August 23, 2016

TO: Chief School Administrators
Charter School Lead Persons
Renaissance School Project Lead Persons
Directors of Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities

FROM: Pamela J. Leggio, Director
County Office Administrative Unit

SUBJECT: Reporting of Paraprofessional Staff – ACTION REQUIRED

DUE DATES: September 30, 2016 and January 31, 2017

The purpose of this memo is to inform/remind school officials of the reporting requirements for the employment of paraprofessional staff, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-4. School districts, charter schools, Renaissance Schools and approved private schools for students with disabilities (APSSD) must submit a statement of assurance (SOA) two times each school year to affirm that paraprofessional staff are employed in accordance with law and regulation.

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) has made the “Statement of Assurance Regarding the Use of Paraprofessional Staff, 2016-17 School Year” (SOA) available on the NJDOE Broadcasts webpage. In addition, a list of frequently asked questions is attached to this memo. Paraprofessional staff is defined as a “school or classroom aide who assists appropriately certified personnel with the supervision of student activities.” The terms “paraprofessional staff” and “classroom aides” are used interchangeably in this memo. Requirements for paraprofessionals funded through Title I monies can be found at: [http://www.state.nj.us/education/title1/hqs/pp](http://www.state.nj.us/education/title1/hqs/pp). Please note that, as the NJDOE stated in its July 19, 2016 broadcast, requirements for paraprofessionals funded under Title I have not changed as a result of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Additionally, APPSDs must meet the requirements regarding approval of paraprofessional staff at N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-18.

Here are the required steps to ensure compliance with paraprofessional reporting:

**School Districts, Charter Schools, Renaissance Schools:**

1. Create a list of all paraprofessional (school aide) employees and their titles. Maintain the list within your school/district. Do not submit the list to the County Office of Education.
2. Prepare job descriptions for all **special education classroom aide employees only.** These job descriptions must be submitted to the County Office of Education for approval.
by the Executive County Superintendent. Any time a job description is changed, the updated description must be transmitted to the County Office for approval. Do not submit job descriptions for non-special education aides to the County Office.

3. Complete and submit the Paraprofessional Staff Statement of Assurance form to your County Office by September 30, 2016 and January 31, 2017. Job descriptions for special education aides that have not been approved by the Executive County Superintendent need to be part of your SOA submission.

Approved Schools for Students with Disabilities:

1. Create a list of all paraprofessional (school aide) employees and their titles. Submit the list to the County Office of Education.

2. Prepare and submit job descriptions for all paraprofessionals to the County Office for approval by the Executive County Superintendent. Any time a job description is changed, the updated description must be transmitted to the County Office.

3. Complete and submit the Paraprofessional Staff Statement of Assurance form to your County Office by September 30, 2016 and January 31, 2017. Items #1 and 2 must accompany your SOA form as part of your submission.

Questions about the SOA process, form or compliance requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:32-4 should be emailed to countyoffices@doe.state.nj.us.

Attachment

c: Members, State Board of Education
   Senior Staff
   Executive County School Business Administrators
   Executive County Superintendents
   Executive Directors for Regional Achievement Centers
   Garden State Coalition of Schools
   NJ LEE Group
   Karen Campbell
   Kathleen Ehling
   County Education Specialists
   County Supervisors of Child Study
Paraprofessional Staff (Classroom Aides) SOA Process
Questions and Answers (revised 8/2016)

Q: We don’t use paraprofessional aides. Do we need to complete the SOA?
A: No; however, please inform your County Office so that they know that you will not be submitting an SOA.

Q: To whom do we submit the completed form?
A: Send the completed form to the County Office of Education. Your County Office will inform you regarding their preferred method of receipt.

Q: Our district outsources procurement of paraprofessionals to a vendor. Do we need to complete the SOA?
A: Yes. The paraprofessionals are employed to work in your district so the SOA form is applicable and must be completed.

Q: What job descriptions do I need to provide to the county office of education?
A: Districts, charters and Renaissance provide only those job descriptions for special education paraprofessionals. Approved private schools for students with disabilities need to provide all job descriptions to the County Office.

Q: We provided job descriptions to the County Office last year and those job descriptions have not changed. Do we need to provide them again?
A: No. As long as the job descriptions remain the same from the previous year, they do not need to be submitted to the county office again.

Q: What types of paraprofessionals fall under the required category?
A: The regulations define paraprofessional staff as “a school or classroom aide who assists appropriately certified personnel with the supervision of student activities.”

Q: Do we need to provide a list of paraprofessionals to the County Office?
A: School districts, charters and Renaissance Schools do not need to provide a list of paraprofessionals to the County Office but they do need to maintain such a list. Approved private schools for students with disabilities must submit the list aides and job titles to the county office of education.

Q: What is the deadline for SOA submission?
A: Biannual submission dates are September 30, 2016 and January 31, 2017.

Q: Our district/charter/Renaissance school does not have any special education classroom aides. How do we indicate that on the form?
A: Check the N/A box in the section labeled “Compliance with State Regulatory Requirements.”

Q: We do not employee Title I aides. How do we indicate that on the form?
A: Check the N/A in the section labeled “Compliance with Federal Title I Requirements.”

Q: To whom should we address additional questions about the SOA or process?
A: Email questions to countyoffices@doe.state.nj.us.