

**Essex Regional
Educational Services Commission
2021 – 2022 School Year**



**Paraprofessional Program
Manual**

Irvington Public Schools

DR. LAURIE W. NEWELL

Superintendent of Schools

THEME: “WE’RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER”

- ✓ **High Expectations**
- ✓ **Be Positive & Optimistic**
- ✓ **Good Attitude**
- ✓ **Set Goals**
- ✓ **Believe in your calling – Passion**
- ✓ **Self-reflection**

Paraprofessional “On-Point” Check List

✓ **Professionalism**

(Attitude, Dress, Attendance, Conflict Resolution, Effective Communication, Integrity & Fairness, Accountability, Responsibility, Competence, Discretion, Adherence to Professional Rules, Ethical Conduct).

✓ **Roles, Responsibilities & Expectations**

✓ **Professional Development**

(Strengthening Skills, Applying Strategies, Providing Support Services, Partnerships).

Paraprofessionals

The ERESK Paraprofessional Mission

“To provide optimum services that respond to the needs of the total child.”

You are employees of the ERESK and your supervisor is the ERESK Coordinator of Schools and Programs, Tracy Stewart. ERESK paraprofessionals (paras) are considered to be important providers of support services in all schools. The role of the ERESK paraprofessional (para) is to provide support and assistance to students and the classroom teacher. Paraprofessionals are employed to improve and maintain an educational environment conducive to learning.

ERESK paras provide services to the school district in which they are assigned, under the direction of the ERESK administration in partnership with that school district personnel. Paras take daily direction from the classroom/special education teacher, district behaviorist, child study team and building principal to which they are assigned.

ERESK paras work to provide instructional and/or non-instructional services as:

1:1 Aide

1:1 Bilingual Aide

Shared Aide (You may work with up to four students)

Classroom Aide (You may work in one of the following types of classrooms: General Ed, Special Ed, ABA, or ELL.)

Para support is determined by the individual needs of the student or class. Paras can provide support to one student, small groups of students or a classroom of students. Therefore, it is essential that the para meet with the classroom teacher to discuss pertinent test results, goals and objectives, recommended strategies, etc. Frequent communication between the classroom teacher and para is important to provide clear expectations and direction that will positively impact student success. Paraprofessionals are expected to consult with the classroom teacher often.

Supervision is conducted by administrators and consultants who monitor and support paraprofessionals in their field experience by conducting informal and formal visits. Visits invite dialogue, collaboration and communication among all partners.

A para can have a profound and significant influence on student performance. When paraprofessionals work as a team with the classroom teacher and other professional school staff, positive changes can result in student achievement and behavior. ERESK paras are professionals who love children. ERESK paraprofessionals are valued as members of the educational team who endeavor each day to make a difference in the lives of their students.

ERESC Expectations for Paraprofessionals

Adults are role models for children. Paraprofessionals are expected to demonstrate good practices in all you do and say. **Be punctual, consistently present and professional.**

Paraprofessionals must respect both student and school confidentiality both in and out of school. Always DIGNIFY the learner. Nothing less is acceptable.

Please refrain from any cell phone use during the school day. This includes taking photos, video recordings and the use of a smartwatch, i.e. Apple watch. The teacher is responsible for knowing the time and schedule if students need to go to a different class. **Do not take out your phone to check for time, calls, texting, or calculator.**

Paraprofessionals are to discuss a student's performance/problems only with the classroom teacher PRIVATELY. Unless invited by the classroom teacher or building personnel, **paraprofessionals are NOT to speak to parents. Refer parents to the classroom teacher.** All parent's questions and concerns must be directed to the classroom teacher.

Discussion of educational plans and student performance should never take place in public places, hallways, faculty room, playground, etc.

Paraprofessionals should not get involved in school issues. Paraprofessionals are not paid to participate in faculty meetings, or meetings that take place before or after school. Paraprofessionals are paid for their contact time with students.

