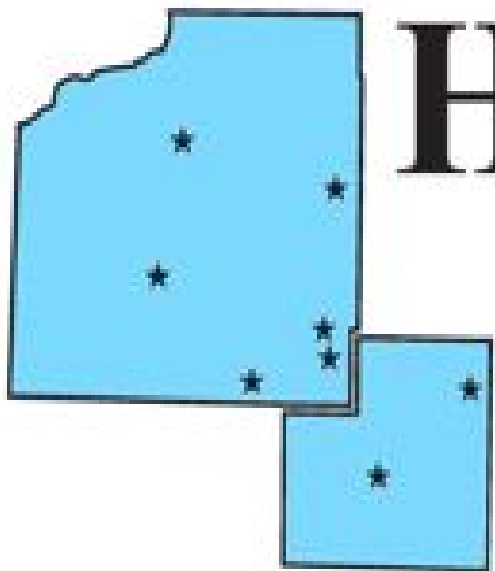


**Special Education
Paraprofessional Handbook**



**Henry-
Stark
Counties**

SPECIAL EDUCATION DISTRICT 801

August 2018

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Welcome to Henry-Stark Counties Special Education District!

It is a pleasure to have you with us. As a special education paraprofessional, you have an important and challenging role within the school system. Special education paraprofessionals are an integral team, assisting students with special education needs to meet their educational goals and personal care needs. The role of paraprofessionals in educational environments has changed dramatically over the past several years. New educational priorities emphasize the education of all students with disabilities therefore, increasing the need for and use of paraprofessionals.

Along with the increased need for paraprofessionals comes the need for training and professional development. At HSCSED we have identified some core competencies that paraprofessionals hired to work in schools must have. These core competencies, which form the basis of this handbook, are designed to provide the special education paraprofessional with the basic skills and knowledge required to be successful in their role as a special paraeducator.

The enclosed information is to provide you with a resource to answer your questions or guide you to a source for answers to your questions. This handbook is intended to be a guide that serves as a basis for training. Henry-Stark SED will assist in providing ongoing training and support to paraprofessionals, which may be provided through a variety of mediums such as in-services, web based instruction, and one-on-one support. You will also find that as a member of the Henry-Stark special education team, you have resources in your colleagues who possess a wealth of knowledge and can help you find the answer to just about any question you might have.

Section One

School Resources



Contacts and Important Phone Extensions:

Henry-Stark Counties Special Education District #801
1318 W. Sixth St, P.O. Box 597
Kewanee, IL 61443
Telephone 309-852-5696 (800-396-4555)
Facsimile 309-853-4398

Staff Directory:

T. Gregory Wertheim - Executive Director

Jennifer Harker - Receptionist

Amanda Birdsong - Payroll/Time Off/Reimbursement

Barb Lempke - Student Personnel Funding Manager

Kelly Miller - Technologist

Gabriela Solano - Assistant to Director

Candace Wexell - Human Resources Manager

Zach Cowl - Program Coordinator

Tami Bryan - Program Coordinator

Jana Clancy - Program Coordinator

Cassie Hanson - Program Coordinator

Marci Jett - Program Coordinator

Kim Evans - Program Coordinator

District/Building Numbers:

Annawan District #226	309-935-6781
Bradford District #1	309-897-2801
Cambridge District #227	309-937-2144
Galva District #224	932-2108
Geneseo District #228	309-945-0450
Kewanee District #229	853-3341
Neponset District #307	309-594-2306
Stark Co District #100	695-6123
Wethersfield District #230	853-4860
Annawan HS (9-12)	309-935-6781
Annawan Elem (PreK-8)	309-935-6623
Bradford (PreK-5)	897-4441
Cambridge Elem (Pre K-6)	309-937-2028
Cambridge Jr/Sr (7-12)	309-937-2051
Galva Elem (K-6)	932-2420
Galva HS (7-12)	932-2151
Geneseo High (9-12)	309-945-0399
Geneseo Middle (6-8)	309-945-0599
Millikin Elem (K-5)	309-945-0475
Northside Elem (PreK-5)	309-945-0625
Southwest Elem (K-5)	309-945-0699
St. Malachy's Elem (K-6)	309-944-3230
Belle Elem (K-1)	852-2449
Central Elem/Jr High (4-8)	853-4290
Irving Elem ((2-3)	853-3013
Kewanee High (9-12)	853-3328
Lyle Elem (Pre K)	853-2741
Stark Elem (PreK-5)	695-5181
Stark Jr High (6-8)	286-3451
Stark High (9-12)	286-4451
Wethersfield Elem (Pre K-6)	853-4800
Wethersfield Jr/Sr (7-12)	853-4205
ROE	309-936-7890
ExCEL	309-936-7790

School Procedures

What follows below is for informational purposes and serves only as a quick reference. It is not meant to replace any contractual information or information that may otherwise be presented in the collective bargaining agreement. The information below is meant to serve as an overview of quick reference procedures specific to Henry-Stark SED.

Absences:

If you need to be absent, follow your building specific procedures to report absences. If you know of your absence ahead of time, please make arrangements as far in advance as possible of the absence to give ample time for a substitute to be secured. When you return, you will need to complete your absence request in the Skyward system for approval. Personal day requests are also completed through the Skyward system and require advance notice. Please refer to the collective bargaining agreement for specific procedures for personal requests.

Link to Skyward Tutorial:

<https://www.hscsed.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=168>

School Calendar:

Staff members will follow the calendar of the school district in which they are placed. Your days of work will be the days that students attend school. You will not work on school improvement days unless your supervisor requests that you attend training.

Hours of Work:

Hours of work depend on an individual's assignment. Your work hours will be set per building and will initially be when students are in attendance. You may be requested to work longer than student attendance time if needed and approved by the director. On half day student attendance you may leave when students do unless you are requested to stay for training. You will be paid according to the working hours on those days.

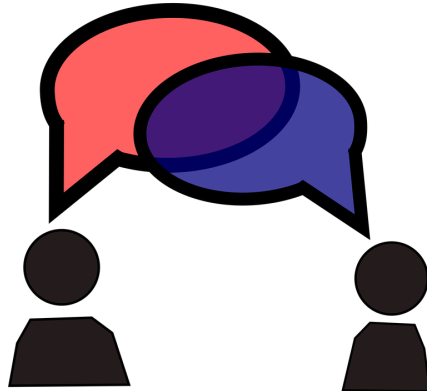
Pay Periods:

Pay periods are every other Friday. The first Friday that you are eligible for payroll will be established with Human Resources when completing your employment paperwork. Direct deposit is available for all employees. Notice of payroll deposits are made via your Henry-Stark email and may be viewed at anytime through Skyward.

