

# Paraprofessional Handbook

## East Lyme Public Schools



---

*EAST LYME PUBLIC SCHOOLS WILL INSPIRE,  
ENGAGE, AND EDUCATE EACH STUDENT TO  
BECOME A CONTRIBUTING CITIZEN AND A  
RESPONSIBLE, INDEPENDENT, AND CRITICAL  
THINKER*

---

---

## PREFACE

---

This manual has been created with input from paraprofessionals, teachers, administrators, and Central Office staff to provide information and resources to all paraprofessionals. The District's procedures, policies, and performance expectations are also provided to assist all staff in working effectively in the East Lyme Public Schools.

This manual is a result of the District's overall efforts to improve the quality of education provided to our students by improving the skills and abilities of the paraprofessional staff. The manual was developed with input from the following District staff:

Amy Bogart, Teaching Assistant, Lillie B. Haynes Elementary

Randy Buzzelli, Teaching Assistant, East Lyme Middle

Kimberly Davis, Director of Student Services

Betsy Farrugia, Instructional Assistant, East Lyme High School

Lori Shed-Nickerson, Instructional Assistant, Flanders Elementary

Maureen Werner, Instructional Assistant, Niantic Center School

*It is the policy of the East Lyme Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, disability, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, in any of its educational activities or employment policies.*

# Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to offer guidance for a collaborative and cohesive effort between the paraprofessionals, teachers and school officials in providing a nurturing environment that will allow us to maximize our combined efforts in fostering a quality education for our students. Our goal is to support the development of each child so that they may become as independent as possible as adults.

The Connecticut State Department of Education provides the following definition of a paraprofessional:

*A paraeducator is an employee who assists teachers and/or other professional educators or therapists in the delivery of instructional and related services to students. The paraeducator works under the direct supervision of the teacher or other certified or licensed professional. The ultimate responsibility for the design, implementation and evaluation of instructional programs, including assessment of student progress, is a collaborative effort of certified and licensed staff.*

You are an important member of an educational team. It is of utmost importance that the paraprofessionals be pro-active and anticipatory in maintaining the safety, well-being, respect, and dignity of each student. At the same time, paraprofessionals should demonstrate an awareness and sensitivity for each student's responsibilities in learning and in his/her interaction with adults and other students.

The East Lyme Public Schools recognize the importance of mature judgment and decision-making in this critical area of appraising students' interactions. This is an important part of your role in helping to provide an education for students enrolled in East Lyme Public Schools.

This manual is designed to help you understand the needs of students with disabilities, your role in the school setting and the district's expectations for you.

# School Information

## East Lyme Public Schools

<b>Flanders Elementary School</b> 167 Boston Post Road, East Lyme, CT 06333 <b>Principal:</b> Danielle Schoman	860-739-8475
<b>Lillie B. Haynes Elementary School &amp; Integrated Preschool</b> 29 Society Rd., Niantic, CT 06357 <b>Principal:</b> Melissa DeLoreto	860-739-2922
<b>Niantic Center Elementary School</b> 7 West Main Street, Niantic, CT 06357 <b>Principal:</b> Jeff Provost	860-739-3961
<b>East Lyme Middle School</b> 31 Society Road, Niantic, CT 06357 <b>Principal:</b> Jason Bitgood <b>Assistant Principal:</b> Claudine Kelly & OPEN	860-739-4491
<b>East Lyme High School</b> 30 Chesterfield Road, East Lyme, CT 06333 <b>Principal:</b> Debarh Roselli-Kelly <b>Assistant Principals:</b> Henry Kydd & OPEN	860-739-6946
<b>Coastal Connections School</b> 315 Flanders Road, East Lyme, CT 06333 <b>Assistant Principal:</b> Abby Demars	860-691-4424
<b>Abilities In Motion</b> 31 Society Road, Niantic, CT 06357 <b>Program Facilitator:</b> Joe Dykas	860-691-5538

# Central Office

165 Boston Post Road, East Lyme, CT 06333

P.O. Box 220, East Lyme, CT 06333

Phone: 860-739-3966

FAX: 860-739-1215

Jeffrey Newton	Superintendent of Schools
Open	Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Kimberly Davis	Director of Student Services
Jennifer VanDusen	Special Education Coordinator (grades PreK-6)
Cheryl Felix	Special Education Coordinator (grades 7-12)
Maryanna Stevens	Director of Finance, Marketing, and Growth Management
Stacey Muscarella	Information Technology Analyst
Christine Kluge	Human Resources
Chris Olsen	Safety & Security Director
Chris Urban	Food Services Director
Pat Lannon	Information & Technology Specialist
Christian Lund	Facilities Supervisor

## Board of Education

Timothy Hagen	John Kleinhaus	Barry Sheckley
Candice Carlson	William Derry	Leigh Gianakos
Jaime Barr Shelburn	Eric Bauman	Jill Carini
Catherine Steel		

## School Hours

Elementary Schools:	9:05 am - 3:35 pm
Middle School:	8:30am - 2:45 pm
High School:	7:30 am - 2:10 pm
Integrated Preschool (3 yr. old class)	8:30 am - 11:30 am
Integrated Preschool (4 yr. old class)	8:30 am - 1:30 pm
Wednesdays	9:00 am -11:30 am

## Early Dismissals

Elementary Schools:	9:05 am - 12:35 pm
Middle School:	8:30 am - 11:45 pm
High School:	7:30 am - 11:00 pm
Integrated Preschool	8:30 am - 11:30 am

*Please note that a lunch break is not required on an early closing day.*

*\*Please note that a lunch break is not required on an early closing day at the High School and Middle School levels; a lunch break is added into the schedule for the Elementary Schools.*

## District Website

*For more specific information about paraprofessionals in East Lyme, go to the district website [www.eastlymeschools.org](http://www.eastlymeschools.org). Go to the drop-down menu under Departments. Click on Student Services. There you will find links for other resources, conferences and training opportunities, and a calendar. District policies can also be accessed via the website.*

# Section 1

## At-a-Glance Information

### Orientation

(to be completed by building administrator or designee)

- Review of Handbook
- Orientation to the building, program, & students

### Attendance

Paraprofessionals are expected to be at work on time daily. Regular, consistent daily attendance and punctuality is essential to enable students to make adequate progress. In the event of an absence, it is the paraprofessional's responsibility to enter the absence into Frontline Absence Management (AESOP) with as much notice as possible. In the event a paraprofessional has excessive absences, disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, may occur.

### Time Sheets

Paraprofessional attendance is recorded via spreadsheets maintained by the building administrator Administrative Assistant. If a paraprofessional is approved to work additional hours for a given reason, a separate time sheet must be filled out. Time sheets are generally located in the main office at each school building as well as within the online public folder.

Employees are responsible for documenting time/days taken off via Aesop.

Employees are prohibited from entering time data for other employees. Entering another employee's time, or any other form of time sheet fraud will result in termination of employment.

All full time hourly employees have a scheduled break for lunch. Case managers and building administrators should develop a schedule that

ensures the Paraprofessional's lunch break is available each day. This includes arranging alternate coverage for students in some cases.

## Food Services

Paraprofessionals may order lunch at the building to which they are assigned.

## Electronic Communication Devices

East Lyme Board of Education Policy 4218.51; Regulation 4218.51

All staff are required to sign-off on the Appropriate Use of Technology policy.

Cell phone use, inclusive of text messaging, social media and phone capabilities by staff is limited to times when staff is not directly supervising students. Students must have our undivided attention at all times.

*For email and other social media information refer to Board Policy and Regulations 4219.51 and 6141.321.*

## Dress Code

Staff members are expected to maintain a personal appearance appropriate to the school setting. The daily responsibilities of paraprofessionals may require supervision of students outside. Casual attire is permitted, but please note that all staff members are discouraged from wearing flip flops, ripped/torn jeans, tank tops and dangling jewelry for safety reasons.

## Arrival and Dismissal

Building administrators may assign paraprofessionals to assist students upon arrival and dismissal outside of school hours on an as needed basis.



# Weather Emergencies

Schools will be closed when weather conditions make it hazardous to transport children to the assigned school. Notice of such closing will be announced by:

- Infinite Campus Messenger
- Local TV and Radio
- ELPS Website

Please listen to the radio or television and check your messages. Do not call the school, Central Office, police or radio stations. Note: It is important that your contact number be kept up-to-date with your school so that you receive all messages.

It is possible that school openings will be delayed 2 hours when it appears that conditions will improve. Tune into any of the following for this information:

- WFSB TV – 3
- WTNH TV – 8
- WVIT TV – 30
- 97.7 FM or 1310 AM
- 100.9 FM or 1510 AM
- 102.3 FM or 980 AM
- 104.7 FM
- 103 FM
- 105 FM (Q105)

# Emergency Drills/Operations Plan

*Building principals will provide specific information related to each school campus.*

**Fire Drill:** Fire drills and lockdown drills are conducted routinely during the school year. During a fire drill, students must pass quickly and silently in a single file to the nearest exit as directed by the teacher and remain with their class. Directions for this procedure will be found in each classroom near the exit door. After the drill, students will return to their classes at the direction of the teacher.

