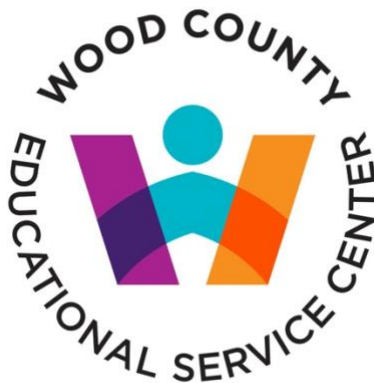


Paraprofessional Handbook 2021-2022



Wood County Educational Service Center
1867 North Research Drive
Bowling Green, OH 43402
419-354-9010 419-354-1146 fax wcesc.org



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1867 N. Research Dr., Bowling Green, Ohio 43402
419-354-9010 office 419-354-1146 Fax wcesc.org

Dear Wood County Paraprofessionals:

Welcome to the new school year. We have a wonderful, dedicated staff consisting of teachers, paraprofessionals, and specialists who will be with us this year. We are excited to continue to have a strong team dedicated to the needs of our children. Thank you for being a part of that team.

The Wood County staff upholds the belief that all children are capable of learning, are valuable members of society and are entitled to feelings of self-worth. All children are unique in personality, learning rates, time lines of development, special needs and learning styles. Children's individual strengths and sense of personal merit form the foundation of learning, while challenges promote growth and self-confidence.

Our paraprofessionals work in either the ESC program classes (multi-disability, emotional disturbance, or early childhood) as classroom aides or student attendants or in the local schools as student attendants. Classroom aides support the teacher and assist in classroom preparation, organization, and student learning. Student attendants work with specific student/students who need more support for behavioral, physical, emotional or academic challenges. The special education teacher guides the programming for these children.

We will work as a team to support each other and continue to learn and gain skills that will promote the growth and development of our children. It is hoped that this handbook will be a resource and support for you.

We look forward to a wonderful and rewarding school year for each of you and for each child under your direction.

Sincerely,
The WCESC Special Ed Administrators

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Department Directory at the WCESC

NAME	TITLE	RESPONSIBILITIES
Mark North	Superintendent	Supervision Support and Overview of Programs
Julie Bulkowski	Receptionist/Office Coordinator	Phone
Teresa Kitchen	Special Needs Supervisor	Pathe/ED
Joe Taylor	Special Needs Supervisor	MD Program/Related Services
Diane Witt	Special Needs Coordinator	Transition & Life Skills Program
Alicia Holdren	Executive Secretary EMIS Secretary	Assistant to the Superintendent Personnel files – Certification IEP Anywhere, EMIS
Jackie Haar	Treasurer	
Joy Stacey	Assistant to the Treasurer	
Melanie Feather	Fiscal Data Specialist Accounts Payable Specialist	Preschool/ED Food Service Programs Inventory, Cell Phones, Purchase Orders – (needed PRIOR to taking in-services that cost money or making purchases)
Kelly Allred & Abbie Loy	Payroll Clerks	Payroll, Insurances, Workers' Compensation
Stephanie Dyar	Personnel Secretary	Absences, Substitute Processing, New Hires
Naomi Stickles	Secretary/Tech. Asst.	Special Education & Preschool Databases

Contact us at: 419-354-9010

Paraprofessional Responsibilities When Working with Children with Disabilities



When in doubt, we will put the child's welfare first. We will be fair to all children and recognize and respect the uniqueness and potential of every child. Above all, we shall not harm children or participate in any practice that is harmful, disrespectful, degrading, dangerous, or physically harmful to children.