Supervisors:

The classroom teacher that you work with will be a primary source of information for you. The building principal will also be a primary supervisory resource for you in the absence of your Henry-Stark Special Education Coordinator. Your Henry-Stark Program Coordinator will be responsible for your overall direction and evaluation process.

Section 1: School Resources - Classroom Conversations



Once you are hired and placed within a specific classroom, the following are questions that you should review with the classroom teacher:

1. Where do I park?
2. How do I enter the building? Do I swipe a badge, etc?
3. Where do I put my coat, purse, lunch, etc.?
4. Do I have a mailbox? How do I know what's going on?
5. Where is the copy machine? Do I make my own copies or does someone do it for me?
6. Where are supplies kept?
7. What is the lunch procedure? When do the kids go to lunch? When do I go to lunch?
8. When do I take breaks?
9. How do I acquire a substitute? Do I find one or does someone find one for me?
10. What is the school discipline policy? Where can I get a copy?
11. Where can I get a list of staff members in the building?
12. Who am I responsible to? What is my channel of communication?
13. Do I need to make a substitute folder?
14. When do students arrive and leave?
15. What are my hours?
16. What are the rules for any supervisions that I have been assigned? Lunch? Recess?
17. If working with more than one teacher, how is my time divided?

Notes and Good Ideas



Section Two

Philosophical, Historical and Legal Foundations of Education



Philosophical, Historical and Legal

Foundations of Education

Historically individuals with disabilities were not valued members of the community. Sometimes, special asylums were built for people who were disabled. Often conditions in these institutions were dehumanizing, filthy and crowded. There is little evidence that people in these institutions were given skills or education that would enable them to cope with the world and become members of the greater community. Much of the lack of education occurred because it was believed that these individuals were not able to learn like other people and that it would be a waste of time and money to help them learn. In recent times as early as the 1970's, prior to Public Law 94-142 (Education of All Handicapped Children Act), children with special needs often continued to be excluded from the public education system or, if included, they were often segregated from their peers in separate classrooms or schools. This practice is no longer acceptable.

Today, with the reauthorization of P.L. 94-142, now called IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), students with disabilities are now an integral part of the regular school environment. This legislation emphasized the inclusion of children with disabilities into the regular classroom and community environments, and increased the need for and use of paraprofessionals. When that is not possible, children are to be educated in the "least restrictive environment" appropriate for the child. Federal law, as well as State mandated practices, have established procedures to assure that, to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated with non-disabled students. Special classes, separate schools, or other removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment occur only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes, with the use of supplementary aids and services, cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Research supports that children with disabilities benefit from inclusive instruction within the regular classroom environment. For children with moderate to severe disabilities, inclusion can increase social interaction between children with disabilities and children without disabilities. Inclusion can increase social acceptance by peers and provide students with disabilities with appropriate behavior models.

It is important to note however, that the mere physical placement of children with disabilities in regular classrooms does not necessarily result in positive results. Often these children require direct intervention and support in order to be successful. Paraprofessionals play an important role in providing that intervention and support as they are often utilized to implement and reinforce teacher designed programs to increase the students' success in the classroom setting.

Paraprofessionals have a difficult but rewarding position within education. They influence positive changes in academic achievement and behavior. Their interest in students and assistance to teachers is invaluable.

Individualized Programming

Along with the sweeping changes that occurred with the passage of P.L. 94-142, schools were challenged by the mandate that each child in special education should have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The law required that the plan be written and be developed in a meeting that includes the parents, those staff identified by the school and, by age 14, the student.

The IEP is a yearly written plan developed through a team process designed to meet the needs of the child with disabilities. It is confidential and should not be discussed outside of the school setting.

The intent of the Individualized Education Plan is to ensure that each child with a disability is able to take part in an educational program that will assist and support the child to learn to live, work, play and make friends in the community. An essential part of this plan must be to assist the child to participate in the same settings as are used by other children of the same age. This means that learning should occur in the "least restrictive environment" which is generally considered the community setting or general education classroom in which children of the same age are placed.

The IEP summarizes a child's present level of performance in nine areas of functioning and identifies the child's specific needs in each area. At least once per year, the team identifies goals and specific objectives for meeting the identified needs. The plan will also describe changes, adaptation, or modification that will be necessary for accommodating a child with special needs in the school setting. The plan also describes how a student will be educated with peers. It will state the time, location and staff member who will provide the service. Paraprofessionals will most likely be involved in the observation and documentation of progress on plan objectives. Any parent questions or concerns about the services provided by the plan should be directed to the teacher.

Diversity and Learning

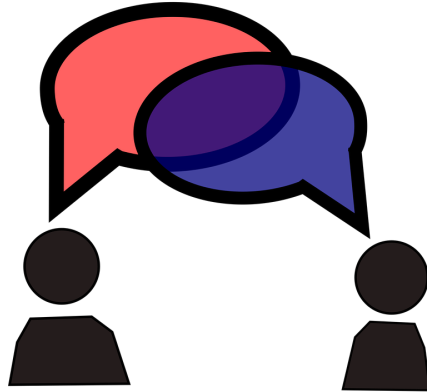
Many areas of the United States are considered very diverse culturally because of the different people who live there. Here in Central Illinois we may not have as many opportunities to experience the different cultural heritages, colors, languages and family and economic backgrounds found in other areas of the country. Even so, classrooms in the 21st century often reflect diversity and value systems we may not have experienced in our own school years.

Values are developed over the course of a lifetime and they come from a variety of different directions. We may learn them from parents, religious affiliations, school, friends, reading materials or a host of other sources. However they are learned, they have become a part of us and are important to each of us in our own way.

Recognizing the values of others is an important piece of recognizing the individuality of each person. In order to do so, you must be aware that the values system of another person is uniquely that person's; attempts to ignore it or to make changes will probably meet with failure.

It is necessary for paraprofessionals to realize that when they are working with students individually or in groups, there may be cultural expectations that should be considered. Lessons should always be culturally sensitive to the needs of the individual students. By understanding and appreciating the diversity in the cultures, lifestyles and other characteristics of children, it helps the paraprofessional to shape instructional methods in ways that will reinforce the value of the children and their families.