**Lockdown Drill:** For a drill or an actual emergency, a lockdown may be initiated. When a lockdown is announced, students and school personnel shall go to the nearest classroom or remain in another appropriate location until the building administrator or designee announces the lockdown is over. Directions for lockdown procedures are posted near the exit door in all classrooms.

## **Emergency Operations Plan (*hot pink flipchart*)**

The East Lyme Public Schools Emergency Operations plan is a bright pink flipchart that should be located in each classroom in all of our buildings. The purpose of the flipchart is to provide quick and easy to understand information for adults in a variety of emergency situations.

Please take time to locate this resource in the building where you report.

## **Reporting an Accident/Injury**

If an accident does occur, see the School Nurse immediately. The Nurse may recommend medical treatment, but the employee will ultimately decide to seek medical treatment. An employee injury/incident report must be completed by you and/or your building administrator within 24 hours.

## Section 2

# Role & Responsibilities of the Paraprofessional

Connecticut State Department of Education defines a paraprofessional as: *An employee who assists teachers and/or other professional educators or therapists in the delivery of instructional and related services to students. The paraprofessional works under the direct supervision of a teacher or other certified or licensed professional. The ultimate responsibility for the design, implementation, and evaluation of instructional programs, including assessment of student progress, is the collaborative effort of certified and licensed staff.*

According to federal guidance: *A paraprofessional works under the direct supervision of a teacher if (1) the teacher prepares the lessons and plans the instructional support activities the paraprofessional carries out, and evaluates the achievement of students with whom the paraprofessional is working, and (2) the paraprofessional works in close and frequent proximity with the teacher.*

Within East Lyme, several types of paraprofessionals are employed:

**Job Coach:** A Job Coach plays a key role in vocational exploration. Knowing the students, his/her strengths, interests and needs; establishing relationships based on trust, mutual respect and effective communication; ensuring a safe environment; and modeling appropriate skills and positive behaviors, fosters student independence, responsibility and self-advocacy, carry out activities and data collection related to employment and independent living skills. The job coach must have the ability to work effectively and maintain relationships with students, school personnel, employers, co-workers and families under the direction of the case manager.

**Behavior Technician:** A Registered Behavior Technician implements behavior plans, collects data and monitors the behavior support plans as directed by the BCBA or special education case manager. The Behavior Technician provides support using behavior management techniques and intervention strategies to reduce behaviors that interfere with the learning process. The Registered Behavior Technician maintains their credential with the Board Analyst Certification Board.

**Teaching Assistant:** A teaching assistant instructs students individually or in small groups under the direction and supervision of a certified teacher. Plans lessons, provides instruction, plans individual instruction per the student's instructional plan in collaboration with the classroom teacher. Implements lesson plans independently or in collaboration with the certified teacher.

**Instructional Assistant:** An instructional assistant is responsible for providing assistance to instructional programs by assisting the teacher in achieving educational objectives by working with individual students or small groups to help them achieve the skill levels of their IEP or the class as a whole. The instructional aide assists the teacher in providing a well-organized, smoothly functioning environment in which students can take full advantage of the instructional program and available resource materials.

**Lunch/Recess Assistant:** A lunch/recess assistant supervises students during lunch, recess, and other times as necessary under the supervision of the building principal or his/her designee.

## Responsibilities of the Paraprofessional

According to the State Educational Resource Center (SERC) and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE, 2008), the responsibilities of a paraprofessional include six primary areas:

1. Assisting teachers/providers **with building and maintaining effective instructional teams**
  - Ability to follow teacher/provider instructions and carry out team decisions
  - Ability to interact constructively with and demonstrate respect for learners, families and other school personnel.
  - Ability to contribute relevant, objective information to teachers/providers to facilitate planning, problem solving and decision making
  - Ability to participate in program planning team meetings, when required by district policies and procedures
2. Assisting teachers/providers with **maintaining learner-centered supportive environments**
  - Ability to implement proactive behavior and learning strategies developed by teachers/providers that maintain supportive learning environments.

- Ability to follow and use prescribed district policies to ensure the safety, health and well-being of learners and staff
  - Ability to ensure universal health precautions for preventing illnesses and infections and proper body mechanics for lifting learners and heavy objects
  - Ability to implement procedures or plans for managing individual student behavior.
3. Supporting teachers/providers with **planning and organizing learning experiences**
- Ability to use computers to prepare learning resources and materials
  - Ability to assist teachers/providers with modifying learning materials and activities to meet the needs of individuals with different ability levels, learning styles or language backgrounds
  - Ability to prepare and use adaptive equipment and assistive technology prescribed by teachers/providers and other professional staff
  - Ability to objectively gather and report information about learner's performance and interactions to assist the teacher/provider in the planning process.
4. Assisting teachers/providers with **engaging students in learning and assisting in instruction**
- Ability to monitor and assist children and youth in other learning environments (e.g., libraries, computer labs, lunchrooms, playgrounds, and buses).
  - Ability to use teacher developed positive behavioral strategies and procedures that facilitate the learning of children and youth with challenging behaviors
  - Ability to maintain effective relationships with all learners
  - Ability to follow and carry out teacher plans for strengthening academic skills for school-age learners
  - Ability to use teacher developed learning strategies for English language learners
  - Ability to carry out teacher plans in community-based vocational and transitional programs for students entering the workforce.
  - Ability to assist students with activities as designed and identified by the physical and occupational therapists and speech language pathologists.

5. Assisting teachers/providers with **assessing learners' needs, progress and achievements**

- Assist in data collection, as designed by certified professionals
- Ability to assist with student modifications for classroom assignments/activities and assessments as outlined by the case manager or classroom teacher.
- Ability to assist teachers/providers in conducting functional behavior analysis
- Ability to assist teachers/providers in maintaining the learner records, as required by the district/state.

6. Meeting **standards of professional or ethical conduct**

- Ability to perform assigned tasks under the supervision of teachers/providers in a manner consistent with professional and ethical guidelines established by the state or district
- Willingness to participate in professional and career development opportunities
- Ability to confer with principals/administrators and supervising teacher/providers to identify strengths and professional development needs

## Sample Tasks Often Assigned to a Paraprofessional

### School Environment

- o Provide 1:1 or group academic, motor or behavioral support
- o Assist with classroom management, such as organizing instructional materials
- o Collect and record data
- o Participate in professional development
- o Assist in maintaining the daily classroom routine
- o Correct student work when requested
- o Assist in establishing and maintaining a clean and safe environment
- o Perform supervision and support during library/media activities/periods

### Instruction

- o Adhere to behavior intervention plans (BIPs) and implement as written
- o Reinforce skills with small groups and/or individual students
- o Assist individual students with classroom assignments, reading, projects, note taking, research as directed by the teacher or in the student's IEP

- o Assist students with physical, occupational and/or speech and language therapies when indicated and appropriate
- o Supervise and assist students with computer work
- o Assist students with organizational strategies
- o Keep the classroom and special education teachers informed of changes in academics and/or behavior

### **Supervision**

- o Supervise students when arriving to and/or departing from school or classes
- o Escort students when necessary
- o Supervise and assist students at assemblies, lunch, recess, snack time, passing, during specials, etc.
- o Enforce school and classroom rules as directed by the teacher

### **Other Responsibilities**

- o Assist in other special education/general education classrooms as needed
- o Promote student self-advocacy and independence at all times
- o Facilitate appropriate interactions among students
- o Assist students in managing their behaviors
- o Provide support to students during extracurricular activities as requested and instructed
- o Stay advised of emergency evacuation and related procedures
- o Follow the procedures for using assistive technology effectively
- o Perform duties as directed by the teacher or administrator

## **Things Every Paraprofessional Should Know**

Your school and/or supervising teacher should provide you with the following information. If you do not receive it, please request it.

- ❖ Your daily schedule
- ❖ The building and classroom emergency procedures
- ❖ The school rules, including protocols for duties to which you may be assigned, and disciplinary procedures
- ❖ Special health concerns of any students with whom you may be working
- ❖ Who you should meet with to discuss any problems or concerns with students or staff
- ❖ Your role in the event the teacher is absent
- ❖ Knowledge of individual/classroom behavior management plans
- ❖ Confidentiality must be maintained at all times, and how that is expected to look
- ❖ Relevant sections of the students Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

# Helpful Tips

## Instructional Tips

- Break multi-step directions into smaller tasks (chunking)
- “do numbers 1 -5, then I’ll check back with you”
- Cover the bottom half of the page until the student completes the top half
- Highlight key words or phrases
- Encourage independence
- Avoid over prompting students and over supporting students
- Do not answer questions for the student. Never do for a student what he/she can do for him/herself
- You may be asked to take notes or to assist a student with written assignments; however, it is not good for the student to become overly reliant on the adult.