- Your first responsibility is to *understand both the student and the disability he/she manifests.*
- It is vitally important that you obtain information about the student's learning style, needs and preferences.
- The maintenance of confidentiality in *all* matters is a top priority.
- Be *proactive* with respect to seeking out information regarding what is expected (and what is not!).
- Do what is necessary to *establish and maintain a relationship of trust with the teacher.*
- Strive for *balance* in your role of *preeminent support.*
- *Check your ego at the school house door!*

We will keep personal problems out of the classroom.	We will keep a positive attitude!	We will show respect for our children, their families and our colleagues.	We will demonstrate professional discretion.
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A paraprofessional must always work under the direct supervision of a licensed/certified teacher

Student Behavior

Charting student behavior
 Implementation of behavior intervention plans
 Crisis intervention and management

Student Health Services

Performing other supervised health services
 Monitoring student health issues

Daily Living Skills

Assist with transportation
 Help student dress and undress
 Assist with toileting skills
 Assist with eating/feeding skills

Transportation

Riding with student on bus
 Monitoring behavior on bus
 Ensuring student is safely transported

Classroom Support

- Providing supplemental, remedial or intervention services
- Assist with test, screenings, or assessments
- Implement portions for the IEP under the direct supervision of the special or general education teacher other credentialed service provider
- Coordinates the use of assistive technology
- Assist with audio recording lessons, note taking, organizational skills, and other supplementary aids, services, and accommodations.
- Assisting student in making necessary transitions during the day
- Keeping student on task
- Accompanying student to community-based work sites or field trips.
- Data collection/graphing

Be sure:

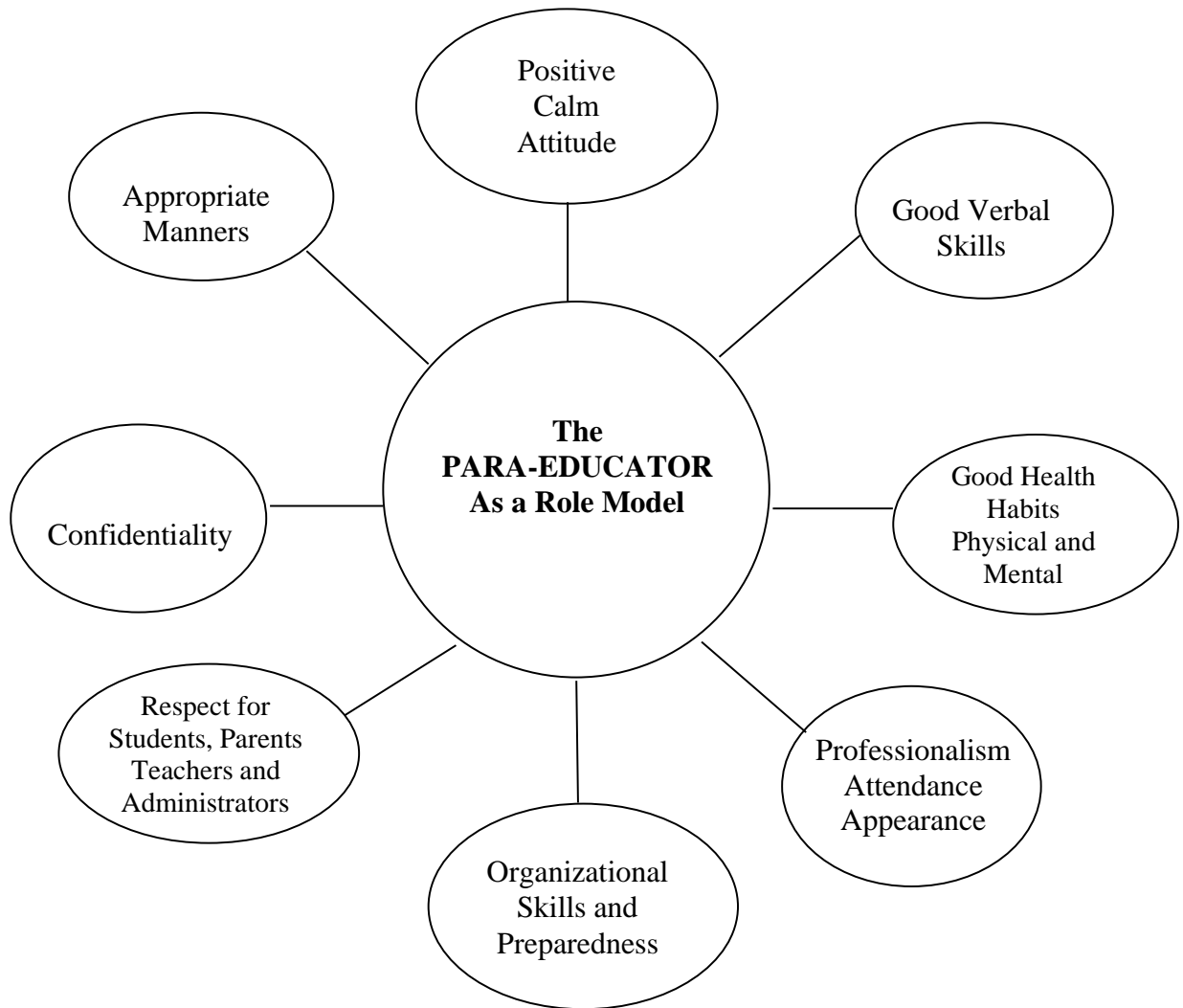
- Para is appropriately trained to perform assigned duties
- Para is properly supervised by a teacher or other credentialed employee.
- Para must have a copy of, or access to, the IEP or any other documents needed to perform duties.
- Para must keep the teacher informed of all information regarding the child
- ***Para should have extremely limited conversations about the student(s) with the parent. Conversations regarding student progress/behavior/IEP issues, etc. should be only discussed by the teacher.***