Section 2: Philosophical, Historical, and Legal Foundations Classroom Conversations



1. What does the law (IDEA) say about the role of paraprofessionals?
2. Should paraprofessionals be used for the entire length of a student's educational placement?
3. Is it appropriate for all special education students to receive services in the general education setting?
4. What is the intent behind IDEA and special education?

Notes and Good Ideas



Section Three

Roles and Responsibilities



Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers and paraprofessionals are partners in education, working together to provide the best educational experience possible for each child. The special education paraprofessional's role is to assist the teacher and allow more effective utilization of the teacher's abilities and professional knowledge. The teacher must function in a leadership role. It is the teacher's responsibility to assure that the students are moving toward achievement of individualized goals and objectives. Paraprofessionals serve under the direction and supervision of the teacher to assist in carrying out the individualized education program. In order for paraprofessionals to provide direct instruction to the student, teachers must plan and prescribe the learning environment and instruction for the student. Teachers must train the paraprofessional in the specifics of the instruction, evaluate student progress and monitor the effectiveness of the paraprofessional's implementation of the instructional strategies.

A clear delineation of roles of the teacher and the paraprofessional is an important element of a successful program. Identification of teacher and paraprofessional roles insures adherence to ethical and legal requirements and serves as a guide in supervision and evaluation. Actual delivery of instruction to the student may be carried out by the paraprofessional under supervision of the teacher.

The teacher's responsibilities to the learner include:

- Assessing the student's entry level performance.
- Planning instruction for individual students.
- Implementing the goals and objectives of the individualized education plan.
- Supervising and coordinating work of paraprofessional and other support staff.
- Evaluating and reporting student progress.
- Involving parents in their child's education.
- Coordinating and managing information provided by other professionals.

The teacher also has a number of roles to fulfill in the proper utilization of the paraprofessionals in the classroom:

- Set an example of professionalism in execution of teacher responsibilities.
- Establish the criteria for acceptable job performance of the paraprofessional at the beginning of the school year.
- Provide consistent feedback to assist the paraprofessional in refining skills.
- Communicate the needs of each student to the paraprofessional.
- Establish and communicate the paraprofessional's role in behavior management.
- Assign the paraprofessional responsibilities which facilitate the teacher's ability to provide more direct student instruction.
- Assist the paraprofessional in defining his/her position as an authority figure.

- Provide schedules of routines and responsibilities that the paraprofessional will be expected to follow.
- Provide specific lesson plans if the paraprofessional is to provide direct instruction to any student(s) at any time.

Role of the Paraprofessional

Various factors influencing the specific responsibilities assigned to the paraprofessionals include: Characteristics and personalities of teachers, paraprofessionals and students; interpersonal skills of both teachers and paraprofessionals; the skill level of the paraprofessionals; and the physical environment of the classroom. Individual teachers may vary the responsibilities of the paraprofessionals to enhance the program of instruction. The following list illustrates instructional and administrative duties that could be assigned to paraprofessionals:

- Assist individual students in performing activities initiated by the teachers.
- Supervise children in the hallway, lunchroom, and playground.
- Assist students to and from the buses.
- Assist in monitoring supplementary work and independent study.
- Reinforce learning in small groups or with individuals while the teacher works with other students.
- Provide assistance with individualized programmed materials.
- Assist in data collection and maintain appropriate records for teachers.
- Perform clerical tasks, attendance, lunch count, etc.
- Assist the teacher in observing, recording, and charting behavior.
- Assist the teacher with crisis problems and behavior management.
- Assist in preparation /production of instructional materials.
- Carry out instructional programs designed by the teacher.
- Work with the teacher to develop classroom schedules.
- Operate and maintain classroom equipment with the proper training.

The paraprofessional may perform these instructional duties:

- Assist in organizing field trips.
- Read aloud or listen to children read.
- Assist students in performing activities that have been initiated by the teacher.
- Assist in preparing instructional materials.
- Implement specific lesson plans provided by the teacher.
- Reinforce learning with small groups.
- Supervise free play activities.
- Prepare art supplies and other materials.
- Hear requests for help, observe learning difficulties of pupils, and report such matters to teachers.

- Assist in data collection as needed and keep appropriate records for teachers.

Instructional duties the paraprofessional may NOT perform:

- Be solely responsible for a classroom or a professional service.
- Be responsible for the diagnostic functions of the classroom.
- Be responsible for preparing lesson plans and initiating instruction.
- Be responsible for progress reports.
- Be responsible for writing an IEP.
- Be used as a substitute for certified teachers unless he or she possesses the appropriate substitute teacher certificate and is hired as a substitute.
- Assume full responsibility for supervising assemblies or field trips.
- Perform a duty that is primarily instructional in nature.
- Be assigned to work with the most “difficult” students the majority of the day.
- Be responsible for communicating with parents and families.

Non-Instructional duties the paraprofessional may NOT perform:


- Shall not assume full responsibility for supervising and planning activities.
- Shall not prescribe educational activities and materials for children.
- Shall not develop progress reports.
- Shall not regulate pupil behavior by corporal punishment or similar means.

Differentiation of teacher/paraprofessional role in the educational program:

TEACHER ROLE

PARAPROFESSIONAL ROLE

Classroom Organization	Plans weekly schedule, lessons, room arrangements, learning center, and activities for individuals and entire class	Implements plan as specified by the teacher.
Assessment	Member of IEP team. Coordinates the delivery of special education services-convenes IEP meetings, writes IEP, “case manager.” Monitors student performance.	Supports and assists with implementation of assessment process. May include collecting data.
Setting Objectives	Determines appropriate objectives for groups and individual students.	Carries out activities to meet objectives.
Teaching	Teaches lessons for the entire class, small groups, and individual students. Teaches strategies for accessing the content material. Provides curriculum accommodations/modifications that allow student to participate. Provides specialized education based on student’s individual needs.	Reinforces and supervises practice of skills with individual and small groups.
Behavior Management	Observes behavior, plans and implements behavior management strategies for entire class and for individual students. Collects data on such plans.	Observes behavior, carries out behavior management activities.
Working with Parents	Primary contact with parents regarding all special education services and specialized instruction. Provides parents with reports on progress towards IEP goals.	Participates in parent conferences when invited to do so.
Building a Classroom Partnership	Arranges schedule for conferences, shares goals, and philosophy with paraprofessional, organizes job duties for the paraprofessional.	Shares ideas and concerns during conferences and carries out duties as directed by a teacher.