## Behavioral/Social Emotional

- Help the student name the feeling: frustrated, disappointed, angry
- Ask the student for a possible solution
- Be patient, offer suggestions
- Help the student process the solution and outcome
- Establish limits/expectations
- State and model appropriate behaviors
- Remind students of desired behavior before the behavior occurs (be proactive)
- Ignore negative behaviors whenever possible and reinforce the more appropriate behaviors when they occur
- Notice, describe and reinforce positive, appropriate behaviors
- Describe the behavior, not the student

## Following Directions

- Be sure you have the attention of the student
- Try to give directions just once to increase attention of students
- Pair oral directions with visuals or visual directions with oral
- Provide a model and/or written directions
- Use visual cues – green dot = start, red dot = stop
- Encourage students to read directions aloud or repeat them to you



### Attention/Concentration

- Practice and model on task behavior
- Change, shorten or alternate tasks to reduce fatigue, boredom
- Cue the student verbally or non-verbally
- Use physical proximity
- Frequent check-ins with student
- Use reasonable, agreed upon time lines/limits for work completion
- Help the student develop self-monitoring techniques

### Enhancing Socialization

- Involve student in activities
- Support peers with suggestions for involving interactions in socially appropriate ways
- Do not hover over or sit with the student, if possible. This can have a large negative impact on their social interactions with peers.

### Rules, Routines, and Expectations

- Classroom routines can be very helpful for students who lack internal structure.
- Clear and consistent expectations make for predictable environments.
- Students may need a reminder of the posted rules explained to them in a clear and concise manner.
- Older students who change classes throughout the day may need reminders as the rules may vary slightly from one class to the next.

### General Strategies

- Give choices when appropriate
- Discuss behaviors privately at the time of the behavior
- State the positive action (say “we walk in the hallway” instead of “stop running”)
- Utilize communication systems as designed by staff
- Take time to reorganize throughout the day
- Model good organizational skill

### Guidelines for Paraprofessionals in the General Education Classroom

- When attending general education class, arrive promptly and remain there for the duration of the class or until no longer needed in that setting.

- Remind students to bring any needed materials such as books, notebooks, pencil, pen, paper, etc.
- Monitor student behavior at all times. Make sure students understand rules and directions. Follow protocol for disciplinary referrals.
- Act as a liaison between the general education teacher and the case manager.
- Communicate with the special education teacher regarding assignments, projects or any difficulties the student may be experiencing.
- Assist students with work completion as appropriate.
- Provide assistance to all students under the direction of the classroom teacher to avoid singling out the special needs students.
- Assist and facilitate appropriate peer interactions and encourage student participation in all classroom activities.
- Be familiar with the accommodations/modifications required for students.

➤ Techniques for Working with Challenging Students

Students can have challenging and difficult behaviors, but they are manageable if you plan ahead. If you need help with a student, share your concerns with the teacher. Students with a history of challenging behaviors should have a Behavior Intervention Plan or BIP in place. It is imperative that you follow the BIP as written. You may also be required to collect specific behavioral data on the student. You should always remain calm and not overreact to student behaviors. Focus on what the student should be doing instead of what he/she should not be doing, for example, “We keep our hands to ourselves” instead of “don’t shove on the playground”.

Follow the plans consistently and with fidelity to insure student success.

<u>What to Do</u>	<u>What to Avoid</u>
Show respect	Physical force
Build rapport	Losing your temper
Be calm	Arguing with students
Be patient	Making threats
Be consistent	Taking things personally
Look for the positive	Ridicule, embarrassment
Keep your sense of humor	Using sarcasm

# Lunch & Recess Duty

## Cafeteria Guidelines

(Each building may have specific systems. These are general tips.)

- Please be punctual for your duty start time.
- All information about individual students is confidential.
- Remind students to use an indoor voice.
- Adults MUST always be circulating among the students. Stay on opposite sides of the cafeteria. (Do not spend too much time with any students. This takes away from supervision of other students.)
- As you circulate please look around and keep your eyes and ears open. You can often times prevent issues by being proactive and by proximity.
- If you see a student sitting alone encourage them to go and sit with their peers.
- We can encourage students to eat their lunch however, we walk a fine line in this area. Parents have a right to pack lunches for their children and we should not make our judgments known. Therefore, encourage students to eat their lunch but do not consequence them if they choose not to eat.
- Keep a close eye on the clock. Stick to the scheduled lunch times.
- Students need routine and consistency to help them make positive behavioral choices.
- Since teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators and students are all people, assume that dilemmas will arise from time to time. When a dilemma or concern develops, talk first with the person responsible for the decision or action. If a student needs a consequence, please have the consequence be logical. For example, if a student is not respecting their peers around them then they can move to a quiet seat. If a student continues to use an outside voice then they can be moved to a place where there is no one to talk with.
- **Positive Reinforcement**—Your attitude and actions in the lunchroom can affect how children feel about school and about themselves. Be authoritative, but gentle, constructive and positive. When speaking to the entire cafeteria project your voice.

## Recess Guidelines

(Each building may have specific systems. These are general tips.)

- Be sure a walkie talkie and a fob are with one of the assigned adults.
- Know the plan for emergency procedures; lock down; fire, outdoor emergency
- Please be punctual for your duty start time.
- All information about individual students is confidential.

- Monitor recess for safe play. While supervising recess, think of your role as a “lifeguard.” Keep alert at all times – attempt to anticipate potential issues.
- Adults **MUST** always be circulating among the students. Stay on opposite sides of the playground. (Do not spend too much time with any students. This takes away from supervision of other students.)
- As you circulate please look around and keep your eyes and ears open. You can often times prevent issues by being proactive and by proximity
- If you see a student sitting alone encourage them to go and play with their peers.
- Encourage and coach conflict resolution steps when students disagree.
- With Primary Grades - Please lead students to play age appropriate games. Many students at this age find it difficult to initiate games on their own and do not know the rules of many games. Your support will enhance their playtime!
- With ball games (primarily older students) – It is extremely helpful for someone to station themselves very close for ball games such as, soccer, basketball, and kickball. Our students can become quite competitive and also have difficulty interpreting the set rules in a fair manner. Student often need to be reminded to use an appropriate level of competitive spirit which is consistent with recess.
- Students need routine and consistency to help them make positive behavioral choices.
- This is a time for fun and play!
- Be aware of the time. With our rolling schedule, it is critical that we are mindful of the time. Blow your whistle 2 minutes before the end of recess to have students line up.
- Once students are lined up get them moving as quickly as possible. The more idle time the more talking will ensue. Students do not need to be silent to enter the building. Quiet them down and then get moving into the building. Once they are moving the noise level will inherently decrease.
- Since teachers, aides, administrators and students are all people, assume that dilemmas will arise from time to time. When a dilemma or concern develops, talk first with the person responsible for the decision or action. If a student needs a consequence, please have the consequence be logical. For example, if a student is not respecting their peers around them then they can take a break or go find something else to play.
- **Positive Reinforcement**—Your attitude and actions at recess can affect how children feel about school and about themselves. Be authoritative, but gentle, constructive and positive.

### Loss of Recess as Disciplinary Consequence

Except as provided below, school employees may NOT prevent a student in elementary school from participating in recess or in other sustained opportunities for physical activity during classroom learning as a form of discipline. Recess and other physically active learning opportunities may include movement-oriented learning activities in the academic environment, physical activity breaks, and regularly scheduled school wide routines and events that engage students in physical activity that is the time devoted each day (at least 20 minutes) to physical exercise in the District's elementary schools. Loss of recess or other physically active learning opportunities as a form of discipline may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if approved in writing by the building administration prior to the imposition of the discipline. Such approval may be granted for safety reasons, as a last resort before in-school suspension, or in extraordinary situations when alternative strategies to address student misconduct have been ineffective. This restriction shall not apply to students who are receiving in-school suspension. 2. Physical Activity as Punishment School employees may NOT require students enrolled in grades K-12, inclusive, to engage in physical activity as a form of discipline during the school day.

East Lyme Board of Education Policy 5144.4

## **Key Points to Remember When Working with Students**

### **What you focus on, you get more of**

- Tell children what you want them to do instead of what you don't want them to do.
- Example: Student keeps getting up from cafeteria table - "Please sit at the table."

### **The only person you can MAKE change is yourself**

- Help children be more successful instead of attempting to make or get them to behave.
- Example: Instead of asking yourself, "How am I going to get these children to act appropriately during lunch?" ask yourself, "How am I going to help these children to more likely to make the right choices?"

### **Allow children the chance to solve their own problems**

- Have children identify what making a good choice "looks like."
- Example: "Show me what sitting appropriately at lunch looks like."

### **Conflict is an opportunity to teach**

- Teach children how to handle conflicts. And re-teach, and re-teach some more!
- Example: Have students work through conflict with your guidance.

### **Remain Positive and Calm**

- When you address an issue with students in a calm manner, they are more likely to hear your message rather than react to your emotionality.

### **Consistency and Predictability are critically important**

- Children often look for the "loopholes" in the rules. Inconsistent consequences and enforcement of the rules creates such loopholes.
- Make sure you follow through with consequences.