**We will always observe the WCESC support chain of command:
 Teacher - Supervisor - Superintendent**

A GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

The Paraprofessional – A Role Model for Children

Below is a graphic organizer to help you remember your duty to be a role model.



Procedures and Policies

STAFF CONDUCT

All staff members have a responsibility to make themselves familiar with, and to abide by, the laws of the State of Ohio, and the policies of the Governing Board and the administrative regulations designed to implement them. The Governing Board expects staff members to conduct themselves in a manner in which not only reflects credit to the Educational Service Center, but also presents a model worthy of emulation by students.

All staff members will be expected to carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern. Essential to the success of ongoing school operations and instructional program are the following specific responsibilities that will be required of all personnel:

- **Faithfulness and promptness in attendance at work;**
- Support and enforcement of policies of the Governing Board and regulations of the Educational Service Center administration in regard to students; administration in regard to students;
- Diligence in submitting required reports promptly at the times specified;
- Care and protection of Educational Service Center property and;
- Concern and attention toward their own and the Educational Service Center's legal responsibility for the safety and welfare of students, **including the need to ensure that students are under supervision at all times.**

Failure to abide by the laws of the State of Ohio, Governing Board policies, administrative regulations, or other reasonable directives may result in discipline. Discipline may include verbal or written reprimands, suspension, or termination.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Wood County paraprofessionals are employed by the Wood County Educational Service Center and are placed in Wood County special education programs or in individual school districts. If you are placed in a program position, paraprofessionals are directly responsible to the classroom teacher and supervisor. District administration should not be expected to deal with personnel issues, program issues, or child issues (if the child does not reside in that district). District administration should be aware of your program and building activities, but WCESC should help resolve the issues. If you are a district paraprofessional, report to the special education administrator or principal. Always work with the support of a licensed teacher who monitors all children learning. All issues and concerns should be initially addressed to the designated supervisor.

WORK SCHEDULE

The special needs programs will follow the individual calendar of the school district where you are housed. Workdays and hours vary with specific job and district requirements. Be sure to check your contract for your individual days and hours. The hours indicated are work hours; employees have ½ hour of unpaid lunch. Most programs should have staff in attendance approximately ½ hour before children arrive and ½ hour after they depart. Please finalize that schedule with your teacher prior to the first day.

EVALUATION

Paraprofessionals will be evaluated a minimum of one time a year by the teacher and/or supervisor, but in most cases twice annually. Paraprofessionals will be evaluated on overall willingness to participate in the classroom, ability with children, and success in following the job description. Paraprofessionals work with the teachers but are responsible to the supervisor.