**Henry-
Stark
Counties**
SPECIAL EDUCATION DISTRICT 801
Job Description Paraprofessional

Qualifications:

1. At least 19 years of age
2. One of the following
 - a. Associate's degree or higher
 - b. 60 semester hours of coursework
 - c. High school diploma or GED *and* a score of 460 or higher on the ETS Parapro
 - d. High School Diploma or GED *and* the following on the ACT Workkeys:
 - i. Applied Mathematics/Applied Math - 4
 - ii. Reading for Information/Workplace Documentation - 4
3. Previous experience in an educational environment preferred
3. Physically capable of performing essential duties of the job.

Reports to: Director of Special Education, Coordinator of Programs for Students with Disabilities, Building Principal, and Special Education Teacher

Job Goal: To assist (under professional supervision) and facilitate student success in the general education and special education classroom setting

Assignment: Will be within a HSCSED member district, follow the assigned district's calendar, and adhere to those buildings normal hours of operation unless otherwise specified

Academic Support:

1. Adapt classroom work/homework under the direction of the teacher for the purpose of providing a method to support and/or reinforce classroom objectives and behavioral skills
2. Assist teachers for the purpose of implementing lesson plans and/or developing student's daily living and behavioral skills

Professionalism:

1. Maintain professional attitude and behavior
2. Comply with board policies and regulations
3. Dress and act in a professional manner
4. Communicate effectively with assigned teacher(s)
5. Respects the confidentiality of students and staff
6. Work cooperatively with the entire staff
7. Maintain reasonable and consistent attendance
8. Adhere to the Personal Technology and Social Media Policy

9. Report absences to Henry-Stark Counties Special Education District and, as appropriate, to assigned district/building . Planned absences and vacations must be approved by Henry-Stark Counties Special Education District

Professional Development:

1. Participate in meetings and/or training sessions as provided by Henry-Stark Counties Special Education District or cooperating school district if requested by assigned teacher(s) or administration
2. Document professional growth by submitting required form to Henry-Stark Counties Special Education for inclusion in personnel file

Additional Duties:

1. Perform record keeping, data collection, basic clerical functions, etc., for supporting the teacher in maintaining students' progress
2. Monitor students in less structured environments such as playground, lunch, hall, specials, etc., as needed
3. Support social skill needs of student
4. Accept other duties as determined by the Coordinator and Building Principal with the approval of the Director of Special Education

Equipment Used:

Wheelchair lift, ramp, augmentative communication device, copier, other related office equipment

Working Conditions:

Mental Demands: Reading, ability to communicate effectively (verbal and written), maintain emotional control under stress

Physical Demands: May be required to lift and transfer students to and from wheelchair or assist with positioning students with physical disabilities, conduct physical restraint as needed

The foregoing statements describe the general purpose and responsibilities assigned to this job and are not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills that may be required.

Employee

Date

HSCSED Administration

Date

DOMAINS AND COMPONENTS

Paraprofessional

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

1a: Demonstrating knowledge of content.

1b: Demonstrating knowledge of students.

1c: Understanding instructional goals.

1d: Planning and preparing for coherent instruction with supervision by certified educator.

Domain 2: The Learning Environment

2a: Creating an environment of respect and rapport.

2b: Understands strategies to assist in the inclusion of students in various settings.

2c: Classroom procedures to promote student independence.

2d: Managing student behavior.

2e: Organizing physical space.

Domain 3: Instruction/Delivery of Service

3a: Communicating with students.

3b: Using questioning and discussion techniques.

3c: Engaging students in learning.

3d: Using assessment in instruction.

Domain 4: Professional Responsibility

4a: Reflecting on practice.

4b: Maintaining accurate records.

4c: Communicating with families/colleagues.

4d: Participating in professional learning opportunities.

4e: Showing integrity, professionalism and confidentiality.

4f: Displaying a positive work ethic/attendance.

EVALUATION RUBRIC
Paraprofessional

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

1a: Demonstrating knowledge of content.

Unsatisfactory

Little understanding.

Needs Improvement

Basic understanding.

Proficient

Solid understanding.

Distinguished

Extensive knowledge.

1b: Demonstrating knowledge of students.

Unsatisfactory

Little or no attempt to acquire knowledge.

Needs Improvement

Partial knowledge of students' background skills.

Proficient

Thorough knowledge of students' background skills

Distinguished

Extensive knowledge of students' background skills.

1c: Understanding instructional goals.

Unsatisfactory

Limited experiences, unsuitable for students.

Needs Improvement

Moderate value or suitable for students.

Proficient

Valuable learning and are suitable for students.

Distinguished

High level of learning relating to curriculum and standards.

1 d: Planning and preparing for coherent instruction with supervision by certified educator.

Unsatisfactory

Little or no evidence of following directions.

Needs Improvement

Able to follow most of the time, needs support.

Proficient

Independently follows directions, collaborates with certified educators.

Distinguished

Contributes ideas, showing initiative, able to prepare for differentiated instructional strategies.

Domain 2: The Learning Environment

2a: Creating an environment of respect and rapport.

Unsatisfactory

Interactions are negative, inappropriate.

Needs Improvement

Interactions are generally appropriate.

Proficient

Interactions are warm, caring, respectful.

Distinguished

Interactions are highly respectful, genuine.

2b: Understands strategies to assist in the inclusion of students in various settings.

Unsatisfactory

No understanding of inclusion as it relates to students.

Needs Improvement

Knows and identifies what is meant by inclusion and best practice.

Proficient

Implements best practice and strategies to facilitate inclusion.

Distinguished

Resource/model that encourages collaboration.

2c: Classroom procedures to promote student independence.

Unsatisfactory

Unable to use inclusive strategies to promote student independence.

Needs Improvement

Can implement some strategies to promote student independence.

Proficient

Knows and implements strategies to promote student independence.

Distinguished

Implements and encourages collaboration of the team on promoting student independence.

2d: Managing student behavior.

Unsatisfactory

Limited knowledge, unable to perform in a crisis.

Needs Improvement

Some knowledge, able to perform in mild crisis.

Proficient

Has an understanding, reinforces positive behavior, good in crisis.

Distinguished

Variety of strategies to reinforce positive behavior, performs in all crisis.