# Section 3

## Training, Support, & Supervision/Evaluation

### Training

Paraprofessionals have access to three tiers of training

- 1. Required training mandated by the state of Connecticut.**
  - a. Mandated Reporter training
  - b. Blood Borne Pathogens
  - c. Sexual Harassment
  - d. Bullying
- 2. District Training**
  - a. Therapeutic Crisis Intervention Training
  - b. One day of professional development on topics related to the district improvement plan
- 3. Individual/Job Specific Training** (varies by assignment and role) the following are examples but are not all inclusive.
  - a. Implementation of behavior support plans
  - b. Academic support strategies
  - c. Discrete trial instruction
  - d. Sensory motor strategies
  - e. Lifting, transfers, diapering, feeding

### **Stipend Positions**

Some paraprofessional positions in East Lyme include a \$3 per hour stipend. These positions are most often associated with one of our specialty programs. The stipended positions are determined as part of the budgeting and staffing plan process. The reason a stipend is associated with a position is based on the need for additional expectations that most IA's do not perform. These types of job responsibilities include learning, recording, and carrying out detailed behavioral instruction and data collection. Other responsibilities could include support of functional skills such as toileting, lifting, or feeding. A paraprofessional hired into such a role will be required to complete Therapeutic Crisis Intervention training participate in training under the supervision of the case manager

and/or the Board Certified Behavior Analyst, as well as demonstrate the competencies they have learned within the 90-day probationary period. At the end of the 90 days, if all criteria are met successfully the stipend will be applied to the payroll of the individual.

### **90-day probationary period**

The **probationary period definition** for new employees is the time between signing an employment contract and being granted permanent employment status. It is a “trial period” during which the employee is being evaluated as a suitable fit to the position and the organization. The new employee will be given consistent feedback and coaching to have the chance to learn their new job and improve during the probationary period. At the end of the probation period (or possibly before that), the supervisor will determine if the employee should be retained in the organization. This decision will be made by appraising the following criteria:

- The skills, competencies and knowledge of the employee on the job
- The employee’s progress on given assignments
- Their reliability, trustworthiness and other relevant personality characteristics of the employee
- The employee’s relations and collaboration with subordinates, supervisors and peers

The above-mentioned criteria will be assessed with quantitative measures if applicable. Their progress will be documented whenever possible, and the decision to retain them will be at the supervisor’s discretion.

## Evaluation Form

A job performance checklist is currently used to determine the overall performance of paraprofessionals. This checklist is to be completed by the supervising administrator with consultation from the supervising teacher and the paraprofessional twice each year.

Areas of needed improvement will be identified by the paraprofessional and supervisor during this time.

## Disciplinary Action

Employees are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal for just cause. Just cause shall include, by way of example, but shall not be limited to, the following: dishonesty, violation of rules and policies of the



Board, excessive unexcused absenteeism or tardiness, sick leave abuse, insubordination, falsification of employment applications or Board records, intentional injury to person or property, a third documented warning for incompetence or inefficiency, or other due and sufficient cause.

### **Grievance Procedure**

A grievance is a written claim filed by an employee alleging a misinterpretation or misapplication of a specific provision of the handbook.

**Step 1 - Immediate Supervisor:** A grievance shall be filed with the immediate supervisor within seven (7) workdays of the incidence occurring upon which the grievance is based. This matter will be discussed, and a written decision given to the aggrieved within ten (10) workdays following such review. The immediate supervisor will inform the Principal that a grievance was filed.

**Step 2 - Principal:** If the grievance is not resolved at Step 1, the aggrieved may seek further review by presenting the grievance to the Principal within ten (10) workdays following receipt of the decision at Step 1. This matter will be discussed, and a written decision given to the aggrieved within ten (10) workdays following such review.

**Step 3 - Superintendent of Schools:** If the grievance is not resolved at Step 2, the aggrieved may seek further review by presenting the grievance to the Superintendent of Schools within ten (10) workdays following receipt of the decision at Step 2. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall confer with the aggrieved and, if the grievance is not resolved, render a written decision within ten (10) workdays of such discussion.

**Step 4 - Board of Education:** If the grievance is not resolved at Step 3, a review of the grievance may be requested of the Board of Education by filing a written request for appeal to the Board within ten (10) days of receipt of the Superintendent's decision at Step 3. The Board of Education or its

designated committee shall confer with the aggrieved and issue a written decision within ten (10) workdays of such review.

### **Voluntary Transfers/Reassignments**

Vacancies are posted in each building. Application is by letter of interest and completion of a job application form. (Application for Employment – Teacher’s Assistant/Instructional Assistant/Lunch-Recess Assistant/Before & After School Care)

### **Health Insurance**

### **Salary Schedule and Leave Requests**

Salary: L/RA, IA and TA positions have a step increase salary schedule (see attached Appendix E). The Superintendent or his designee has final determination of the hired step level. New hires with previous teaching or paraprofessional (instructional) experience in East Lyme will receive, for salary purposes, service credit for those years in East Lyme.

Yearly salary is defined as the number of hours per day times the number of workdays in the school year times the hourly rate. This salary is then paid out over 22 equal payments. Employees hired after 2020 will be paid hourly based on their submitted timecards not over 22 equal payments. Timecards will be submitted through the building principal to the Central Office Payroll Department.

### **Employee Assistance Program ([www.solutions-eap.com](http://www.solutions-eap.com))**

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides free and confidential brief counseling and referral for East Lyme Public School employees and their family members. Either the employee or an employee’s family member may initiate the process by calling 860-526-3485 for an appointment. Once contacted, EAP will link you with a Master’s or doctoral level EAP counselor who will set up a face-to-face appointment at a time and location that is convenient to you. The EAP service is strictly confidential and there is no cost to you or your family members for EAP sessions.

# Section 4

## Board of Education Policies Related to the Role of the Paraprofessional

### Mandated Reporter Information

East Lyme Board of Education Policy 5141.4; Regulation 5141.4

**ALL SCHOOL EMPLOYEES ARE MANDATED REPORTERS** (Public Act 11-93).

Paraprofessionals are mandated reporters and must notify the building administrator if there is reasonable cause to suspect a child has been abused, neglected, or placed in imminent risk of serious harm. If reporting in good faith, a mandated reporter is immune from civil or criminal liability.

The DCF hotline number is: 1-800-842-2288.

Although child abuse is a situation one hopes never to encounter, the law mandates school agencies and their personnel to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect. Under Connecticut law, any school principal, teacher, or other paid professional employee of the school who observes or receives evidence, which raises the suspicion of child abuse or neglect is obligated to report this information to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) under the penalty of being fined. All ELPS employees are mandated reporters. For a list of frequently asked questions see the link below: <https://portal.ct.gov/DCF/1-DCF/Reporting-Child-Abuse-and-Neglect>

From the Department of Children and Families website:

**Q.** *How do I respond to a child who reports abuse to me?*

**A.** *Tell the child that you believe them and that you are going to contact people who can help. Respect the privacy of the child. The child will need to tell their story in detail later, so don't press the child for details. Remember, you need only suspect abuse to make a report. Don't display horror, shock, or disapproval of parents, child, or the situation. Don't place blame or make judgments about the parent or child. Believe the child if she/he reports sexual abuse. It is rare for a child to lie about sexual abuse.*

### Additional Steps to follow in East Lyme:

1. Report any suspected abuse to the administrator/school nurse so that they can support you as you complete the process of reporting the suspected abuse or neglect.
2. Maintain confidentiality at all times.

## Bloodborne Pathogens

East Lyme Board of Education Policy 4147.1; Regulation 4147.1

Universal precautions are to be taken always. This means that non-latex gloves are to be worn whenever you may come in contact with another person's body fluids (i.e., tending cuts, bloody noses, changing diapers, etc.).

- All employees should have access to disposable gloves or have them available nearby, including when on the playground.
- A person who is bleeding should not be moved to the nurse's office if there is any danger of blood contacting another person or of blood getting on the floor or other surfaces. The nurse should be asked to come to the injured person.
- Precautions must always be taken to avoid contact with blood or other bodily fluids.
- Custodians are required to clean up blood or other bodily fluids on an emergency basis. Other duties must always come second to cleaning up spills of blood and other bodily fluids.
- All staff are required to view The Bloodborne Pathogen On-line Tutorial (check with Human Resources for login information) on an annual basis.
- Staff who routinely work with students that may be exposed to bodily fluids are eligible for Hepatitis B vaccination at the district's expense.

## Anti-Bullying Policy

East Lyme Public Schools Policy 5131.9; Regulation 5131.9

The East Lyme Public Schools maintains a firm policy prohibiting bullying. Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyber bullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district, or a

physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district that:

1. Causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property
2. Places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
3. Creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
4. Infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
5. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school

Bullying shall include, but is not limited to , a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

Bullying may take many forms, such as but not limited to:

1. Physical violence and attacks;
2. Taunts, name-calling or put-downs or discriminatory slurs; Targeting of a student based upon that person's actual or perceived "differentiating characteristics" such as race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, national or ethnic background, disability, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, or a student's association with a person or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics;
3. Threats and intimidation
4. Extortion or stealing of money and possessions
5. Cyber bullying
  - i. Cyber bullying means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

Standards shall be observed in dealing with observed bullying behavior.

Responding to suspected cases of bullying – “On the Spot” Interventions:

1. Stop the behavior you are witnessing
2. Support the student who appears to be the target of the bullying.
3. Name the inappropriate behavior and how it violates school rules
4. Tell the students you are informing the administration

## Safe School Climate

In accordance with Public Act 11-232, *An Act Concerning the Strengthening of School Bullying Laws*, the East Lyme Public Schools has developed a Safe School Climate Plan which is based on the National School Climate Standards. The plan, which is available on the district’s website, presents a vision and framework for a positive and sustainable school climate through the implementation of the following standards:

1. The school community has a shared vision and plan for promoting, enhancing, and sustaining a positive school climate.
2. The school community sets policies specifically promoting:
  - a. The development and sustainability of social, emotional, ethical, civic, and intellectual skills, knowledge, dispositions and engagement; and
  - b. A comprehensive system to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage students who have become disengaged.
3. The school community’s practices are identified, prioritized, and supported to:
  - a. Promote the learning and positive social, emotional, ethical, and civic development of students.
  - b. Enhance engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities.
  - c. Address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage those who have become disengaged.
  - d. Develop and sustain an appropriate operational infrastructure and capacity building mechanisms for meeting this standard.

