



PARA PROFESSIONALS

What we do

"It's all about helping the kids any way you can. That pretty much sums up being a paraeducator."
 —Angie Penalzoza, bilingual paraeducator,
 Kerman Chapter 279

Paraeducators work directly with children. Some help the teacher in the classroom and work with children who need one-on-one attention. Others assist students in computer labs and some even reach out to families in their homes. They make sure students get the help they need when they need it. They support and enhance the work of teachers in all components of the education process.



Angie Penalzoza
 bilingual paraeducator

Photo by Don Davis

INSIDER TIPS FROM THE INSTRUCTION PROS

- Read to your student as often as possible or set aside time to listen to them read. This is the best way to ensure that they succeed in the classroom.
- When helping your students with their homework, avoid completing the assignments for them or answering questions for them. Allow students to learn from and take pride in their own work.

A B C

Essential Web sites

California department of education resources for paraeducators: <http://www.pent.ca.gov/pos5para.htm>

Professional Association for Childhood Education: www.pacenet.org

The Paraeducator Learning Network: www.paraeducator.net

CSEA Paraeducator page: www.csea.com/Paraeducator

facts about paraeducators

- "Paraeducator" is the title CSEA adopted for a variety of different roles including teacher associate, teaching assistant, classroom aide and paraprofessional. A survey identified more than 60 different job titles that could be included in the paraeducator category.
- Paraeducators cover many different areas of education. Some specialize in working with underachieving students, others work with English language learners and others with disabled children.
- Paraeducators are an important part of the education workforce and their numbers have been increasing steadily. Because of paraeducators, many children with disabilities are now able to join their peers in a general classroom setting.
- It has been nearly 50 years since the first paraeducators were introduced into American classrooms in response to teacher shortages during the early years of the post-World War II baby boom.

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