Paraprofessionals need to **support** the teaching methods and behavior modification system set in place by the classroom teacher. Paraprofessionals need to be clear on how the teacher would like behaviors handled. Paras should request a meeting with the teacher to understand the procedures, systems, schedules, etc. that the teacher would like the para to follow. Follow the teacher's directions and use the same methods of instruction and behavior management techniques. Consistency is critical to student success and will avoid confusion. **Always get the approval of the classroom teacher before initiating a new method or strategy.**

Present information that includes visual, auditory or kinesthetic (VAK) experiences and provide experiences that result in success. Model what you expect the student to learn and allow plenty of practice opportunities to master the skill.

Ask the classroom teacher about their expectations for your performance. Take notes and refer to them periodically. Question what you do not understand. Ask for a school schedule and calendar. **Keep a folder of pertinent information including this manual, copies of your timesheets, articles, book lists, etc.**

Be pro-active after you are clear about your expectations. Don't wait to be prompted. **Be a self-starter!** Implement teacher requests promptly. Use sound decision making skills and common sense. Conduct tasks and support instruction with a positive attitude. Your positive spirit may **make the difference between student success or failure.** **You are the adult and the professional at all times. Use emotional intelligence.**

Always speak in an appropriate manner. Use a **calm** and **professional tone**. **Do not SHOUT** across the room or at students. Use **compassion** and **humor**. **Model correct speech** by repeating the sentence correctly. Do not use baby talk or slang words. Directions should be clearly and concisely stated. Ask simple questions. **Be a good listener.** Encourage the student to use EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE. Paras should refrain from talking too much, but rather, encourage responses by the student in order to evaluate learning. Paras should use **"wait time"** techniques. Find a balance between **assisting** the student and encouraging their **independence**.

Strategies to Implement

“Raise the Praise in Public.” Corrections should be done privately. Remember to always **dignify the learner**. We all have so much more to learn. Emotional intelligence has taught us that climate and tone play a significant role in HOW we learn and remember. Do we remember useful skills and information or humiliation? Compassion, sensitivity and humor dignify the learner. Sometimes it is what you don’t say that gives a lasting effect.

MODEL what you expect your student learn. Provide a **sample of the product** each step of the way presenting only ONE step at a time. **“Chunk” the learning. Present the information in short manageable tasks.**

Keep instruction routine and predictable but always with engaging and interesting lessons and activities. Use visual pictures as cues – index cards, stickers, and pictures on Velcro strips. Think “multi-sensory.” Imagine yourself as the learner – would your response be positive to the learning strategy?

Use prompts, verbal and non-verbal.

Have students repeat directions.

Re-direct student attentions to the task at hand.

Encourage the use of highlighters and stickers.

Present abstract concepts in concrete ways. Concrete methods (hands-on) are essential to learners of ALL ages in ALL content areas.

Verbally reinforce and praise all appropriate behaviors. You can improve behavior by 80% just by pointing out what someone is doing correctly.

Teach collaboration and problem solving skills. Encourage students to make CHOICES.

Conduct a student interest survey to get to know your student(s) as individual. Ask the teacher first. You may be able to use the information you learn for rapport building and the creation of activities that speak to their interests.

FUN is memorable. How can you make learning clever and fun?

EVALUATIONS

You will be formally evaluated one time per year by an ERESK consultant. A conference will follow the observation/evaluation. Your signature is required. You may submit a response to the content within 30 days of the evaluation and conference. You will receive a copy for your records. A copy of your evaluation will also be kept on file in the personnel office at the ERESK.

Frequent informal visits will be made to your school by ERESK administrators. Please report problems directly to your assigned teacher and then to the Para Program office by e-mail, report form and telephone promptly. Prompt communication will assist in resolving problems together effectively and efficiently.

We look forward to seeing you at your best. Please be open to suggestions and discussion following your evaluation. We want to provide feedback that will enhance your para skills and offer support and guidance for your future achievements.

TRAININGS

The Essex Regional Educational Services Commission provides trainings for paraprofessionals. Some trainings are **mandatory**, while others are optional. The ERESK and the school district presents trainings on ABA, CPI, Behavioral Strategies, The IEP Process and other subjects. Paras are required to complete trainings as required by the New Jersey Department of Education. The ERESK directs paras to the on-line trainings.