4. The school community creates an environment where all members are welcomed, supported, and feel safe in school: socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically.
5. The school community develops meaningful and engaging practices, activities, and norms that promote social and civic responsibilities and a commitment to social justice.
6. If you have questions about the District's Safe School Climate Plan, Denise Doolittle, District Safe School Climate Coordinator can be reached at 860-572-2157. To speak to the Safe School Climate Specialist in your child's school, please contact the school directly.

## **Smoke Free Workplace Policy**

East Lyme Public Schools Board of Education Policy 4118.231; Regulation 4118.231

The Smoke Free Workplace Policy prohibits smoking within any building or on the grounds of any school district facility. Additionally, students, faculty, and chaperones are not permitted to use tobacco at any time while participating in school sponsored activities away from the school facilities or while on a school bus.

## **Drug Free Workplace Policy**

East Lyme Public Schools Board of Education Policy 4118.231; Regulation 4118.231

The Drug Free Workplace Policy is in accordance with federal regulations and states that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the work place. Any employee who violates the provisions of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with applicable state and federal laws and referral for criminal prosecution. Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, a letter of reprimand, suspension, or termination from employment and enrollment and successful completion of an appropriate substance abuse rehabilitation program.

# Workplace Violence Policy

East Lyme Board of Education Policy 4118.112 & 5145.5 Regulation 4118.112 & 5145.5

The East Lyme Public Schools are committed to providing all personnel with a safe and supportive environment in which everyone behaves responsibly and respectfully toward others. The Board of Education recognizes that school children are often influenced by the conduct displayed by paraprofessionals and other members of a school's staff. The Board expects that staff will strive to set the kind of example for students that will serve them well in their own conduct and behavior and contribute toward an appropriate school atmosphere. All staff are required to report to the building principal and/or assistant principal any information or knowledge relevant to conduct which is prohibited by this policy.

## Confidentiality

**Do not discuss a student with anyone except appropriate school personnel.**

If parents and friends ask about your work, tell them you enjoy working with the children and discuss the activities you do rather than information about the children or the teacher. No one wants to hear a story about their child spread through the "grapevine." If anyone quizzes you about a child, teacher or incident at school, they should be directed to contact the teacher or principal.

Bottom Line – What happens in school should stay in school. If you have particular concerns you want to discuss, please do so as soon as possible with the teacher or one of the administrators.

Breaches in confidentiality could result in termination.

Paraprofessionals must respect both student and school confidentiality. You are to discuss a student's performance and problems only with those staff members serving the student, never with the parents or outsiders. All parents' questions about their children's education should be directed to the teacher. Please refer to the district's appropriate use of technology policy for direction on appropriate use of social media related to school activities.

Be discreet and trustworthy. The paraprofessional should not question school policies in the presence of students or outside of the school, but, rather, should pursue personal concerns and inquiries through the school's



designated chain of command. The chain of command would first be the supervising teacher, Assistant Principal, the Principal and then the building special education supervisor. (See page 5)

Paraprofessionals need to support the teaching methods and materials used by the supervising teacher, especially in the presence of students, parents, and other paraprofessionals. Any questions about methods or management are best directed privately to the teacher.

While sending and receiving emails, please maintain strict confidentiality and do not list student's full names (initials only), and keep the email vague. It is best practice to consult with the other individual, in person, when concerning confidential issues.

## Confidentiality in the School Setting

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 and not to be shared outside of the school with anyone other than the parent. Employees responsible for breaches in the confidentiality ethic will be subject to disciplinary action that could include separation from the organization.

## Sexual Harassment

East Lyme Board of Education Policy 4118.112; Regulation 4118.112

East Lyme Public Schools maintains a firm policy prohibiting all forms of discrimination based on sex. Sexual harassment against students or employees is sex discrimination. All persons are to be treated with respect and dignity. Unwelcomed sexual advances or other forms of personal harassment by any person, male or female, which create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Individuals who suspect that they may be victims of sexual harassment shall complete a Sexual Harassment Report Form and file it with the District Title IX Compliance Officer, Director of Student Services at the Central Office, 165 Boston Post Road, East Lyme, CT 06333. Please refer to the district website to access the full policy.

# Medication Policy

East Lyme Board of Education Policy 5141.21; Regulation 5141.21

This policy requires that all medications are to be stored in the nurse's room. Do not accept any medications from a parent. All medications are accepted through the nurse's office.

Students may not have any non-prescription medications (such as cough drops, nasal sprays) in the classroom, on the playground or in their locker. Students may not bring sunscreen to school. No staff member should apply sunscreen to a student. Please refer all questions regarding sunscreen to the school nurse.

## Communication with Teachers & Other Staff

Daily communication with the student's special education teacher/case manager is essential for staff to be informed of the daily schedule and responsibilities. Refer all questions or concerns to the student's special education teacher/case manager.

# Section 6

## Disability Awareness

### Intellectual Disability

Intellectual disability, formerly labeled “mental retardation,” is defined by the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#) as “significantly below average general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently [at the same time] with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, that adversely affects a child’s educational performance.” There are two key components within this definition: a student’s IQ and his or her capability to function independently, usually referred to as adaptive behavior.

### Learning Disability

The term “learning disabilities”, sometimes referred to as specific learning disabilities, is an umbrella term that covers a range of neurologically based disorders in learning and various degrees of severity of such disorders. Predecessor terms include: minimal brain damage and minimal brain dysfunction.

Broadly speaking, these disorders involve difficulty in one or more, but not uniformly in all, basic psychological processes: (1) input (auditory and visual perception), (2) integration (sequencing, abstraction, and organization), (3) memory (working, short term, and long term memory), (4) output (expressive language), and (5) motor (fine and gross motor).

Learning disabilities vary from individual to individual and may present in a variety of ways. Learning disabilities may manifest as difficulty: (1) processing information by visual and auditory, means, which may impact upon reading, spelling, writing, and understanding or using language, (2) prioritizing, organizing, doing mathematics, and following instructions, (3) storing or retrieving information from short or long term memory, (4) using spoken language, and (5) clumsiness or difficulty with handwriting.

## **Dyslexia**

CSDE Working Definition of Dyslexia\* Dyslexia is included in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) as a specific learning disability (SLD). Dyslexia impacts reading, specifically decoding and accurate and/or fluent word recognition and spelling. Dyslexia is neurobiological in origin and is unexpected and/or inconsistent with a student's other abilities often despite the provision of appropriate instruction. Dyslexia results from a significant deficit in phonological processing (i.e., a persistent difficulty in the awareness of and ability to manipulate the individual sounds of spoken language). Typically, students with dyslexia have strengths and cognitive abilities in areas such as reasoning, critical thinking, concept formation, problem solving, vocabulary, listening comprehension, and social communication (e.g., conversation). Early identification and appropriate instruction targeting the underlying phonological processing deficits that characterize dyslexia may minimize its educational impact. Essential Clarifications ) Dyslexia is not primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disability; an intellectual disability; emotional disturbance; a lack of appropriate instruction; cultural factors; environmental or economic disadvantage; or limited English proficiency. ) Early identification of the characteristics of dyslexia is critical, leading to focused, evidence-based interventions, accommodations, self-awareness, self-empowerment, and school and life success. ) Without targeted, systematic and explicit instruction/interventions along with accommodations (e.g., accessible educational materials in content area subjects), students with dyslexia may have: o reduced reading experiences that may impact the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge, or difficulty with written expression, and/or o difficulty learning a second language. ) Students with dyslexia may demonstrate additional behavioral and/or emotional reactions to their difficulty with learning to read. \*This working definition was developed by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) with input from an external stakeholder workgroup and is based on a review of applicable literature, the IDEA, and current definitions in use by other states, organizations and legislation.

## **Emotional and Behavioral Disorder**

The definition used in Connecticut for students with ED follows the definition contained in the federal IDEA. Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-76a defines the condition as follows:

Emotional disturbance means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree, that adversely affects educational performance:

1. an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory or health factors;
2. an inability build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers;
3. inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances;
4. a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or
5. a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

### **Speech & Language Impairment**

The [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#) officially defines speech and language impairments as “a communication disorder such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment that adversely affects a child’s educational performance.” Each point within this official definition represents a speech and language subcategory. “A communication disorder such as stuttering” provides an example of a fluency disorder; other fluency issues include unusual word repetition and hesitant speech. “Impaired articulation” indicates impairments in which a child experiences challenges in pronouncing specific sounds. “A language impairment” can entail difficulty comprehending words properly, expressing oneself and listening to others. Finally, “a voice impairment” involves difficulty voicing words; for instance, throat issues may cause an abnormally soft voice.