BRINGING YOUR CHILDREN TO WORK

After checking on our liability, our insurance carrier has advised that staff not bring their own children to work. If there were a problem, the employee would have no liability protection because caring for their own children at school is outside their job responsibilities. Therefore, you must make childcare arrangements that do not involve bringing your child to work.

ABSENCE FORMS AND THE PAYMENT OF SUBSTITUTES

All staff must log their absences through Red Rover on-line system or by telephone. <https://www.redroverk12.com/> Please make arrangements with your supervisor if you incur a long-term absence so that arrangements can be made to log your absence in the Red Rover on-line system. A physician's statement is required for absences excess of three (3) days. Please refer to the Wood County ESC Policy (located at <https://www.wcesc.org/about/leadership-and-governing-board/governing-board-policies/>) for information about the appropriate use of leave. Sick and Personal leave are available in ½ or full day increments.

Substitutes must complete the substitute payroll time slip in order to be paid.

RED ROVER DIRECTIONS

Absenteeism is an ongoing issue for the Wood County ESC. We thank and appreciate those of you who have been faithful and have used your sick leave only when needed. On some days, we have had almost 30 staff members out! We are having some difficulty with not having classroom coverage when staff are absent from their positions. This leaves students unattended and is a tremendous liability for the Wood County ESC.

Red Rover Reminders:

- Be sure you have created your preferred list and check it often – the earlier you report your absence, the more time your preferred list will be honored before sending it out to everyone. (If you report later in the morning, it may be only a very brief time before your absence is shared with everyone.)
- **Report your absence as early as possible.** Red Rover will **NOT** accept absences created after 6:30 am. In **emergency situations only**, you will need to contact Stephanie Dyar (**Red Rover Administrator**) at **419-308-4147**. (Remember, if you need a substitute, you will need to have your job created early so that a substitute will have time to dress and be at the site before your start time).

Notification Procedures:

Teachers:

- 1st Stephanie 419-308-4147/ Rachel Wixey & Associates (RWA) 419-725-9499
- 2nd Notify building principal – leave message on answering machine
- 3rd Notify classroom assistant (paraprofessional, if you have one)

Program Para-professionals (including one-on-one student attendants in program):

- 1st Stephanie 419-308-4147/ RWA 419-725-9499
- 2nd Call Teacher

One-on-One working in district buildings:

- 1st Stephanie 419-308-4147/ RWA 419-725-9499
- 2nd Call building principal – leave message on answering machine

Paras whose subs are provided by the district:

- 1st Call School/Principal or whoever district directs you to call for a sub
- 2nd Be sure you also record absences in WCESC Red Rover
(many are forgetting to do this 2nd step)

SUPPORT STAFF PERSONAL LEAVE

Up to three (3) full days of personal leave with pay may be used, if approved by the supervisor, each contract year (7/1—6/30) by full-time employees. Personal leave will be pro-rated for part-time employees or employees who are hired after the start of the year. Personal leave is not cumulative. (A preschool assistant receives 2 ½ scheduled workdays of personal leave). Personal leave days may be used for personal obligations that are necessary and compelling which involve family events, community events, business transactions, or legal transactions, subject to the following conditions:

Restrictions on the use of personal leave days are as follows:

- The day(s) may not be used in conjunction with any holidays/vacation days.
- The day(s) may not be used in the first ten (10) nor the last ten (10) working days of the school districts' calendars.

Exceptions may be granted by immediate supervisor for the following reasons:

In case of emergencies, e.g., an auto accident, furnace break down, frozen water pipes, wedding of an immediate family member, graduation, move child into college, or legal business which cannot be addressed outside of regular school hours **and** the scheduling of which is not under control of the employee.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- A. Request shall be recorded in Red Rover **at least three (3) school days in advance**, except in the event of an emergency.
- B. The use of day(s) immediately preceding or following school or legal holidays shall be at the discretion of the supervisor.
- C. Number of persons granted personal leave for any one day will be limited to the demands of the Wood County ESC as determined by the superintendent.
- D. Scheduled daily assignments shall be adjusted by the employee and confirmed by the director in advance of the day requested.

