

Ledyard Public Schools  
Paraprofessional Handbook  
2019-2020



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## **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 is intended to serve 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 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, it is agreed that para representatives 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 that 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**

Paraprofessionals hired in the 2018-2019 school year, who have completed at least 4 full months of continuous service at the conclusion of the school year, will receive \$13.75. Those paraprofessionals who have less than 4 full months of continuous service in 2018-2019, will receive the standard rate for the 2019-2020 school year. Paraprofessionals not listed above will receive a \$.75 per hour increase.

### **2019-2020**

Standard Rate - \$13.00

- Increases to this rate 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.

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

Paraprofessionals returning to Ledyard Public Schools after a break in employment will be rehired at the standard rate for the current school year. Paraprofessionals who have retired from Ledyard Public Schools with a minimum of 10 years of consecutive service, may work as a substitute paraprofessional and will receive the last hourly rate earned before retirement.

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. 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.

### **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 (PD) 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 review by the Administrator of Human Resources within ten (10) days from the date of the informal decision. Within five (5) days of the receipt of such request, a conference shall be scheduled with the complainant, a paraprofessional representative (if requested by the complainant), and the building principal and/or administrator. 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 to 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, attendance, improper behavior, incompetence, insubordination and/or other issues 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 school district business. The Ledyard Board of Education encourages the use of E-mail to share information, and 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](http://ledyard.ss7.sharpschool.com/board_of_education/BOEPolicyManual).

### **END-OF-THE-YEAR NOTIFICATION**

Near the end of each academic year, paras will be informed of district openings and may express preferred schools and assignments, solely for the purpose of placement, and will be given due consideration during the assignment process for placement. 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 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 children and they deserve the right of privacy regarding the academic performance and demeanor of their children while in our care. Information about students "good", "bad" or "neutral", is to be considered confidential at all times. 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 online at Ledyard.net.

## **JOB POSTINGS**

Anticipated openings for paraprofessionals will be advertised internally via the district's email system. Paraprofessional's interested in applying for these positions should contact the principal in the school where the vacancy occurs.

## **LUNCH**

Paraprofessionals who work more than 4.5 hours per day will take an unpaid, half-hour lunch break; paras who are assigned to supervise classroom lunches during the half-hour lunch break will be paid for that time. In the event of a 2-hour delayed school opening, paraprofessionals will not be required to take an unpaid lunch period.

## **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 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 are qualified and 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 substitute position without any ramifications.

### **PAYROLL PROCEDURE**

Paraprofessionals are expected to fill out a time record using the required method and submit it per the designated procedure. Time is 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 of all district employees.

### **REDUCTION IN WORKFORCE**

If the Board determines that a Reduction in Force is needed, qualifications and performance shall be the factors determining the 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 to determine staff members who may be transferred or may 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) for a total accumulated maximum of 20 days. Paid sick days will be earned at one-half sick day per month (September - June for 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 benefits per state statute.

### **EDUCATION BENEFIT**

Paraprofessionals with 6 months or more of service shall be eligible for reimbursement for up to three (3) courses per year, at a maximum of \$500 per course, provided that such course(s) are approved in advance by the Superintendent and provide benefit to the Ledyard Public Schools. Paraprofessionals who end employment within six (6) months from date of reimbursement must repay 50% of the reimbursement and agree it shall be deducted from the last paycheck.



**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 - 8:00 a.m.	
8:00 - 8:30 a.m.	
8:30 - 9:00 a.m.	
9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	
9:30 - 10:00 a.m.	
10:00 - 10:30 a.m.	
10:30 - 11:00 a.m.	
11:00 -11:30 a.m.	
11:30 - 12:00 noon	
12:00 - 12:30 p.m.	
12:30 - 1:00 p.m.	
1:00 - 1:30 p.m.	
1:30 - 2:00 p.m.	
2:00 - 2:30 p.m.	
2:30 - 3:00 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.

Please understand this notice is an attempt to gather information. It does not guarantee 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 form to your school office no later than \_\_\_\_\_.

Yes, I plan to return for the \_\_\_\_\_ school year.

No, I do not plan to return for the \_\_\_\_\_ school year.

Please list preferred position/school:

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**APPENDIX C**

Paraprofessional Performance Evaluation

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Para Assignment \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_

School Year \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