### **Other Health Impaired**

An umbrella term, “other health impairment” (OHI) encompasses a range of conditions. The [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#) names several such disorders in OHI’s official definition: “having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that— (a) is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis [a kidney disorder], rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette syndrome; and (b) adversely affects a child’s educational performance.”

## **Orthopedic Disability**

An orthopedic impairment is defined by the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#) as “a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child’s educational performance.” IDEA specifies that this term “includes impairments caused by a congenital anomaly [birth defects], impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures).” Put directly, orthopedic impairments involve physical disabilities which could affect the academic process.

## **Autism Spectrum Disorder**

Autism, or autism spectrum disorder, refers to a range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication, as well as by unique strengths and differences. We now know that there is not one autism but many types, caused by different combinations of genetic and environmental influences.

The term “spectrum” reflects the wide variation in challenges and strengths possessed by each person with autism.

## **Visual Impairment**

As the term indicates, a visual impairment involves an issue with sight which interferes with a student’s academic pursuits. The [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#) officially defines the category as “an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child’s educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.”.

## **Hearing Impairment**

The official definition of a hearing impairment by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is “an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child’s educational performance but is not included under the definition of ‘deafness.’”

### **Multiple Disability**

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act's (IDEA), multiple disabilities refers to "concomitant [simultaneous] impairments (such as intellectual disability-blindness, intellectual disability-orthopedic impairment, etc.), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in a special education program solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness."

In other words, a student whose special needs are categorized under multiple disabilities requires coinciding adaptations for more than one disability.

### **Developmental Delay**

Developmental Delay means a significant delay in one or more of the following areas: cognitive development; communication development; physical development, including vision or hearing; social or emotional development; or adaptive skills or development. Connecticut uses this category for Children aged birth to age 6.

### **Access to and Familiarity with IEPs**

Where a paraprofessional supports a child eligible for special education, it is important that the paraprofessional understand what is expected of them within the context of the implementation of the child's IEP. Access to the child's IEP is one means of achieving this familiarity with the services included in the child's IEP and understanding the role of the paraprofessional in the implementation of the child's IEP. Disclosure of information from the child's IEP by the supervising teacher and other staff working with the child would also be appropriate. Each child's record has an access sheet included in the front of the individual record. If a staff member accesses the child's record, they must sign in on the access form indicating the reason they are accessing the child's records.

This law affects the role of the paraprofessional who works or has access to confidential information. Information about a student is confidential and should only be shared with teachers and staff who work directly with the student. Paraprofessionals who type, collect and store education records need to be aware that the written data is confidential and should not be shared with persons outside the educational team. For further information regarding Freedom of Information, please refer to: <https://www.foia.gov/>

# **Description of Special Education Programs**

## **Individualized Education Programs (IEP's)**

The IEP is a description of special instruction and services needed by an individual student, specifying program placement, with beginning and ending dates, test results on which decisions have been made, exit criteria, materials, and methods to be used to attain specified long-term goals and short-term objectives, and personnel responsible for carrying out these goals. The IEP is written by the special education teacher, or related service provider and other team members, including parents and sometimes paraprofessionals. As paraprofessionals, you may be asked for input in developing an IEP for a child with whom you work. As you provide supportive instruction to students, you will automatically be contributing to the implementation of their IEP.

## **Resource Room**

The Resource Room is designed to meet the needs of students who require modifications to the general curriculum. Students in any disability category can be present in the Resource Room. The Resource Room in the elementary schools can be a place for specialized reading, language and math needs that cannot be met in the general education setting. At the middle and high school levels, services can be provided outside of the general education rooms. Resource Room teachers also provide special education services in general education classes.

## **Therapeutic Learning Program**

Students who qualify for this program are those who are exhibiting behavioral difficulties and are in need of a structured environment with frequent attention paid to both positive and negative behavior so that the student may learn to control their responses. Students in this program may have mental health problems. However, other special education students who have similar behavioral concerns may have other disabilities and be eligible for programming in these classes.



### **Abilities In Motion (AIM)**

Students enrolled in this program are between the ages of 18-21 and have completed their high school programming. They receive a variety of vocational experiences. These experiences may include job shadowing and actual work in the community and at school sites in order to provide them with a realistic view of adult work situations. In addition to vocational skills, students are working on skills related to independent living and social skills.

### **Applied Behavioral Analysis Program (ABA)**

This program is designed for students who need a curriculum of direct instruction. Many of the students enrolled in this program have autism or pervasive development disorders as a primary disability. These students follow a data based instruction program with frequent one-on-one, hands-on directed learning activities. ABA techniques may be used in any special education or regular education location; however, it is the primary instruction mode for this classroom.

### **Integrated Preschool Program**

The preschool program is designed for three and four year old students with developmental delays and their same age peers. These students comprise the entire range of disabilities that may evidence themselves as the students become older. The preschool program's philosophy is that children learn best through play and active participation in a variety of developmentally appropriate experiences. The program follows the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards.

## **Glossary of Terms**

**Accommodation** – a minor change that does not change the content of the material. Extra time, preferential seating, color coding are all examples of an accommodation.

**ADD/ADHD** – Attention Deficit Disorder or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is a behavioral disorder that affects a child’s ability to concentrate, control his or her behavior, learn and maintain a “normal level of activity”. Children with this disorder are often overactive, impulsive and have trouble focusing on a task. They often know their behavior is disruptive but are unable to change it. Daily schedules, structures and routines are helpful. Set appropriate expectations and limits. Positively reinforce appropriate behavior. No school employee should ever discuss or encourage a parent to use medication for their child.

**Functional Behavioral Assessment** – A comprehensive and individualized assessment designed to identify the purpose or function of a student’s behavior. The process identifies target behaviors, the purpose of the behavior, and the factors that maintain the behavior that is interfering with the student’s educational progress.

**Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP)** – Strategies, program or curricular modifications, and supplementary aids and supports developed by a PPT to address behaviors that impede a child’s learning or the learning of others. A BIP requires consistency in implementation and regular data collection.

**Extended School Year Services (ESY)** – Special Education and related services that are provided to a student in accordance with the IEP, beyond the normal school year and at no cost to the parent. Eligibility for ESY services is determined by the PPT and in accordance with ESY guidelines.

**Inclusion** – The provision of specialized instruction supports and services in the general education classroom so students with disabilities can attend classes and participate in the general education curriculum along with non-disabled peers.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** – federal legislation governing special education that requires school districts to do the following:

- Locate, identify and evaluate children with disabilities
- Provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), in the least restrictive environment (LRE) for children with disabilities
- At least annually, convene a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) Meeting to develop an individualized educational plan (IEP) for each child with a disability.

**Least Restrictive Environment** – the setting that allows a student to learn and grow with appropriate support with the greatest opportunity to participate with age appropriate peers and to progress through the general curriculum. This is typically the general education

classroom and may require the assistance of a special education teacher, paraprofessional, modifications and accommodations.

**Modifications** – changes made to what is being taught. For example, if the class is learning about the eight parts of speech, the student with a disability may only be required to identify verbs.

**Planning and Placement Team (PPT)** – this is a meeting to develop an IEP. The team consists of teachers, administrator, related services providers, parents and the student if appropriate. Parents may choose to bring attorneys, advocates or other support people. Your insights into the student’s strengths and needs may be sought by the team. If you are not comfortable in this role, please speak with the case manager or administrator prior to the meeting. The team reviews student progress, determines eligibility, develops goals and objectives and determines the provision of services.

**Primary Disability** – Every student receiving special education services has a classification or primary disability. The disability categories in Connecticut are: Intellectual Disability (ID) (formerly called Mental Retardation), Hearing Impairment (HI), Speech or Language Impairment (SLI), Visual Impairment (VI), Emotional Disturbance (ED), Orthopedic Impairment (OI), Other Health Impairment (OHI), Specific Learning Disability (SLD or LD or Dyslexia), Deaf-Blindness, Multiple Disabilities, Autism (ASD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Developmental Delay (ages 3 – 5 only). Remember, children are people first and should never be referred to as “the autistic student” or by their disabling condition.

**Related Services** – services in addition to special education that are required in order for a child to benefit from special education services. Related services may include speech/ language therapy, occupational or physical therapy, counseling and transportation.

**Section 504** – this is a civil rights law that provides equal access for individuals with disabilities by providing accommodations. All students who receive services through an IEP are protected by Section 504, but not all Section 504 students are eligible for special education. Section 504 services are provided through general education.

## East Lyme Public Schools Paraprofessional Acknowledgement Form

After reviewing the East Lyme Public Schools Paraprofessional Manual Revised 9/30/2018, please sign this page and return to:

East Lyme Public Schools  
Central Office  
165 Boston Post Road  
East Lyme, CT 06333

Telephone: 860-739-3966

This page will be included in your personnel file.

**I have read the East Lyme Public Schools Paraprofessional Manual.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

Print:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Town

\_\_\_\_\_  
State

Telephone: Home \_\_\_\_\_

Cell \_\_\_\_\_

# Job Descriptions



## East Lyme Public Schools Position Description

---

Position Title:	Lunch/Recess Assistant & Head Lunch/Recess Assistant	
Department:	Instruction	
Reports To:	Building Administrator	
Prepared By:		Date:
Approved By:	Dr. James Lombardo	Date: April 2011

---

Department:	Regular Education
Reports to:	School Principal or his/her Designee
Benefits:	None

**Summary:** Supervise students during lunch, recess, and other times as necessary under the supervision of the building principal or his/her designee.