In addition to 3 days' notice (except for emergencies) you must also have permission from your supervisor (requested on Red Rover) in order to be paid for a personal day. If you do not receive permission in advance, your requested personal day will be considered a "dock" day. In special circumstances, you must contact your supervisor directly. You must check Red Rover to assure a substitute has been secured. **If a substitute is not available by 4:30 PM the day before, your request could be declined. Contact your supervisor by 4:30 PM the day before if you do not have a substitute.**

SUPPORT STAFF SICK AND PREGNANCY LEAVE

Refer to Governing Board Policy GDBDB available on the website at:

<https://www.wcesc.org/about/leadership-and-governing-board/governing-board-policies/>

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE Refer to Governing Board Policy GBR and GBR-R available on the website at:

<https://www.wcesc.org/about/leadership-and-governing-board/governing-board-policies/>

WORKERS' COMPENSATION / STAFF INJURY REPORT

The provisions of the workers' compensation law cover every employee of the Wood County ESC, and if you receive an injury in the course of an event during your employment, you may file a claim. Complete an injury form on the Wood County ESC web page. Contact your supervisor or Alicia Holdren (Superintendent's Secretary) @ 419-354-9011 x 217 immediately. You will be guided through the process to make a worker's compensation claim, if appropriate.

The accident must be reported to a supervisor or director immediately and prior to seeking treatment (unless it is an emergency!) You must complete the Staff Injury Form (on WCESC web page) ASAP. If you need medical attention, you may go to Ready-Works (Medical building at Wood County Hospital, Suite 105) or your private physician. **PLEASE IMMEDIATELY COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY WITH YOUR SUPERVISOR IF YOU ARE INJURED.**

DOCK DAYS

Dock leave is an option in the absence reasons in Red Rover; supervisor permission is required. Non-paid leave of absences will be granted on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Superintendent. **A request for non-paid leave should be made in writing and submitted to your Supervisor and the Superintendent for review.** Non-paid leaves will only be considered in cases where personal days are not available or sick leave is not appropriate for the situation.

Unauthorized use of dock days may result in dismissal.

BLOOD PATHOGEN REGULATIONS

Be sure to complete annual blood borne pathogens training in Public School Works as soon as possible. In the event of exposure to human blood or other potentially infectious materials, immediately wash exposed skin thoroughly and/or flush eyes or mouth for 15 minutes with running water. Then, report the incident immediately to your supervisor who will assist you in determining if further action is necessary.

PAYROLL

All questions regarding your salary and benefits should be directed to the *Kelly Allred* at 419-354-9011 x **212**; *Abbie Loy* at x **213** or by email payroll@wcesc.org.

ADDRESS CHANGE

If your address changes during the year; please complete the address change form located in your Power School Records account, as well as updated city tax form if necessary. Also notify your supervisor of your address change.

PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS

It is policy that all problems and concerns be addressed initially with those involved. If issues cannot be resolved the supervisor will attempt to assist. All program, personnel, or child issues should be discussed with the supervisor first. Please do not approach the district administration with any of these issues until you have discussed them with the supervisor. Any building issues should be reported to the principal. Since you are a Wood County ESC employee, the supervisor needs to be made aware of issues first. It is important for the staff to work together as a team. Every staff person must follow the rules of the classroom and follow the directions of their supervisor. It will be considered insubordination if supervisor/teacher requests are not followed. Insubordination may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

STAFF INTER-RELATIONSHIPS

Under no circumstances, will it be tolerated that staff not support each other. Only appropriate communication and behaviors must be modeled (no rumors, sabotaging, or other non-supportive behaviors). Working as a team is a critical component to the position.

RESIGNATION

A resignation form must be filled out in your Power School Records account. Please give at least two weeks' notice if you resign during the school year. If you wish to transfer to another position within the Wood County ESC, please put your request in writing to your supervisor.

WCESC PERSONNEL FORMS: wcesc.org — Log into the Employee Resources Page

Staff Fiscal Documents

- Inventory Change Form
- Requisition Form
- Meeting / Mileage Reimbursement Forms
- Time Sheet Form
- Substitute Time Sheet Form
- Payroll Policies & Procedures handbook for current school year

For more information contact - *Kelly Allred* 419-354-9011 at extension 212; *Abbie Loy* at extension 213 or email payroll@wcesc.org.

