request for a meeting with the Superintendent of Schools. Said meeting shall take place within five (5) days of the written request. A final decision shall be made by the Superintendent of Schools within five (5) days of the meeting and conveyed in writing to the complainant, the paraprofessional representative and the building principal and/or administrator.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

No paraprofessional shall be discharged or disciplined without just cause. Just cause for discipline or discharge shall include, but not be limited to, violation of Board of Education policy, improper behavior, incompetence, insubordination, making the paraprofessional's continued presence in his/her position unacceptable.

ELECTRONIC MAIL

Electronic mail (E-mail) service is provided to employees of Ledyard Public Schools for the purpose of conducting the business of the school system. The Ledyard Board of Education encourages the use of E-mail to share information, improve internal and external communications. All paraprofessionals will be assigned an e-mail account on the ledyard.net system. Please see your principal to request an e-mail address. The full policy 4118.4/4218.4 is available online at http://ledyard.ss7.sharpschool.com/board_of_education/BOEPolicyManual.

END-OF-YEAR NOTIFICATION

Near the end of each academic year, paras will be informed of any openings and be able to express preferred assignments and school solely for the purpose of placement and will be given due consideration during the assignment process. A preference does not guarantee a particular assignment or school (Appendix B). Due to funding and staffing uncertainty, non-binding letters will be prepared for all paraprofessionals who are scheduled to return in the fall prior to the end of the school year. Specific hours and assignments will be provided shortly before school begins. If the district administrator does not anticipate a paraprofessional returning due to performance or reduction in force, the paraprofessional will be notified at the end of the school year.

EVALUATION

Paraprofessionals will be evaluated annually at the end of each school year. (See Appendix C)

FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Paraprofessionals are required to comply with the BoE Policy 5125 – Student Records; Confidentiality.

Parents entrust our staff with their most precious possession, their children. While at school, parents assume and deserve the right of privacy as to the academic performance and demeanor of their children. Information about students "good", "bad" or "neutral", is to be considered confidential. Employees responsible for breaches in the confidentiality ethic will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Paraprofessionals will be eligible for leave in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, as amended.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Job descriptions are available in the school offices and on-line at Ledyard.net.

JOB POSTINGS

Anticipated openings for paraprofessionals will be advertised via the district's e-mail system and posted in staff lounges. Paraprofessionals interested in applying for these positions should contact the principal in the school where the vacancy occurs.

LUNCH

Paraprofessionals, based on their work schedule, may be provided an unpaid one-half hour lunch break; paras who supervise classroom lunches will be paid for that time.

MANAGEMENT RIGHTS

The rights, powers, and authority held by the Board of Education over the complete operations, practices, procedures, and regulations with respect to its employees and the operation of the Ledyard Public Schools shall remain solely and exclusively in the Board, except as otherwise prohibited by law, including, but not limited to, the following:

- to direct and control its employees;
- to determine the standards of services to be offered by its employees;
- to determine the standards of selection for its employees;
- to take disciplinary action;
- to assign, transfer or promote its employees;
- to relieve its employees from duty because of lack of work or other legitimate reasons;
- to issue rules, policies, and regulations including those affecting working conditions and from time to time change them and enforce them;
- to maintain the efficiency of operations;
- to determine work schedules;
- to determine the methods, means and personnel by which the Board's operations are to be conducted;
- to determine employees' places of work;
- to establish jobs and transfer employees between buildings
- to exercise complete control and discretion over the Board's organization, facilities and technology of performing its work,
- to evaluate its employees;
- and to fulfill all of its legal responsibilities.

PARAPROFESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Each school in the district will provide a paraprofessional representative to meet with the Superintendent on a regular basis as determined by mutual agreement to discuss concerns and issues relevant to paraprofessional employment.

Paraprofessionals should communicate to their building representative any issues that they wish to be included in the meetings with the Superintendent and/or Designee.

Paraprofessionals will share building-level concerns with school administrators.

Paraprofessional representatives are expected to meet with their building principal every other month.

PARAPROFESSIONAL WORKING AS A SUBSTITUTE

Paraprofessionals who agree to serve as a substitute teacher will be paid per day at the LPS current rate of pay for regular substitute teachers. If a paraprofessional is asked to serve as a substitute teacher and his/her rate of pay is higher as a paraprofessional, the higher rate will be paid. Paraprofessionals can refuse to accept the sub position without any ramifications.