**Essential Duties and Responsibilities:** *Other duties may be assigned*

The Lunch/Recess Assistant/Head Lunch/Recess Assistant shall:

- Maintain a high level of ethical behavior and confidentiality of information about students/staff.
- Possess the ability to work independently as well as a member of a team.
- Reinforce specific behavior patterns.
- Ensure the safety of the students.
- Establish, as fully as possible, a supportive relationship with the student(s) while maintaining the role as an authority figure.
- Remain student-focused, maintaining a caring, safe, developmentally **appropriate** environment.
- Establish a positive, appropriate rapport with students as socially and age appropriate.
- Alert appropriate staff to any problem or special information about individual students.
- Be punctual and consistent in meeting daily time schedules throughout the school year.
- Work effectively and cooperatively with other staff members.
- Perform such other duties as may be assigned.
- Head School Aide will supervise and schedule school aides.
- Head School Aide will secure substitutes for district school aides.

**Supervisory Responsibilities:** Lunch/Recess Assistant supervise Students; Head Lunch/Recess Assistant supervise Students and Lunch/Recess Assistants as determined by the principal or his/her designee.

**Qualification Requirements:** *To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or*

*ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*

**Education and/or Experience:** Minimum Requirements: High school diploma, general education degree (GED) or equivalent as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

**Language Skills:** Ability to read and comprehend simple instructions, short correspondence, and memos. Ability to write simple correspondence.

**Mathematical Skills:** Ability to add, subtract, multiply, and divide in all units of measure, using whole numbers, common fractions, and decimals.

**Reasoning Ability:** Ability to apply common-sense understanding to carry out detailed but uninvolved written or oral instructions. Ability to deal with problems involving a few concrete variables in standardized situations.

**Other Skills and Abilities:** Previous work in childcare. Ability to develop effective working relationships with students, staff, and the school community. Ability to communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing. Ability to perform duties with awareness of all district requirements and Board of Education policies.

**Physical Demands:** *The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to sit and talk or hear. The employee is regularly required to stand, walk, climb or balance, and stoop, kneel, or crouch. The employee may occasionally lift and/or move up to 50 pounds. The employee must be able to push items of 50 pounds such as pushing children on a bike or moving/rearranging furniture. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, and the ability to adjust focus.

**Work Environment:** *The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*

The noise level in the work environment is often loud but at a standard acceptable level for this environment. The employee is continuously responsible for the safety, well-being, and work output of students.

The information contained in this job description is for compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) and is not an exhaustive list of the duties performed for this position. Additional duties are performed by the individuals currently holding this position and additional duties may be assigned.



## East Lyme Public Schools Job Description

---

Position Title:	Paraprofessional - Instructional Assistant	
Department:	Paraprofessional	
Reports to:	Assigned Certified Teacher	
Prepared by:	Kimberly Davis	Date: 8/2018
Approved by:	Jeffrey R. Newton	Date: 8/2018

---

Reports to:	Assigned Certified Teacher
Benefits:	Per Contract

**Summary:** Instructs/tutors students individually or in small groups under the direction and supervision of a certified teacher. Plans lessons, provides instruction, plans individual instruction per the student's instructional plan in collaboration with the classroom teacher. Implements lesson plans independently or in collaboration with the certified teacher.

**Essential Duties and Responsibilities:** *Other duties may be assigned.*

The Instructional Assistant shall:

- Maintain a high level of ethical behavior and confidentiality of information about students/staff.
- Possess the ability to work independently as well as a member of a team.
- Work with individuals and/or small groups of students to reinforce material introduced by the teacher and foster skills while encouraging independence.
- Accompany student(s) into inclusive settings.
- Establish, as fully as possible, a supportive relationship with the student(s) while maintaining the role as an authority figure.
- Remain student-focused, maintaining a caring, safe, developmentally-appropriate environment.
- Establish a positive, appropriate rapport with students as socially and age appropriate.
- Assist with toileting, feeding, and any other health responsibilities.
- Assist with loading and unloading of students onto vans, buses, taxis, etc.
- Lift/restrain student when necessary.
- Alert appropriate staff to any problem or special information about individual students.
- Assist the teacher in implementing behavior programs.
- Assist in collecting and creating suitable materials for educational displays.
- Aid the teacher in conducting lessons that require preparation of visual aids, operation of audiovisual equipment, and other equipment used in the classroom for instructional purposes.
- Assist the teacher in conducting routine clerical duties.
- Be punctual and consistent in meeting daily time schedules throughout the school year.



- Work effectively and cooperatively with other staff members.
- Sanitize classrooms as required by health care plans.
- Perform such other duties as may be assigned.

**Supervisory Responsibilities:** Supervises students as determined by the certified teacher, principal, or his/her designee.

**Qualification Requirements:** *To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*

**Education and/or Experience:** Minimum Requirement: Associates Degree, 60 hours of college credit, or a passing score on Para Pro Assessment (457)

**Language Skills:** Ability to read and comprehend simple instructions, short correspondence, and memos. Ability to write simple correspondence. Ability to effectively present information in one-on-one and small group situations to customers, clients, and other employees of the organization.

**Mathematical Skills:** Ability to add, subtract, multiply, and divide in all units of measure, using whole numbers, common fractions, and decimals. Ability to compute rate, ratio, and percent and to draw and interpret bar graphs.

**Reasoning Ability:** Ability to apply common sense understanding to carry out detailed but uninvolved written or oral instructions. Ability to deal with problems involving a few concrete variables in standardized situations.

**Other Skills and Abilities:** Previous work in childcare. Ability to develop effective working relationships with students, staff and the school community. Ability to communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing. Ability to perform duties with awareness of all district requirements and Board of Education policies.

**Physical Demands:** *The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to sit and talk or hear. The employee is regularly required to stand, walk, climb or balance, and stoop, kneel, or crouch. The employee may occasionally lift and/or move up to 50 pounds. The employee must be able to push items of 50 pounds such as pushing children on a bike or moving/rearranging furniture. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, and the ability to adjust focus.

The employee is willing to be trained in the use of physical management of students for emergency use and to use procedures as directed by the supervising teacher.

**Work Environment:** *The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*

The noise level in the work environment is often loud but at a standard acceptable level for this environment. The employee is continuously responsible for the safety, well-being, and work output of students.

*The information contained in this job description is for compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) and is not an exhaustive list of the duties performed for this position. Additional duties are performed by the individuals currently holding this position and additional duties may be assigned.*



## East Lyme Public Schools Job Description

---

---

Position Title: Paraprofessional - Teaching Assistant  
Department: Paraprofessional  
Reports to: Assigned Certified Teacher  
Prepared by: Kimberly Davis Date: 8/2018  
Approved by: Jeffrey R. Newton Date: 8/2018

---

---

Reports to: Assigned Certified Teacher  
Benefits: per contract

**Summary:** Instructs/tutors students individually or in small groups under the direction and supervision of a certified teacher. Plans lessons, provides instruction, plans individual instruction per the student's instructional plan in collaboration with the classroom teacher. Implements lesson plans independently or in collaboration with the certified teacher.

**Essential Duties and Responsibilities:** *Other duties may be assigned*

The Teaching Assistant shall:

- Maintain a high level of ethical behavior and confidentiality of information about students/staff.
- Possess the ability to work independently as well as a member of a team.
- Develop and present learning materials and instructional exercises.
- Use assessment data to prepare instructional planning.
- Maintain discipline in the absence of the teacher.
- Provide information required for IEP meetings.
- Evaluate instruction and learner outcomes.
- Carry out IEP goals and objectives.
- Become familiar with the learning characteristics of students with whom they work.
- Establish as fully as possible a supportive relationship with the student(s) while maintaining the role as an authority figure.
- Remain student focused, maintaining a caring, safe, developmentally appropriate environment.
- Establish a positive, appropriate rapport with students as socially and age appropriate.
- Alert the teacher to any problem or special information about individual students.
- Be punctual and consistent in meeting daily time schedules throughout the school year.
- Work effectively and cooperatively with other staff members.
- Lift/restrain student when necessary.

**Supervisory Responsibilities:** Supervises students as determined by the certified teacher, principal or his/her designee.

*Qualification Requirements: To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*

**Education and/or Experience:** Minimum Requirement: Bachelor's degree.

**Language Skills:** Ability to read and comprehend instructions, correspondence, and memos. Ability to write correspondence. Ability to effectively present information in one-on-one and small group situations to student, parents and/or staff. Ability to read and interpret special education documents. In collaboration with the certified teacher, may develop, write and implement lesson plans.

**Mathematical Skills:** Ability to add, subtract, multiply, and divide in all units of measure, using whole numbers, common fractions, and decimals. Ability to perform basic arithmetical calculations.

**Reasoning Ability:** Ability to apply common sense understanding to carry out detailed but uninvolved written or oral instructions. Ability to deal with problems involving a few concrete variables in standardized situations.

**Other Skills and Abilities:** Ability to operate photocopying and fax machines and computers. Ability to assume responsibility for supervising students, understand and carry out oral and written instructions. Ability to develop effective working relationships with students, staff, and the school community. Ability to communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing. Ability to perform duties with awareness of all district requirements and Board of Education policies.