Please go to gcntraining.com and complete the trainings below no later than Friday September 3, 2021:

- Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights - NJ
- Child Abuse - NJ

Paraprofessionals are notified by e-mail of the professional development opportunities and encouraged to attend the workshops. Participants are required to sign in and asked to complete an evaluation. Paraprofessionals receive professional development certificates of attendance for the trainings they attend.

Watch for our schedule of trainings.

2021-2022

IRVINGTON SCHOOL START DATE

Please report to your school on:

Wednesday, September 8th, 2021

- **You are encouraged to use the school district web site to review their calendars, holidays and school closings due to inclement weather (after 6:00 a.m.)**
- **Please be sure to inquire about your school's snow chain and/or emergency list with the school's secretary.**
- **In the case of a delayed opening, you are to report to the school at the same time that the teachers report.**
- **Substitutes are not included on the Snow Chain list (Please refer to the school district web site after 6:00 a.m.)**

Irvington Public Schools

Augusta Preschool Academy 97 Augusta Street (973) 399-6868	Ms. Andrea Tucker, Principal School Hours: 8:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. (973) 399-0527 (fax)
Berkeley Terrace Elementary School 811 Grove Street (973) 399-6852	Mr. Sean Evans, Principal School Hours: 8:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. (973) 399-6850 (fax)
Chancellor Avenue Elementary School 844 Chancellor Avenue (973) 399-6858	Mr. Hubert Chase, Principal School Hours: 8:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. (973) 375-2488 (fax)
Florence Avenue Elementary School 1324 Springfield Avenue (973) 399-6862	Ms. Mary Michailidis, Principal School Hours: 8:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. (973) 399-6965 (fax)
Grove Street Elementary School 602 Grove Street (973) 399-6867	Dr. Deniese Cooper, Principal School Hours: 8:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. (973) 399-2442 (fax)
Madison Avenue Elementary School 173 Madison Ave (973) 399-6871	Ms. Malikita Wright, Principal School Hours: 8:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.
Mt. Vernon Avenue Elementary School 54 Mt. Vernon Avenue (973) 399-6875	Ms. Bennett, Principal School Hours: 8:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. (973) 371-6875 (fax)
Thurgood Marshall Elementary School 141-181 Montgomery Avenue (973) 399-6800 ext. 2203	Ms. Stacy Love, Principal School Hours: 8:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. Autistic Classes: 8:20 a.m. – 2:50 p.m. (973) 416-3807
University Elementary School 1 University Place (973) 399-6826	Dr. Chinare Simons, Principal School Hours: 8:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. (973) 373-0734 (fax)
Union Avenue Middle School 427 Union Avenue (973) 399-6885	Mr. Muller Pierre, Principal School Hours: 8:20 a.m.- 2:50 p.m. (973) 371-0957 (fax)
University Middle School 255 Myrtle Avenue (973) 399-6879	Ms. Rose Gordon, Principal School Hours: 8:20 a.m.- 2:50 p.m. (973) 351-1025 (fax)
Irvington High School 1253 Clinton Avenue (973) 399-6897	Mr. Oge Denis, Principal School Hours: 8:20 a.m.- 2:50 p.m. (973) 371-7045 (fax)

*** Sign In/Out Procedures ***

You will be punching in and out using Chrome Books (with the exception of charter schools) which are located in the main office (or designated area) of each school. **Please report to the main office each day upon arrival to punch in and sign in.** If you are new to the building, please be sure to introduce yourself to the office staff alerting them of your assignment. **Upon dismissal, be sure to clock out. ALL PARAPROFESSIONALS, PERMANENT & SUBSTITUTES, MUST PUNCH IN AND OUT EVERYDAY!**

Punching in and out is directly linked to the payroll. **If you forget to punch in or out, the adjustment process will take up to 30 days to correct and you will be paid on the next payroll pay date after this process. ABSOLUTELY NO EXCEPTIONS!** Using sign in sheets each day is solely for the use of school administrators. They must know who is in the building at all times. It is imperative that you punch in and sign in to ensure that this process runs smoothly for everyone.