Personnel Documents

- Contact Information
- Leaving Wood County ESC Form
- Technology
- Work Calendars
- School District Directory

For more information contact *Stephanie Dyar* 419-354-9011 x **305** or via email sdyar@wcesc.org.

Hints for Paraprofessionals

Confidentiality

Sometimes you may know way too much.

All teachers, paraprofessionals and related service providers need to know each student's IEP goals and objectives like the back of their hand. The goals and objectives should be easily accessible in the classroom so staff can make comments and document progress as needed. However, student records also contain information about the family and personal information about the student. (Even the fact that the student is in your special education class is confidential). Please be sure that student information never leaves the school and you discuss confidential information only with appropriate colleagues who have a need to know the information. Confidentiality is important—please observe the students and families right to privacy. (This is also a federal confidentiality requirement).

Staff Dress Code

Dress like a professional -- Especially for parent meetings, assemblies and community work experiences.

Be sure your appearances does NOT violate the student dress code.

Be a model for appropriate dress. Follow the Dress Code of your School.

Personal appearance reflects upon you personally, the classroom and the Wood County ESC.

Program staff may wear jeans on days designated in your assigned district (no holes or frays), but please wear casual business tops—no t-shirts or sweatshirts except on dress down days.

Personal Conduct

Please keep purses and/or other personal items stored in a safe place in the room.

Phones

Except in the case of emergencies, and with the permission of the teacher/supervisor/principal, cell phone usage during work hours is not acceptable. Personal usage should be limited to break & lunch times.

Students may NOT use staff cell phones. Use the school telephone number for emergency calls.

Social Media

Due to confidentiality, no photos or comments about your class, staff, or students should be posted on any social media outlet. This may result in discipline due to the legal ramifications of confidentiality. Be very cautious about what you share and post on social media that could tarnish your reputation and/or the reputation of Wood County Educational Service Center. What you post reflects not only you, but the organization you work for and the districts you serve. If you are unsure if it is appropriate, do not post.

Medications

Keep all personal medicine in a safe place out of the reach of students!!!!

Eating and Drinking

NO eating or drinking (other than water) in the presence of children.

Language

Watch adult conversations in the classroom when students are present. Just because a student is non-verbal does not mean he/she cannot understand what you are saying.

NEVER use profanity or “adult language” in the school building.

Harsh language or threats towards a student will not be tolerated.

Be aware of how language tone, & body language can impact student behavior.

Substitutes in the Classroom

Remind the substitute to check the substitute folders, which should have general classroom guidelines that must be followed by the substitute.

The routines for the students need to stay as close to the same as possible. Paras should offer to assist wherever needed. Discipline issues should be taken care of in a routine manner by the teacher.

Switch students around, if possible, in order that the substitute does not have one of the more challenging students that day. Another regular staff member needs to be responsible for student personal hygiene issues.

***Substitutes should NOT change diapers (unless specifically trained)
or toilet children without another staff member to support***

Para subs cannot be left alone with a Student

Always monitor a substitute. Re-arrange the schedule to prevent the substitute from being alone with, assisting with personal hygiene, or participating in any behavior issues with a child.

Be sure to report any concerns regarding the classroom or any students to:

<u>Teresa Kitchen</u>	Special Needs Supervisor	419-352-7588
<u>Joseph Taylor</u>	Special Needs Supervisor	419-354-9010 ext. 232
<u>Diane Witt</u>	Special Needs Coordinator	419-354-9010 ext. 140

MOST IMPORTANTLY:

BE FLEXIBLE & WEAR A HAPPY FACE 😊

How to be a Great Paraprofessional

- * Be reliable and eager to help whenever needed.
- * You will need to take “official” time off (personal or sick) if you will be missing ½ hour or more of work.
- * Talk with your teacher and find out exactly what your classroom or child duties will be.
- * Read and understand the students IEP goals including any special learning or behavior techniques.
- * Learn all special procedures or emergency techniques that apply to your student (s).
- * Learn where all supplies and materials are kept.
- * Discuss the line of communication and authority.
- * Set up a time each day to discuss that day with the teacher.
 - You are responsible for understanding the needs of each student under your care.
 - If you need more information, it is your responsibility to ask your teacher or the program supervisor.
- * Responsibilities are to follow through on teacher/supervisor directions.
- * Report all student information to the teacher.
- * Do **NOT** talk to parents about academic or behavior progress (teacher's job).
 - It will be considered insubordination if a para talks poorly to a parent about the classroom or criticizes the school program.
- * Concerns about the classroom or program should be discussed with the teacher or the program supervisor.
- * **Under no circumstance should a paraprofessional have conversations with a parent outside of school hours.**
- * Talk with the teacher or supervisor if you have a question or concern about Wood County ESC policies, the school programs, or any issues that you cannot resolve or need assistance.
- * Understand your roles in student guidance and discipline.

Do's & Don'ts of a Great Paraprofessional

Do	Don't
<p>For purposes of No Child Left Behind, (NCLB) a paraprofessional is a school district employee who provides instructional support in a program supported with Title I funds, including employees who:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide one-on-one tutoring if such tutoring is scheduled at a time, when a student would not otherwise receive instruction from a teacher. 2. Assist with classroom management, such as the organization of instructional and other materials. 3. Provide assistance in a computer laboratory. 4. Conduct parental involvement activities. 5. Provide support in a library or media center. 6. Act as translator. 7. Provide instructional support services under the direction of a highly qualified teacher. 8. Always remember, your primary responsibility is to the students. 	<p>Each district that receives Title I funding must ensure that a paraprofessional working in a program supported by such funds is not assigned a duty inconsistent with provisions of NCLB. Thus, paraprofessionals should NOT:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare lesson plans. 2. Develop curricular materials. 3. Provide direct instruction in place of a teacher. 4. Introduce new content or skills. 5. Assign grades to students. 6. Serve as substitute teachers. 7. Purchase items expecting reimbursement. 8. Be distracted or engage in conversations with classroom visitors unless directed by the teacher.

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION OR RESTRAINT

We have a “hands off” policy in regard to physical intervention or restraint.

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION OR RESTRAINT SHOULD BE A LAST RESORT AND USED ONLY WHEN A STUDENT POSES IMMINENT DANGER TO HIM/HERSELF OR OTHERS.

In almost every instance, physical interventions can be avoided by following your training and using a combination or redirection, cuing, ignoring, waiting out a behavior, etc.

When physical aggression turns ugly or if he/she injures him/herself or others – physical intervention may be necessary...but only as a last resort. Physical restraint or intervention is difficult, and it is fraught with many legal and procedural pitfalls if it isn't executed properly. Physical intervention requires planning, teamwork and training.

NO PARAPROFESSIONAL SHOULD ENGAGE IN ANY PHYSICAL RESTRAINTS WITH STUDENTS IF THEY HAVE NOT BEEN APPROPRIATELY AND SPECIFICALLY TRAINED!!!!!!!!!!

If you have not been trained, notify your supervisor immediately in order to make the necessary arrangements to be trained.

Here's what you should **NOT** do:

- * Never try to physically restrain a student alone.
- * Never act outside of your training.
- * Never physically restrain a student without a written plan for intervention.
- * Never decide to intervene unilaterally – it should be part of our school's policy to consult with another person before intervening. Work with your teacher and colleagues to be prepared, have a plan, and communicate PRIOR to any intervention.
- * Never threaten, bribe or use any physical/verbal aggression against a student.
- * Never participate in any harsh behavior against student. Yelling, squeezing, pinching, slapping, rough holding, pushing, etc., will not be tolerated and may be subject to a referral to Job and Family Services for suspected abuse.

If you are involved in any physical intervention/restraint, you must follow all related procedures, which include completing the necessary paperwork, immediately notifying the supervisor, ensuring the parent is contacted by the teacher/supervisor, etc.