



**CENTRAL RIVERS**  
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*A Post for Paraeducators Working with Students within Schools in Central Rivers AEA*

# ParaPost



*Welcome to the next ParaPost! A Post for Paraeducators Working with Students within Schools in Central Rivers AEA. We at Central Rivers are looking forward to supporting you in your role as a paraeducator and hope that you find this information useful.*



## Welcome to the first edition of the ParaPost for the 23-24 school year.

This year's theme is Collaboration! Everyone, including admin, special ed and general education teachers, paraeducators, etc., contributes to students' success and how building strong partnerships among these groups can create a positive learning environment.

In this year's newsletters, we will delve into the multifaceted responsibilities of paraeducators, shedding light on ways to collaborate with supervising teachers to create environments where every student can thrive. From classroom support to specialized assistance, data collection, and professional development, paraeducators wear many hats to meet every student's needs.

Thank you for joining us in celebrating the remarkable work of paraeducators and the power of Collaboration in education. Good luck with the new school year. As we said last Spring, Paraeducators, this one's for YOU!

# Tips for Success as a Paraeducator

## Be a Good Communicator

Paraprofessionals will need to communicate with students, teachers, administrators, and possibly parents/guardians, the ability to communicate clearly and articulately is a major part of the job. Especially if you are a bilingual aide. So, listening skills are key! Talk to the teacher you assist with your concerns or any issues you may have. Students CAN sense negative feelings. If you do not address them, it can affect your ability to help the students and may damage the way the student and teacher relationship.

## Be a People Person

You MUST like kids unconditionally and be a team player. Paraprofessionals are part of a team of teachers, administrators, and support staff where communication and collaboration are essential. Know how to work as part of a team to help educate students.

## Be Calm, Patient, and Flexible

The best paraprofessionals remain calm and patient both in crisis and in routine. Remain patient and understanding when having to work at the pace of the student you are helping. Be flexible and ready to shift gears when a crisis arises.

## Be Aware

Give the student/s their independence. Know when to back off and jump in. Give students the opportunity to work independently to help them build confidence in their skills. Instead of guiding the student to the answers, a truly great paraprofessional knows how to remain present or step back while the student figures out the answer for him or herself and intervenes when something is not quite right.

## Be Organized

A chaotic environment distracts everyone from the tasks at hand. As a paraprofessional, you should have a good sense of organization when it comes to record-keeping and classroom behavior. That means keeping track of assignments and bathroom breaks, having the right class materials at the right time, and much more. Remember to document everything and keep confidential information private.

## Be Positive

You recognize the opportunities and are willing to try new things. You can do this! It is Possible!

<https://aparapro.com/beginners-guide-paraeducators/>

# Para Help Line

Submit any questions you have and we will share the answers, advice and guidance. Please submit your questions to [tkesler@centralriversaea.org](mailto:tkesler@centralriversaea.org) and our team will address them.

I recently disagreed with my teacher partner. I don't like to argue, and I realize she is the teacher. How can I share my disagreement without letting it come between us?

It's important to approach the situation respectfully and openly to find a resolution. Here are some tips on how to share your disagreement with your teacher partner without letting it come between you:

**Choose the right time and place:** Find a time and place to have a private conversation without distractions or interruptions.

**Use "I" statements:** Instead of blaming or accusing, express your concerns using "I" statements. For example, "I feel like we may have different approaches to this lesson" instead of "You're doing this wrong."

**Listen actively:** After sharing your concerns, listen to your partner's perspective. Try to understand where they're coming from and why they see things the way they do.

**Seek common ground:** Look for areas of agreement and try to find common ground. Focus on finding a solution that works for both of you.

**Be respectful:** Keep the conversation respectful, even if you disagree. Avoid attacking or belittling your partner; instead, focus on the issue at hand.

Remember, it's okay to disagree with your partner. What matters is how you handle the disagreement. By approaching the situation with an open mind and respectful attitude, you can work together to find a solution that works for both of you.

I've been a paraeducator for about eight years and have worked with several great teachers. They have taught me some very effective behavior management techniques. The teacher I am working with this year is brand new, and I am unfamiliar with the behavior management plan she decided to implement. I know that I can control student behavior on my own. Should I tell her I plan to use other strategies or go ahead when left alone with the students?

You may have had great success at behavior management with previous teachers. The main reason was that you closely implemented the strategies they showed you. Remember, there is more than one correct answer. It would be best if you gave your new partner a chance to be successful with her system. Your support and consistency will be important.

