

# *Paraprofessional Professional Learning*

## Introduction

Paraprofessionals provide an invaluable service to students and teachers. It is essential for Paraprofessionals to engage in regular and on-going high quality professional learning experiences throughout their career with SSD. The Division of Professional learning aims to design and lead professional learning experiences to address the differentiated needs of all paraprofessionals so they have the knowledge and skills necessary to improve outcomes for students.

## New Paraprofessional Academy

The Paraprofessional Academy is guided training for paraprofessionals in their first 3 years of employment with SSD. Year 1 is provided in person and addresses professional learning topics as required by Missouri's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Paraprofessionals within their 2nd and 3rd years select an asynchronous course to gain knowledge and skills in focused areas. The courses range in topics that include, but are not limited to: literacy, numeracy, SEB (social-emotional behavior), and autism. Paraprofessionals will work with their supervisor to determine which courses (strand) will be appropriate for them to complete in alignment to their immediate job responsibilities. Paraprofessionals will register for these courses within KickUp, SSD's course management system.

## Year 1

Academy for Year 1 Paraprofessionals: a three-day training that is provided to **all** paraprofessionals. All new hires must attend new paraprofessional training prior to working with students as mandated by Missouri's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) .

Topics for the 3 day session include:

- Disabilities Awareness
- Behavior Modification
- Instructional Techniques
- Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Training

\*New hire paraprofessionals are automatically enrolled in this required learning and will receive information regarding training dates/times from the Division of Professional Learning via their SSD email account.

Year 2 - Paraprofessionals in their 2nd Year with SSD will complete one of the courses below.

Strand	Course Title	Description
	Autism Training for paraprofessionals - Part 1	<p>The Effective Practice Specialists for Autism (AU EPS) have specially designed professional development for paraprofessionals working with students with autism. Paraprofessionals play a vital part in helping students gain their independence and receive the support they need to be engaged in their school community. Paraprofessionals are a valuable part of a student's team and influential in impacting student success and can consider themselves "Independence Facilitators" or "Learning Support Assistants." While aligning with New Para training, this course provides you with topics and background information to help you, as a paraprofessional interacting with individuals with autism, succeed in educating your students with unique needs. This course is created as online modules to address each topic area individually. Because it is designed as a self-paced learning experience, this course will take approximately between 12-15 hours for completion. Each module will yield a certificate of completion.</p>
	Behavior Training for New Paraprofessionals	<p>By completing these 10 hours of asynchronous learning in the area of behavior you should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recall and make connections to year 1 training in the area of behavior basics and classroom management strategies.</li> <li>● Know and be able to communicate antecedent, reinforcement, and extinction strategies aligned to function and how they can benefit children/youth in the classroom.</li> <li>● Know and be able to respond appropriately to challenging behavior.</li> <li>● Define behavior in observable and measurable terms.</li> <li>● Understand the A-B-Cs of Behavior and practice collecting ABC Data.</li> <li>● Know various data collection methods (and use specifically two types) and understand when they may be used.</li> </ul>
	Instruction in Literacy	<p>Literacy includes reading, writing, speaking and listening. This site will focus on reading since these are skills explicitly taught. An introduction to Literacy will be provided and you will learn about the many skills that work together to make a proficient reader and how you can support these skills in the classroom.</p>

	<p>Instruction in Numeracy - Part 1</p>	<p>As an educator, it's imperative that we assume our students are competent and able to learn. When we believe in our students, we help them believe in themselves. This course will provide you with resources and strategies to support students in developing a positive math mindset as well as focusing on the importance of communication and collaboration.</p>
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Year 3 - Paraprofessionals in their 3rd Year with SSD will complete one of the courses below.