If you forget your E-Portal information or you do not have access to punch in, please call the Para Program office immediately at 973-405-6262 ext. 294 or 257.

*If there is a problem with the Chrome Book, please contact the Paraprofessional Program Department by email (paras@eresc.com) or at (973) 405-6262 ext. 294 or 257.

If you have an emergency while you are already at your assignment and need to leave before the school day is over, it is your responsibility to inform your teacher, your school building administrator, AND call the Para Program office. Please be sure to punch out.

ERESC Paraprofessional Program office phone #: 973-405-6262 ext. 294

1:1 Paraprofessionals

If your student is not in class by 8:45a.m., first check with the school secretary or attendance officer to see if your student is coming to school that day. If the student is absent, it is your responsibility to inform your teacher, your school building administrator, AND call the Para Program office immediately. Please do not leave the building before following this procedure. You will have the option **to take another assignment for the day**, if available, or be **paid, at your hourly rate, for two (2) hours and you may go home. Please call the Paraprofessional Program office at 973-405-6262 ext. 294 or 228 to notify us if you decide to go home or if you request another assignment. You cannot stay in the classroom without authorization from the Para Program office.**

This procedure also applies if your student is suspended, placed on home instruction, or transferred out of district.

*** Calling Out Procedures ***

You are expected to report an absence at least a day in advance. If you are going to be out **more than three consecutive days** or planning on taking a leave of absence, please call the Para Program office in advance.

Frontline/AESOP Procedure

We are using Frontline/AESOP for our paraprofessionals to log their absences. Here are a few quick facts about the system:

- ❖ Absences can be created on the phone, online and via mobile app
- ❖ From the phone - up to 30 days in advance
- ❖ From the web - up to 1 year in advance
- ❖ Mobile site: **m.aesonline.com**

You will be sent an email directly from Frontline. From there, you will have to create your unique ID/username and PIN/password. To log in to the absence management application, type aesonline.com in your web browser's address bar. The Sign In page will appear. Enter your ID/username and PIN/password and click Sign In.

RECOVERING CREDENTIALS: If you cannot recall your credentials, use the recovery options below or click the "Having trouble signing in?" link on the website for more details.

Phone - 855-999-8515

Email - absencesupport@frontlineed.com

If you are still having issues, it is your responsibility to call the Para Program Office at 973-405-6262 ext. 294.

CREATING AN ABSENCE: You can enter a new absence from your absence management home page under the Create Absence tab. Enter the absence details including the date of the absence, the absence reason, notes to the administrator or substitute, etc. and attach any files, if needed. You can then click Create Absence.

ACCESSING ABSENCE MANAGEMENT ON THE PHONE: In addition to web-based, system accessibility, you can also create absences, manage personal information, and more, all over the phone.

To call the absence management system, **dial 1-800-942-3767**. You'll be prompted to enter your employee ID number (followed by the # sign), then your PIN number (followed by the # sign).

Over the phone you can:

- Create an absence (within the next 30 days) – Press 1
- Review upcoming absences – Press 3
- Review a specific absence – Press 4
- Review or change your personal information – Press 5

If you cannot access Frontline, you are still required to call out to the Para Program office at (973) 405-6262 ext. 294 the night before your intended absence and no later than 6:00 am the day of.

Please leave a detailed message including your name, school, and assignment. Email absences will not be accepted.

If you fail to call out, you will not be compensated and it may lead to further disciplinary action.

Payroll Procedures

ERESC Part-Time Paraprofessionals work 29 hours per week and 5.8 hours per day.

Payroll is deposited twice per month – the 15th and the last day of each month. If the established date falls on a weekend or holiday, you will receive payment on the weekday before that date.