2e: Organizing physical space.

Unsatisfactory

Limited awareness of healthy/safety factors.

Needs Improvement

Inconsistent in identifying factors affecting health/safety.

Proficient

Consistently identifies factors affecting health/safety.

Distinguished

Proactive, problem solves factors affecting health/safety.

Domain 3: Instruction/Delivery of Service

3a: Communicating with students.

Unsatisfactory

Written/oral communication absent, poor, vague.

Needs Improvement

Written/oral communication generally clear, concise.

Proficient

Written/oral communication are clear/concise.

Distinguished

Strong ability to communicate ideas.

3b: Using questioning and discussion techniques.

Unsatisfactory

Limited knowledge of question/discussion techniques.

Needs Improvement

Able to use questioning and discussion techniques.

Proficient

Knows and implements a variety of questioning and discussion techniques.

Distinguished

Encourages collaboration regarding questioning and discussion techniques.

3c: Engaging students in learning.

Unsatisfactory

Unable to read or follow a lesson plan, unable to provide student instructions.

Needs Improvement

Limited knowledge of how to adapt materials, difficulty following directions.

Proficient

Understands and demonstrates adaptation process, seeks clarification.

Distinguished

Collaborates with team to meet students needs by adapting lessons.

3d: Using assessment in instruction.

Unsatisfactory

Unable to track and record data and/or assessment for goals.

Needs Improvement

Limited ability on tracking and recording data/or assessments for goals.

Proficient

Understands and demonstrates the ability to track and record data or assessments for goals.

Distinguished

Understands and demonstrates ability to record data or assessments for goals, can calculate percentages.

Domain 4: Professional Responsibility

4a: Reflecting on practice.

Unsatisfactory

Little or no evidence of thinking about programs, practices or students.

Needs Improvement

Sometimes shows evidence of thinking about or reflecting on supporting students.

Proficient

Reflects on experiences with students, makes some suggestions for how to improve program or support.

Distinguished

Reflects and provides constant ideas and improvements, attitude of action.

4b: Maintaining accurate records.

Unsatisfactory

Does not follow protocols for documenting student learning or behavioral data.

Needs Improvement

Documentation of student learning and behavioral data is partially aligned to protocols.

Proficient

Documentation of student learning and behavioral data is aligned with protocols.

Distinguished

Documentation data is fully aligned with protocol, students may monitor own progress.

4c: Communicating with families/colleagues.

Unsatisfactory

Relationships are negative or self-serving.

Needs Improvement

Relationships are cordial.

Proficient

Relationships are supportive and cooperative.

Distinguished

Relationships are supportive/cooperative, takes initiative with leadership.

4d: Participating in professional learning opportunities.

Unsatisfactory

Avoids professional learning opportunities.

Needs Improvement

Participates in professional learning opportunities only when asked.

Proficient

Seeks out professional learning opportunities, applies to his/her work.

Distinguished

Shares outcomes of his/her learning and assumes leadership role to assist others.

4e: Showing integrity, professionalism and confidentiality.

Unsatisfactory

Trouble maintaining confidentiality or has made errors in judgment.

Needs Improvement

Occasional lapses in maintaining confidentiality or in professionalism.

Proficient

High standards of integrity in all interactions, respects confidentiality.

Distinguished

Model of professionalism, uses best practice for confidentiality and ethics.

4f: Displaying a positive work ethic/attendance.

Unsatisfactory

Regularly late, not present or not prepared for work.

Needs Improvement

Usually punctual, present and prepared for work.

Proficient

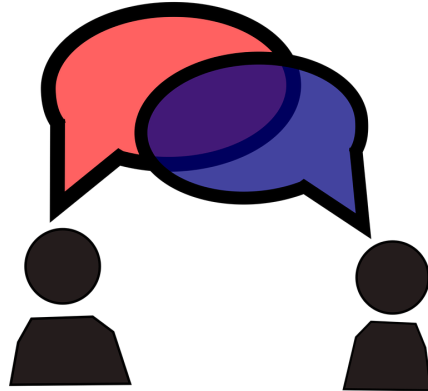
Reliably punctual, present and prepared for work, works well under pressure.

Distinguished

Reliable in any circumstance, committed to work on personal level.

Section 3: Roles and Responsibilities

Classroom Conversations



Preparing to Work Together:

1. What are the basic classroom rules?
2. What the classroom expectations for students regarding:
 - a. participation and classwork?
 - b. discipline?
 - c. materials?
 - d. homework?
 - e. planning?
 - f. modifications for individual students?
 - g. grading?
 - h. noise level?
 - i. cooperative learning?
 - j. giving/receiving feedback?
 - k. other expectations?
3. What is the classroom behavior management system?
4. Are there any students with behavior intervention plans? If so, what role does the paraprofessional take in managing this?
5. How are students grouped for instruction in the classroom?
6. What instructional methods does the teacher like to use and how can the paraprofessional be helpful during each type of instruction?
7. How does the teacher evaluate student progress and what is the expectation of the paraprofessional regarding this?
8. What are the strengths of the teacher? What are the strengths of the paraprofessional? How can the team capitalize on that? What are pet peeves of each?

9. What is the paraprofessional's role in regard to:
 - a. while the teacher is lecturing
 - b. taking roll
 - c. passing out papers
 - d. testing
 - e. small group lessons
 - f. collecting homework
 - g. completing any classroom paperwork
 - h. taking attendance
10. What student records do I have access to? And which should I review?
11. When the teacher is absent, how do my responsibilities change?
12. How does the supervising teacher view the teacher/paraeducator relationship?

Notes and Good Ideas



Section Four

Confidentiality and Its Application



Confidentiality and Its Application

Confidentiality is one of the most critical aspects of the paraprofessional's job. It is a legal responsibility to observe both the rights of students with disabilities and parents in regard to data privacy. Like teachers and administrators, paraprofessionals have access to personal information about children and their families including these examples:

- The results of formal and informal tests;
- Behavior in classrooms and other education settings;
- Academic progress;
- Family circumstances and family relationships..

Both the children and the family have the absolute right to expect that all information will be kept confidential, and made available only to personnel in school or another agency who require it to ensure that the rights, health, safety, and physical well-being of the children are safeguarded. Confidentiality must be maintained and protected, and the rights of students to due process, dignity, privacy, and respect must be promoted.

Always ask yourself ...