*Physical Demands: The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to sit and talk or hear. The employee frequently is required to stand, walk and sit. The employee is occasionally required to use hands to finger, handle, as to operate office equipment; reach with hands and arms; and stoop, kneel, crouch or crawl.

The employee may occasionally lift and/or move up to 50 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, and the ability to adjust focus.

The employee is willing to be "Restraint Trained" and to use restraint as directed by the supervising teacher.

*Work Environment: The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*

The noise level in the work environment is often loud but at a standard acceptable level for this environment. The employee is continuously responsible for the safety, well-being, and work output of students.

*The information contained in this job description is for compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) and is not an exhaustive list of the duties performed for this position. Additional duties are performed by the individuals currently holding this position and additional duties may be assigned.*



## East Lyme Public Schools Position Description

---

---

Position Title: Paraprofessional/Registered Behavior Technician (RBT)  
Department: Student Services (District Wide)  
Reports to: Director, Student Services, Building Administrator, and Behavior Analyst (BCBA)  
Prepared by: Kimberly Davis, Director of Student Services      Date: March 2018  
Approved by: Jeffrey Newton, Superintendent      Date: March 2018

---

---

**BENEFITS:** Per Contract

**SUMMARY:**

Public school Registered Behavior Technicians (REGISTERED BEHAVIOR TECHICIAN®) is a paraprofessional who practices under the close, ongoing supervision of a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). The REGISTERED BEHAVIOR TECHICIAN is primarily responsible for the direct implementation of behavior-analytic services.

**ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** Other duties may be assigned

- Assist with functional assessment procedures
- Assist with data collection
- Implement discrete trial procedures, naturalistic teaching, task analyzing chaining procedures, prompt and prompt fading procedures
- Implement Behavior Intervention Plan
- Collaborate and maintain a professional relationship and environment with school staff members
- Adhere to the REGISTERED BEHAVIOR TECHICIAN ethics requirements outlined on the Behavior Analyst Certification Board. ([www.bacb.com](http://www.bacb.com))
- Attend and receive Therapeutic Crisis Intervention Training (TCI); de-escalation strategies and physical management strategies
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills outlined on the REGISTERED BEHAVIOR TECHICIAN task list. See attached.
- Meet all requirements outlined in the paraprofessional evaluation tool.

**SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

None

**QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:**

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

**EDUCATION and/or EXPERIENCE:**

Meet at least, the following requirements: minimum requirement of a High School Diploma or General Education Degree (GED); Associates Degree, 60 hours of college credit, or a passing score on Para Pro Assessment (457)

**CERTIFICATES, LICENSES, REGISTRATIONS:**

Have completed 40 hours of training under the supervision of certified Board Certified Behavior Analyst, complete a criminal background check, pass the [Registered Behavior Technician Competency Assessment](#), and pass the Registered Behavior Technician exam.

**LANGUAGE SKILLS:**

Ability to read and interpret: data collected, a program write-up, a Behavior Intervention Plan, and a functional behavior assessment.

**MATHEMATICAL SKILLS:**

Ability to apply concepts such as rate, basic frequency, fractions, percentages, ratios, and proportions to practical situations.

**REASONING ABILITY:**

Ability to define problems, collect data, and report facts. Ability to be self-reflective.

**OTHER SKILLS and ABILITIES:**

- Ability to execute plans and programs based on school objectives and the needs and abilities of students to whom assigned.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with students, peers, and school community members.
- Ability to create a positive learning environment.
- To be self-directed.
- To organize time, space, and materials.
- Ability to speak clearly and concisely in written or oral communication.
- Ability to operate photocopying, fax machines and computer programs (fluent in Excel).

- Ability to assume responsibility for supervising students, understand and carry out oral and written instructions.
- Ability to perform duties with awareness of all district requirements and Board of Education policies.

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS:**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to sit and talk or hear. The employee is regularly required to stand, walk, climb or balance, and stoop, kneel, or crouch. The employee may occasionally lift and/or move up to 50 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, and the ability to adjust focus.

The employee is willing to be trained in and implement (if necessary) physical management strategies of students, under the direction of the supervising teacher/BCBA in order to be an effective member of the team.

**WORK ENVIRONMENT:**

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of the job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions

The noise level in the work environment is often loud but at a standard acceptable level for this environment. The employee is continuously responsible for the safety, well-being, and work output of students.

The information contained in this job description is for compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) and is not an exhaustive list of the duties performed for this position. Additional duties are performed by the individuals currently holding this position and additional duties may be assigned.



# TCI System Overview

From the website: <http://rccp.cornell.edu/tci>

## A Child in Crisis Needs Help

What kind of help and how it is given make a crucial difference between the child's learning from the experience or being set back. The Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) training program for child and youth care staff presents a crisis prevention and intervention model designed to teach staff how to help children learn constructive ways to handle crisis. The ability of the entire organization to respond effectively to children and young people in crisis situations is critical in establishing not only a safe environment, but also one that promotes growth and development. The skills, knowledge, and professional judgment of staff in responding to crises are critical factors in helping young people learn constructive and adaptive ways to deal with frustration, failure, anger, rejection, hurt, and depression. While TCI is primarily intended for those who care for children and young people living in out-of-home settings or in schools (private and public), it has also been adapted for foster care families.

## How Does the TCI System Help?

The purpose of the TCI system is to provide a crisis prevention and intervention model for residential child care organizations that will assist in: Preventing crises from occurring, de-escalating potential crises, effectively managing acute crises, reducing potential and actual injury to children and staff, learning constructive ways to handle stressful situations, and developing a learning circle within the organization.

## Who Is TCI Training for?

The RCCP offers three TCI training programs that have been adapted for specific audiences. Note that while the language of TCI instruction has been tailored to specific audiences, all three programs teach the same core TCI material. Click the titles below to read a general overview of the TCI System, including information about the program's history, effectiveness, and where it is being practiced.

- **TCI Training of Trainers (TxT):** This course is for trainers, managers, counselors, social workers, and care workers working in out-of-home settings capable of training therapeutic crisis intervention techniques. Participants who are taking part in the physical intervention part of the program must be capable of moderate physical activity.
- **TCI for Families Training of Trainers (TCIF TxT):** This course is for trainers, administrators, supervisors, social workers, foster and adoptive case workers and providers interested in training crisis prevention and intervention techniques to caregivers. There are no physical interventions associated with this program.
- **TCI for Schools Training of Trainers (TCIS TxT):** This course is for trainers, principals, school counselors/psychologists, teachers, social workers, teacher assistants and other school personnel working in school settings capable of training crisis intervention techniques. Participants who are taking part in the physical intervention part of the program must be capable of moderate physical activity.

## How Was TCI Developed?

In 1979 with a grant from the National Center of Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN) staff of the Family Life Development Center (FLDC) at Cornell University undertook a study of child abuse and neglect in New York State group care institutions. The purpose of this study was to assess the nature and extent of child abuse and neglect when it occurs in the institutional setting, and to identify those factors associated with its incidence. Factors associated with the incidence of abuse and neglect included the inappropriate use of discipline, isolation and restraint, and poor management practices. FLDC staff spent many months researching other crisis intervention curricula, meeting with child care experts, and visiting child care agencies in order to develop a comprehensive training program that addressed the issues outlined in the research. TCI training was developed and pilot-tested at approximately eight facilities from the study sample of sixteen. Concurrently, the entire sample was involved in the testing of a model response system in reporting and investigating child abuse. From 1981 to 1982, child abuse reports (not instances of abuse) in those facilities that had pilot-tested the Cornell curriculum decreased by forty percent. In those sample facilities, which were not exposed to the new training materials, reporting child abuse increased by more than two hundred percent. (Note: By virtue of being in the sample, all of these agencies were much more likely to be sensitive to reporting issues and were, therefore, more likely to make a report.)

## How Is TCI Effectiveness Measured?

From 1994-1997, the RCCP and child caring agencies in the Northeastern United States and the United Kingdom conducted joint evaluation projects that introduced TCI into residential treatment settings and evaluated its effect on the organizations. Throughout the life of this



joint evaluation project, critical incidents were collected and an advisory group from the agencies met with the Cornell Team. Other data collection methods were pre-/post-tests, surveys, and interviews with staff, supervisors, and young people. All levels of residential child care personnel at both sites attended TCI training. Supervisors attended additional training, to assist them in monitoring and supporting the model. Results from both of the project sites indicated a decrease in physical restraint episodes, fighting incidents, physical assaults, runaways, and verbal threats. Results also indicated that after attending TCI training staff felt more confident in their ability to manage any crisis situation, work effectively with co-workers, and help young people learn to cope more successfully with crisis. Staff reported they were less afraid to manage crisis situations and were more focused on the needs of the young people. They also reported an increase in knowledge about agency policy and procedures for crisis management. For additional information about TCI, please download a copy of the "TCI Systems Bulletin" by clicking the icon in the sidebar of this page.

## Where Is TCI Being Practiced?

Worldwide, over 3000 professionals have been certified as TCI trainers. Trainers are located throughout the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Israel, Australia, New Zealand, Bermuda, Vietnam, and the Republic of Korea.