Unless you talk about alternate strategies with your partner, it is essential that you learn and follow through with her system of behavior management.

# Central Rivers AEA ABC Paraeducator Award

In order to honor the hard work and dedication of the paraeducators employed by the schools within CRAEA, we are excited to bring back the ABC (Above and Beyond the Call of the Paraeducator Profession) Paraeducator Award.

This award gives us a chance to highlight the incredible service that paraeducators provide to our schools and our students. Often working without fanfare and behind the scenes, paraeducators are the lifeline for teachers to provide the individual attention so many students need to unlock their academic potential. Through continuous daily successes, students are given the opportunity to maximize their education because of the efforts of paraeducators.

The upcoming Central Rivers AEA ABC Paraeducator Award will undoubtedly provide a great opportunity to honor and recognize the outstanding contributions of paraeducators in the education community. Be watching for next month's ParaPost for nomination guidelines and submission directions.





# Individual Differences

Did you know that there are over 4,000 English learners in CRAEA districts?

As a paraeducator, you will likely be called upon to support students learning English as a new and additional language. Our multilingual learners come to us with various backgrounds, cultures, and languages. They are at different places on their English learning journey. While our multilingual learners bring a wealth of knowledge and experiences to our classrooms, they are challenged to learn grade-level content in a language they are still acquiring. Wherever they are on their learning journey, we can use many practices, techniques, and approaches to support their learning of content and language.

As you have the opportunity to support English learners, consider the following:

## Build Relationships:

- Greet students daily with a SMILE and open arms! (A hug if culturally appropriate :)
  - We want students to feel safe and welcomed every day.
- Learn to pronounce their name (ask them multiple times, if needed)
  - Correct pronunciation is a key part of our identity.
- Students will be watching your every move. Make them positive!
  - For example, if this is new and you have feelings of uncertainty, try not to show this in your gestures or facial expressions. If they are new to the language, this will be how the students will 'understand' your feelings and thoughts of them.
- Learn about the student's culture and experiences.
  - Talk to the EL teacher or others in the building to learn more about the student or specific cultures.
- Learn about the student and find ways to connect on a personal level.
  - What do they do for fun?
  - What are they good at?
  - What do they like?
  - What do they know a lot about?

## Support Access to Content:

- Learn about your students' English learning journey - where are they at? What are they working on?
- Support understanding by using visuals, concrete objects (realia), demonstrations, gestures, and hands-on activities.
- Model what students are asked to do

- Share examples
- Emphasize keywords and concepts
- Collaborate with the classroom and EL teacher on strategies that engage students

## Extend and Support Language:

- Ask clarifying questions
- Prompt students to elaborate: "Tell me more."
- Provide 2 choices: is it \_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_?
- Model complete sentences
- Model school language
- Model academic vocabulary

## Build Independence:

- Help students understand the learning target.
- Model note-taking strategies (depending on grade level).
- Show and explain; provide a step-by-step guide; provide just-in-time support.
- Help students learn how to seek assistance: who to ask and how to ask.
- Encourage and reassure them; help build their confidence.
- Celebrate small successes and mistakes! Mistakes are a sign of learning and that the student feels safe enough to take risks in your classroom.

***Enjoy this learning journey and be the one to make a difference in the lives of your students!***

For additional information or questions, please contact:

Annalisa Miner, Consultant for ELs  
[aminer@centralriversaea.org](mailto:aminer@centralriversaea.org)

Lisa Wymore, Consultant for ELs  
[lwymore@centralriversaea.org](mailto:lwymore@centralriversaea.org)

# Learning Opportunities!

*Central Rivers AEA has a variety of learning opportunities for a variety of audiences.*

- [#204352 CR - Literacy Development in Early Childhood](#)
- [#204124 CR - Paraeducator Generalist Certification Program - Course I Introduction/Foundation](#)
- [#204317 CR - Paraeducator Generalist Certification Program - Course II Instructional Support](#)
- [#204318 CR - Paraeducator Generalist Certification Program - Course III Behavioral Support](#)
- [#215980 CR - Regroup, Refresh, Renew your Learning](#)
- [#204756 CR - Substitute Authorization](#)

## Next Month Topics

- Communication Tips
- Mandatory Training Reminders
- Artificial Intelligence- what is it and how does it apply to my students?

*To view previous issues and/or receive our monthly email publications, visit [www.centralriversaea.org/educators/professional-learning/professional-learning-newsletters/](http://www.centralriversaea.org/educators/professional-learning/professional-learning-newsletters/)*



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