- What information would you want discussed with others regarding your child?
- What would you like said about yourself as a parent?
- What would you like said about your family, your values, your lifestyle?

Confidentiality Pointers

- Avoid using names if you are asked about your job.
- Suggest that questions about a student are best directed to the special education teacher.
- Do **NOT** share other student's names or information regarding their programs with parents during IEP meetings, conferences or informal conversations.
- Information regarding specific students and programs should not be shared in the lunchroom, staff room, office areas, out in the community or any other setting.
- When conferencing or writing information regarding a student or family that contains confidential information, be aware of those around you who may be within hearing distance. Look for a more private place within the school building.
- No matter who asks you a question about a student, if you are unsure whether you should answer, **DON'T**. You can do this gently and politely. Remember only staff that has a need to know should be given information about a student.
- Do **NOT** share information with people not directly related to or serving the student.
- Do **NOT** answer questions about students, share information about students, or discuss students with bus personnel during bus duty times. Often the parents share information with the bus personnel and they will comment or ask further questions of staff. What a parent decides to share with bus personnel is beyond our control but we are **NOT** to discuss or share information with bus personnel.
- Do **NOT** discuss one student with another student.

- If a student has a medical issue that should be monitored during transport, a member of administration or nursing should escort the student to the bus and they will share only what information they deem necessary to safely transport the student.
- For consistency of program as well as confidentiality, paraprofessionals must support teacher techniques, materials and methods, especially in the presence of students, parents and other staff. Questions should be directed to the specific teacher privately.

Digital Confidentiality

With the influx of social media as a way to provide instruction and stay connected to families within the educational context, there is a significant shift to the use of digital technology to instruct and communicate. The requirements of confidentiality extend equally to the application of digital confidentiality. The sharing of specific student information on social media, with those not associated with the students IEP, information used inappropriately, information or digital images used without permission of the parties involved, etc., are all strictly prohibited. Parents are required to authorize the use of students' photography and video at the beginning of the school year. Staff are also required to sign an Acceptable Use Policy regarding the internet at the beginning of each school year.

Other helpful tips to protect yourself and students include the following:

- Be very cautious with whom you become friends on Facebook and other social media sites.
- Be very conscious of what you share, post, and comment about on ALL social media platforms. Refrain from sharing about specific students.
- When taking photographs or video within the educational setting, be aware of the background images. Know who in the classroom can and cannot have pictures or digital media images recorded and avoid getting those in the background of any digital product.
- Be conscious of what staff are doing in the background of any digital images. Be sure the background images are appropriate and as much as possible filtered out to just show the photo/video subject being captured.
- Review all digital images carefully before posting to any social media platform that will become public domain.

Section 4: Confidentiality and Its Application

Classroom Conversations



Confidentiality Q & A:

Why Must Confidentiality Be Maintained?

Federal laws, state laws, and local policies require it.

Who May Access Written or Oral Information About Children and Youth or Their Families?

Only personnel who are responsible for the design, preparation, and delivery of education and related services (i.e., supervising teacher, speech therapist, school nurse). The personnel responsible for protecting the safety and welfare of a child or youth also may access such information.

Paraprofessionals may be included in this group if closely supervised.

Who Should Not Have Access to Information About the Performance Level, Behavior, Program Goals, and Objectives or Progress of a Child or Youth?

Teachers, therapists, or other school personnel and staff who are not responsible for planning or providing services to children, youth, or their families. In short, anyone who is not included on the child's IEP does not have access to such information.

What Information Do Children/Youth and Their Families Have the Right to Expect Will Be Kept Confidential?

The results of formal and informal assessments; social and behavioral actions; performance levels and progress; program goals and objectives; all information about family relationships, financial status and other personal matters.

Notes and Good Ideas



Section Five

Characteristics of Learners



Characteristics of Learners

Paraprofessionals will need to understand the cognitive, physical, emotional, and social characteristics that are generally associated with children identified as in need of special education services. Children may exhibit one or more characteristics to varying degrees. The following are the definitions and descriptions of the State of Illinois eligibility criteria for special education services.

Autism

A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three that adversely affects a child's educational performance. (A child who manifests the characteristics of autism after age 3 could be diagnosed as having autism if the other criteria of this Section are satisfied.) Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. The term does not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disability as defined in this document. A child who manifests the characteristics of autism after age 3 can be diagnosed as having autism if the criteria above are satisfied.

Deaf-Blindness

Concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.

Deafness

A hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Emotional Disability (ED)

A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:

- An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors;

- An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers;
- Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances;
- A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or,
- A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

(Includes schizophrenia but does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance.)

Hearing Impairments (HI)

“Hearing impairment” means an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance but that is not included under the definition of deafness.

Intellectual Disability (ID)

Significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Multiple Disabilities

Concomitant impairments (such as intellectual deficit-blindness, intellectual deficit-orthopedic impairment, etc.), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness.

Orthopedic Impairment (OI)

A severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly (e.g., clubfoot, absence of some member, etc.), impairments caused by disease (e.g., Poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis, etc.), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures).

Other Health Impairment (OHI)

Having limited strength, vitality or alertness, including a heightened sensitivity to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment that

- is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, or sickle cell anemia; and
- adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)

A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations, including such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor disabilities, of intellectual deficits, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. [105 ILCS 5/14-1.03(a)]

In accordance with 23 Illinois Administrative Code 226.130, beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, Illinois districts are required to use a process that determines how a child responds to scientific, research-based interventions as part of the evaluation procedures to determine special education eligibility under the category of specific learning disability (SLD). While this requirement is specific to SLD, districts also have the option of using such a process as part of the evaluation procedures for other disability categories.

Speech or Language Impairment (SL)

A communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Speech-Language Pathology Services encompass such activities as:

- Screening, diagnosis and appraisal of specific speech and language impairments;
- Identification of children with speech and/or language impairments;
- Referral and follow-up for medical or other professional attention necessary for the habilitation of speech and language impairments;
- Planning and developing interventions and programs for children or youth with speech and language impairments;
- Provisions of services for the habilitation and prevention of speech and language impairments; and,
- Counseling and guidance of parents, children, and teachers regarding speech and language impairments.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; psychosocial functions; information processing; and speech. The term does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative or to brain injuries induced by birth trauma.