PARAPROFESSIONAL PAYROLL SCHEDULE

2021 - 2022 SCHOOL YEAR

Hourly Period	Time Sheet Due	Pay Date
9/8/2021 - 9/14/2021*	9/9/2021	9/15/2021
9/15/2021 - 9/17/2021	9/17/2021	9/30/2021
9/18/2021 - 9/30/2021	9/30/2021	10/15/2021
10/1/2021 - 10/15/2021	10/15/2021	10/29/2021
10/18/2021 - 10/29/2021	10/29/2021	11/15/2021
11/1/2021 - 11/12/2021	11/12/2021	11/30/2021
11/15/2021 - 11/30/2021	11/30/2021	12/15/2021
12/1/2021 - 12/10/2021	12/10/2021	12/31/2021
12/13/2021 - 12/23/2021	12/23/2021	1/14/2022
1/3/2022 - 1/14/2022	1/14/2022	1/31/2022
1/17/2022 - 1/28/2022	1/28/2022	2/15/2022
1/31/2022 - 2/11/2022	2/11/2022	2/28/2022
2/14/2022 - 2/25/2022	2/25/2022	3/15/2022
2/28/2022 - 3/11/2022	3/11/2022	3/31/2022
3/14/2022 - 3/25/2022	3/25/2022	4/14/2022
3/28/2022 - 4/8/2022	4/8/2022	4/29/2022
4/11/2022 - 4/29/2022	4/29/2022	5/13/2022
5/3/2022 - 5/13/2022	5/13/2022	5/31/2022
5/16/2022 - 5/27/2022	5/27/2022	6/15/2022
5/31/2022 - 6/10/2022	6/10/2022	6/30/2022
6/13/2022 - 6/27/2022	6/25/2022	7/15/2022

- ❖ **Upon enrollment** the first pay period is a physical check.
- ❖ Direct Deposits will start after the first pay period.
- ❖ You can access your paystubs on E-portal.

E.R.E.S.C. DRESS CODE

STAFF DRESS CODE

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a healthy environment in the schools and offices conducive to academic and business purposes; to help foster the goals and objectives of the Commission and to help implement a thorough and efficient system of public education services. Employees of the Essex County Educational Services Commission shall be neatly attired and groomed while discharging their responsibilities.

A. Grooming and attire shall meet the following criteria:

Females may wear skirts, slacks, blouses or sweaters, dresses, or slack suits.

Males are strongly encouraged but not required to wear dress shirts or similarly tailored sport shirts. All shirts worn by males must have a collar. All staff members shall maintain clean and well-groomed hair styles.

B. The following attire is not acceptable:

1. Jeans of any color or material.
2. Sneakers. (Exception – During gym periods ONLY)
3. Excessively tight fitting clothing/leggings
4. Clothing which promotes or advertises a company, product or event. (Band Tour T-shirts, etc.). Brand name apparel displaying logo is acceptable.
5. See-through blouses.
6. Torn or dirty clothing.
7. Any dress or grooming which would attract undue attention, create disruption, or would be potentially unsanitary or dangerous.
8. Beach wear (plastic thongs, beach jackets, swimwear, etc.)
9. "Shorts" meaning Bermudas, cut-offs, hot pants, culottes (that look like shorts), athletic shorts, or swim suits. Dresses and skirts must be knee length or longer.
10. Headwear or hair rollers shall not be worn in the building (exceptions may be made for Religious, medical reasons or special functions).
11. Jogging suits/exercise gear

C. Personal grooming should be done at home or in the appropriate areas. Staff members should maintain a well-groomed appearance at all times.

D. Special Rules

1. Utility workers may wear work-clothes, jeans, sweat shirts, etc. that are appropriate for the work situation.
2. Maintenance workers-Custodians may wear work-clothes, jeans, sweat shirts, etc. that are appropriate for the work situation.
3. P.E. teachers conducting P.E. classes may wear jogging outfits on those days
4. Shirts must be worn at all times.
5. Clothing needs to be clean each workday.
6. Directors may make exceptions to this policy on special occasion.

E. Prior Approval

If any employee is uncertain as to the appropriateness of a garment, contact your Director before reporting to work.