PAYROLL PROCEDURES

Paraprofessionals are expected to fill out a time sheet using the required method and submit it per the designated procedure, typically the school secretary. Time sheets are then forwarded to the district's payroll and benefits coordinator in Central Office. Any questions regarding pay should be addressed to the payroll and benefits coordinator.

Employees shall receive pay stub information in a paperless electronic format. Direct deposit is required.

REDUCTION IN FORCE

If the Board determines that a Reduction in Force is needed, qualifications and performance shall be the factors that will be used in determining staff members who would be reduced. If qualifications and performance are equal, seniority shall be the determining factor.

SENIORITY

Unless otherwise abridged or modified in this handbook, qualifications and performance shall be the factors that will be used in determining staff members who would be transferred or fill a vacancy. If qualifications and performance are equal, seniority shall be the determining factor. Paras will be awarded one year of seniority for each year worked in Ledyard Public Schools. For paras hired for a portion of a year, one year seniority will be granted if the length of service is 92 days or more.

An employee's seniority shall be lost if:

- (a) the staff member is discharged for just cause;
- (b) the staff member quits without notice;
- (c) the staff member fails to return to work within two (2) business days after being notified of recall;
- (d) the staff member is laid off for more than twenty-four (24) months

SICK LEAVE

Paraprofessionals shall receive five (5) sick days during the student school year (30 hours annually for 1 FTE or prorated for those less than 1 FTE) to a total accumulated maximum of 20 days. Paid sick days will be earned at one-half sick day per month (September – June) to a total of 5 per year. Sick pay is calculated on the actual hours scheduled on the day when the paraprofessional calls out sick.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION

In the event a para is injured while in the performance of his/her duties, he/she is eligible for Worker's Compensation per state statute.

Appendix A

PARAPROFESSIONAL LEAVE REQUEST

Name _____ Date(s) Absent _____

Reason _____

Para's Signature _____ Date Submitted _____

Plan for Coverage: Fill in coverage needed and please be sure to include any lunch, recess, and dismissal coverage.

7:30 – 8 a.m.	
8 – 8:30 a.m.	
8:30 - 9 a.m.	
9 – 9:30 a.m.	
9:30 – 10 a.m.	
10 – 10:30 a.m.	
10:30 – 11 a.m.	
11 – 11:30 a.m.	
11:30 – 12 noon	
12 – 12:30 p.m.	
12:30 – 1 p.m.	
1 – 1:30 p.m.	
1:30 – 2 p.m.	
2 – 2:30 p.m.	
2:30. – 3 p.m.	
Dismissal	

Appendix B

Paraprofessional Preference Sheet

TO:
FROM:
DATE:

Pending the approval of next year's budget, we will be developing the schedules for paraprofessionals, and we would appreciate your input. At this point, we do not anticipate many significant changes to paraprofessional positions for the next school year; however, nothing will be finalized until the budget is passed.

Also, please understand that this notice is an attempt to gather information. It does not guarantee that you will get the positions or roles that you prefer. However, your responses will be given serious consideration in August as we develop our new paraprofessional schedule for the school year. Please return this paper to your school office by _____.

_____ Yes, I plan to return in the _____ school year.

_____ No, I am not planning on returning for the _____ school year.

Please list preferred position/school:

Signature

Date

Appendix C

LPS Paraprofessional Performance Evaluation School Year _____

Name _____ Date _____

Para Assignment _____ Evaluator _____

	1 Poor	2 Satisfactory	3 Good	4 Excellent
Job Knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attendance/Punctuality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Initiative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professionalism (<i>confidentiality, deportment, rapport</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dependability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL RATING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY SUPERVISOR (GOALS, SUGGESTIONS FOR TRAINING)	
Signature of Evaluator _____	Date _____
PARAPROFESSIONAL RESPONSE	
VERIFICATION OF REVIEW	
<i>Signing this form confirms that you have discussed this review in detail with your supervisor. Signing this form does not necessarily indicate that you agree with this evaluation.</i>	
Employee Signature _____	Date _____