Visual Impairment (VI)

An impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

Other Terms and Abbreviations

Adaptive Physical Education (APE)

A diversified program of activities specially designed for a child who has a mental, physical and/or emotional disability and is not able to participate safely and/or successfully in regular physical education activities.

Annual Review (AR)

The law requires that students with disabilities must have their educational program reviewed each year. This consists of updating student progress and then planning the student's program.

Assistive Technology (AT)

Pieces of equipment, products, modifications to existing products, or customized items or products that are used to increase, support, or improve functioning capabilities of individuals with disabilities. Some examples of AT would be screen readers, voice-to-text software applications and computers.

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)

Children with ADD usually have short attention spans and marked difficulty with concentrating. The child may seem to "zone out" often. Some may also have learning disabilities.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

A syndrome (a group of symptoms or signs) that is usually characterized by serious and persistent difficulties which result in inattentiveness or distractibility, impulsivity, and hyperactivity.

Cerebral Palsy (CP)

A group of conditions caused by brain damage. Typical features may include limited muscle control, speech, psychological or learning difficulties.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

This law gives all children, regardless of their disability, the right to a free appropriate public education.

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

A written document that is developed in order to meet the educational needs of a student with disabilities. It delineates the services that are to be provided to the student as well as the academic goals set for the student.

Learning Disability (LD)

A disorder in which one or more psychological processes interfere with written or spoken language ability. Evidence of the disability may be a lack of ability to listen, write, speak or do mathematical computations. Learning disabilities include conditions such as brain injury, perceptual disabilities, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Procedures which ensure that to the extent it is appropriate, students with disabilities be educated with students who are not disabled. (also referred to as inclusion or mainstreaming)

Modifications

Adjustments in curriculum or instruction that change or alter the requirements of the curriculum. Curricular requirements are revised to meet the needs of the student.

Occupational Therapy (OT)

Purposeful activity with students who have disabilities for the purpose of achieving maximum independence, disability prevention and maintenance of health.

Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)

Children with ODD typically have many of the following behaviors which occur for a period of greater than 6 months: negative attitudes, hostility, defiance, loss of temper, rule-breaking, non-compliance, refusal to cooperate, vengefulness, anger, spitefulness, disobedience, irresponsibility, and lack of accountability. The behaviors are severe and frequent enough that they will impair both social and academic growth.

Physical Therapy (PT)

The prevention of disability as well as physical rehabilitation for congenital or acquired disabilities that are due to injury or disease.

Procedural Safeguards

Precautions which are taken to make sure that a student's rights are protected.

Range of Motion (ROM)

The normal range of movement for a joint, specifically: flexion (how far it can be bent) and extension (how far can it be stretched out).

Related Services

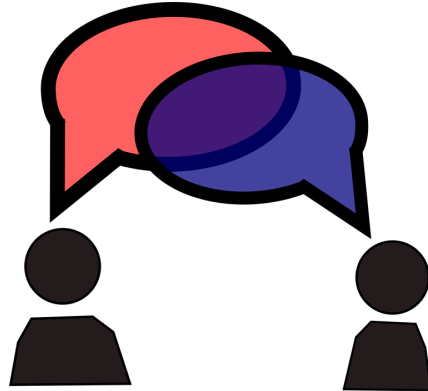
Corrective and supportive services which are needed to assist a student with disabilities to benefit from education. These include speech, audiology, physical and occupational therapies as well as counseling, psychological, recreational, school health and social work services.

Special Education

Educational programs and assignments including special classes and programs or services designed to develop the educational potential of children with disabilities.

Section 5: Characteristics of Learners

Classroom Conversations



Take this time to discuss each student enrolled in the class and his/her specific disabilities, accommodations, goals, and behavior plans.

Notes and Good Ideas



Section Six

Academic Modifications And Adaptations



Academic Modifications and Adaptations

As a paraprofessional, you will be responsible for following through with program modifications developed by the educational team. The following is a list of accommodations and adaptive strategies that you may be asked to incorporate into a student's programming:

Student Aids

- Visual supports
- Alternate seating
- Schedules
- Fidgets
- Positive behavior charts
- Augmentative communication devices
- Discrete trial
- Social narratives
- Task analysis
- Prompts
- Sensory strategies
- Manipulatives
- Timers

Directions

- Be sure the student is looking at you before giving directions.
- Keep directions concise and simple.
- Divide each direction into one-step or two-step components.
- Provide directions in sequential order.
- Allow extra time for responses.

Environmental

- Provide a structured learning environment.
- Provide visual cues as to expectations.
- Provide quiet space/time out areas.
- Prepare students for changes in their environment and prepare them for transitions within the building by using schedules.
- Provide students with consistent expectations specific to each environment.
- Make changes to the environment as needed to change student behaviors. Examples include:
 - Reduce sensory overload by lowering lights.
 - Reinforce concepts by using visual supports.
 - Provide tactile or sensory experiences.

- Be aware of spatial positioning when sitting students in groups.
- Provide quiet music or other calming environmental items.

Organizational

- Treat all students with respect.
- Provide the students with a structured environment which encourages opportunities to communicate, increase independence, and social interaction.
- Create routines that are predictable and provide students with the necessary structure to understand the sequence of events.
- Always inform and prepare students for changes to schedules or the environment.
- Provide consistent and rote routines that the students can expect.
- Provide opportunities for unstructured exploration time, outside if possible, to the extent possible with each student.
- Arrange student groups (according to instructional needs, learning styles, etc.)
- Provide cues for students prior to transitions between activities/tasks.
- Keep instructions simple, using methods of communication specific to each students learning style(s).

Communication

- Always communicate with the student. Communicate during instruction, feeding, and all personal care routines to inform student of what you are doing.
- Promote and facilitate communication opportunities that support core vocabulary and school-wide delivery methods of instructional technologies using the students' best mode of communication.
- Provide opportunities throughout the school day to foster and facilitate independence. Strategies may include:
 - PECS
 - Visual supports
 - Augmentative communication (devices, switches, etc.)
 - Social narratives
 - Positive behavior supports (reward cards, token systems, etc.)
 - Independent adaptive equipment
- Facilitate relationships with parents and families to promote parent involvement in the school and to facilitate open communication with staff.
- Allow students to respond using their best mode of communication which may include:
 - Verbal response
 - Facial cue
 - Hand gesture
 - Eye gaze
 - Verbal utterance combined with visual response

- Alternate form of communication (including pre-programmed switches, personal communication devices, other modes of technological communication)

Instructional Strategies

- Repeat and simplify instructions.
- Supplement oral instructions with visual instructions/cues.
- Change instructional pace.
- Change instructional methods.
- Provide functional tasks familiar to the student.
- Reduce items required on a task.
- Use organizers/visual supports.
- Change/alter wait times for responses.
- Accept the students' best mode of communication for responses.