Part Time Paraprofessional Program FAQ's

****Paraprofessionals are assigned to schools according to the needs expressed by each district. Principals can re-assign paraprofessionals as needed in order to run their buildings efficiently & effectively. We appreciate your ability to be flexible, professional, and cooperative.**

Questions and Answers about the program:

Cell Phone Use:

1. When can I use my cell phone for calls and texting during the day? Never during instruction, in classrooms or hallways. **Please refrain from any cell phone use during the school day. This includes the use of a smartwatch, i.e. Apple watch.** The teacher is responsible for knowing the time and schedule if students need to go to different class. **Do not take out your phone to check for time, calls, texting, or calculator.**

Contact with Parents:

2. Should paras speak to parents in person or by phone? Paraprofessionals are to discuss a student's performance/problems only with the classroom teacher PRIVATELY. Unless invited by the classroom teacher or building personnel, **paraprofessionals are NOT to speak to parents. Refer parents to the classroom teacher.** All parent's questions and concerns must be directed to the classroom teacher.

No Pay Days:

3. Can I take "absent without pay" days? Absent without pay days are discouraged and may result in a transfer to the substitute list. Personal appointments should be planned around the district calendar or after working hours.

Resignation:

4. If I need to resign, what is the procedure for resignation? Send a letter of resignation promptly. The ERESA requests a **14 day notice** in advance. Be sure your letter specifies the last day you will work and email it to the office at paras@eresc.com. The letter should be addressed to Dr. Newell.

Leave of Absence:

5. What if I still want to work but I need to go on leave? Please contact the Paraprofessional Program Department by email (paras@eresc.com), and Human Resources (hr@eresc.com) with any leave requests (family/medical, military, or personal). Please include the date you expect to return. ***The ERESA requests a 30 day notice in advance for Maternity Leave***

Part Time Paraprofessional Program FAQ's cont'd

Returning to work after Absence or Leave

6. Staff members who are absent due to a medical illness for three (3) or more days or with a contagious medical condition are required to provide an original medical certificate before returning to work. The medical certificate must be in writing or on the doctor's letterhead/prescription, and indicate the following: (1) dates of absence/disability, (2) specific date for return to work, and (3) any work limitations or restrictions.

The Commission may request medical certification for any of the following reasons: (1) excessive absences or a pattern of absences indicative of an abuse of sick leave or (2) concerns about the employee's ability to perform their duties.

The Commission is obligated to permit employees to resume their positions and assignments but only if the employees are medically able to perform the essential duties and responsibilities of the employees positions and assignments.

Please Note: No Employee who has ANY restrictions or limitations will be permitted to return to work unless clearance is obtained from the Human Resources Department and/or the Paraprofessional Program Department. The above procedures apply to all employees and must be followed without exception.

Miscellaneous Information

7. All concerns or requests must be put in writing on the report form that is in the manual and emailed to Mrs. Nickerson or paras@eresc.com.
8. Can I bring my child(ren) to work? No, you may not bring your child/children to work.
9. Can I give or receive money, food, or gifts from students? **Never.**
10. Who do I contact regarding:

~**Employment Verification** - Email Human Resources at hr@eresc.com or call ext. 269

ERESC Contacts

The preferred method of communication is by **EMAIL**

hr@eresc.com

Human Resources:

973-405-6262

Albania Jackson

Manager of Human Resources

Mrs. Odalis Perez

H.R. Secretary

(973) 405-6262, ext. 269

Fax: (973) 405-6555

The following requests must be made in writing.

- ❖ To report a change of address, name or phone number, please fill out the appropriate form and fax it to the Human Resources Department at (973) 405-6555 or scan it and email it to hr@eresc.com. Please call H.R. at (973) 405-6262 ext. 269 to ensure receipt of the document.

- ❖ If you need an employment verification letter, please email your request, with details, to hr@eresc.com.

ERESC Paraprofessional Program Contacts

The preferred method of communication is by **EMAIL**

paras@eresc.com

Mrs. Samaiyah Nickerson

Assistant Director

(973) 405-6262

Mr. Isaiah Thomas

Recruiter

(973) 405-6262 ext. 228

Mrs. Itzel Arenas

Billing Specialist

973-405-6262 ext. 213

973-405-6262 ext. 294

Important: If you experience a problem, email the Paraprofessional Program Department (paras@eresc.com) or if it is urgent call 973-405-6262, ext. 294 or 228 to discuss the concern and then write it up with specific dates and information, and fax or email using the contact information above.

Have a successful school year!