Strand	Course Title	Description
	<p>Autism Training for Paraprofessionals - Part 2</p>	<p>The Effective Practice Specialists for Autism (AU EPS) have specially designed professional development for paraprofessionals working with students with autism. Paraprofessionals play a vital part in helping students gain their independence and receive the support they need to be engaged in their school community. Paraprofessionals are a valuable part of a student's team and influential in impacting student success and can consider themselves "Independence Facilitators" or "Learning Support Assistants." While aligning with New Para training, this course provides you with topics and background information to help you, as a paraprofessional interacting with individuals with autism, succeed in educating your students with unique needs. This course is created as online modules to address each topic area individually. Because it is designed as a self-paced learning experience, this course will take approximately between 12-15 hours for completion. Each module will yield a certificate of completion.</p> <p>*Successful completion of Part 1 is a prerequisite.</p>
	<p>Behavior Management</p>	<p>Behavior Management Year 3 Para Professional Learning will introduce participants to the School-Wide Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Quality Indicators (SEB-QIs). Participants will learn specific school-wide practices directly related to the role of the paraprofessional within the continuum of interventions in place to support all students. In addition, participants will learn strategies to implement selected SEB-QI practices, including for those students that require individualized support. The outcome of this Year 3 professional learning is to support school/district initiatives to increase student engagement, grades and attendance within the least restrictive environment and decrease discipline referrals, suspensions and crisis events.</p>

	<p>Instruction in Literacy</p>	<p>Literacy includes reading, writing, speaking and listening. Throughout this site you will be learning about all aspects of assisting in the teaching of literacy skills to students with special needs. This site will focus on writing since these are skills explicitly taught. You will learn about the writing process and the many skills that work together to make a proficient writer.</p>
	<p>Instruction in Numeracy - Part 2</p>	<p>This course is a continuation of Year 2. Paraprofessionals will continue to deepen their knowledge and application of strategies to support students in developing a positive math mindset as well as focusing on the importance of communication and collaboration</p>

## Veteran Paraprofessionals

Year 4+: Paraprofessionals in their 4+ years with SSD may participate in “On Demand” learning topics. Links to ‘On Demand’ learning can be found in SSD’s [Professional Learning Guide](#)

<p>Numeracy101 for Paraprofessionals</p>	<p>This is a great way to start or continue your learning in how to support teachers and students in numeracy. SSD has developed resources and tools you may need to get started in supporting your students with their numeracy needs.</p>
<p>Engagement Expectations - Virtual Learning</p>	<p>This video describes what Paraprofessionals might be expected to do to support virtual learning.</p>
<p>ABC Data Collection for Virtual Learning</p>	<p>This video provides an overview to support Paraprofessionals in collecting Antecedent/Behavior/Consequence (ABC) data for virtual learning.</p>
<p>Behavior Data Collection for Progress Monitoring</p>	<p>This video will support Paraprofessionals in collecting data for baseline and progress monitoring for virtual learning.</p>
<p>Paraprofessional Roles and Responsibilities</p>	<p>This course is about learning and knowing your role expectations and responsibilities.</p>
<p>Prompting and</p>	<p>How do you support students without doing too much? How do you know when to assist and when to let students be autonomous? This course will</p>

Fading	teach you about the different types/levels of prompting and making informed decisions about what is appropriate in each situation.
Disability Awareness	Gain, reinforce and grow your knowledge of disability awareness through the use of resources. Learn the importance of People First Language.
Basic Behavior Training for Paraprofessionals	A course that covers the basics of behavior: Behavior is communication, Effective classroom management, Strategies to apply and support classroom and group management.
IEP Guidance for Paraprofessionals	This course provides basic information about the key components of an IEP with which a paraprofessional should be aware when supporting student goals.
Paraprofessional Ethical Information	As a paraprofessional you will be facing ethical issues daily. This course includes confidentiality, record-management, and the tasks and directives placed by principals, area coordinators, and teachers. Building relationships with various members within the school building often hinges on not only your work performance, but your ethical behavior.

DESE  
Paraprofessional  
Webinar Series

A five-part webinar series on information paraprofessionals need to know is available on the DESE website at <https://dese.mo.gov/special-education/effective-practices/paraprofessionals>. On the Special Education Effective Practices page, see the Quick Link box titled Paraprofessional Resources to access the five recorded webinars, notes, and handouts for each part of the series.

This series includes information on roles and responsibilities, family educational rights and privacy act, confidentiality, mandated reporting, communication, teamwork, group structure, overview of the special education process, and behavior management. It is recommended that paraprofessionals view all parts of the series.