Curriculum Strategies

- Change instructional materials with much repetition.
- Utilize supplementary materials (combinations of tactile, visual, oral).
- Be aware of students' preferred learning and communication style and provide appropriate instruction/materials.
- Use manipulatives (if applicable).
- Change criteria mastery level.
- Use picture directions.
- Provide guided practice.
- Provide many opportunities for mastery.
- Use cues as needed to help guide and direct student learning.
- Vary length of tasks (shorter, simplify if needed).
- Always be looking for ways to build student independence.

Building Student Independence

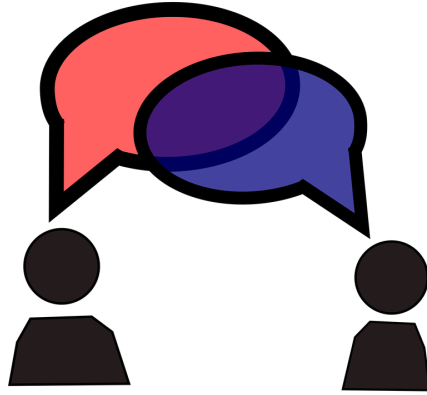
- Always be looking for ways to build student independence
- Instead of repeating teacher directions try giving a visual cue or asking, "Did you hear what the teacher said?" or "Do you know what the instructions were?"
- Fade prompts whenever possible. Use the lowest level of prompting possible to support the student.
- Levels of prompting, least to greatest: visual, gestural, touch, verbal, partial physical, hand-over-hand.
- Be aware of your position in regard to the student. You should **NOT** sit by the student all the time. Fade away from the student and help other students or observe as much as possible.

- Make a plan with the teacher and teacher teams for times when you can leave the student on his or her own.
- Assist in developing a rotating schedule so that one para is not responsible for one student at all times.

Levels of Prompting: Use the lowest level that the student will respond to.

1	Expectant Pause	Give the child time to respond or the opportunity to initiate communication.
2	Indirect Nonverbal Prompt	Use your body language to indicate to the child that something is expected (e.g. expectant facial expression, questioning hand motion with a shrug, etc).
3	Indirect Verbal Prompt	Use an open-ended question that tells the child that something is expected but nothing too specific (e.g. "Now what?", "What should we do next?").
4	Request a Response	If there is still no response, you can try to direct the child more specifically (e.g. "Tell me what you want." "You need to ask me.").
5	Gestural Cue	You can point to the symbol or leave/tap your finger there for several seconds to get the child started with his message.
6	Partial Verbal Prompt	If there is still no response, give them part of the expected response (e.g. "You went to the...").
7	Direct Model	If still no response, model on the student's device (e.g. "The bear is sad."). Pause and wait for the child to imitate or respond.
8	Physical Assistant	Provide hand-over-hand assistance to help the child to form the message using their device.

Section 6 - Academic Modifications and Adaptations **Classroom Conversations**



Take this time to discuss each student enrolled in the class and his/her specific disabilities, accommodations, goals, and behavior plans.

Notes and Good Ideas



Section Seven

Behavior Management



Behavior Management

Behavior management is complex and unique to each individual. In each classroom environment, staff will manage behavior in a variety of ways. Paraprofessionals, in order to reinforce consistency, need to model the classroom management systems defined by each classroom teacher. When further intervention is necessary, the teacher along with other team members will plan appropriate interventions for the paraprofessional to assist in implementing. It will be important for paraprofessionals to define their role with the teacher in each classroom setting. There are a number of general behavior management techniques that paraprofessionals will want to be familiar with no matter the setting in which they will be working.

General Behavior Management Techniques

- Build rapport
 - Students who have a positive view of you will be more likely to cooperate. It is important to establish rapport while still maintaining an appropriate relationship. You can have a positive relationship with a student without being a “friend.”
- Accentuate the positive
 - All people want to hear good things about themselves. Find strengths and positives about the student and focus attention on those traits.
- Do not take a student’s behavior personally
 - Challenging behaviors are not a personal attack! There are so many possible reasons for challenging behaviors.
- Never force an issue with a difficult student
 - A student who displays challenging behaviors may feel more “challenged” when the issue is forced. Take a break and visit the subject again when all parties involved are calm and thinking clearly.
- Every consequence not carried out weakens an adult’s status
 - Idle threats are not considered positive practice. Students can pick these out and will challenge them.
- Find out what the student does well and build on it
 - A great way to decrease negative behavior is to increase self-esteem. Show interest in what the student can do well and encourage the development of the skill.
- Do not label students as “bad”
 - NO STUDENT IS “BAD.” All students have positive attributes.
- Set high standards
 - Students will perform to the level their expectations are set at. If you expect more, the student will produce more.
- Do not look for miracles overnight
 - Behavior will not change overnight. It takes a great deal of intervention to change behavior.

- Be consistent
 - If you say it, mean it and treat all behaviors the same way for each student.
- Remain calm at all times
- Be aware that prevention is proactive and intervention is reactive
 - The goal is to prevent problem behaviors before they occur.
- Deal with problems immediately
 - If you wait too long to intervene, the “teachable” moment is gone.
- Retain a good sense of humor
 - You would be surprised at how many potential “crisis” situations can be prevented by using a bit of humor at the very beginning stages.
- Model good behavior
 - Students become confused as to what appropriate behavior is if they witness inappropriate behaviors by adults in their environment.
- Cuing as needed
 - Non-verbal cuing is less intrusive than verbal cuing. Especially in a whole classroom setting.
 - Non-verbal cuing can be facial expressions, body posture and hand signals, core vocabulary icons, or other visual supports applicable to the situation. It is important to make sure that the student can effectively read these expressions. Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder may have a deficit in reading nonverbal cues.
- Control the environment to the fullest extent possible
 - You would be surprised at how many behavior problems can be remediated by changing the environment in which the behaviors occur.
 - Providing structured activities on the playground, gym, or other non-structured environments may reduce the number of “behavior problems” in those settings.
- Use low-profile intervention
 - Intervention does not need to be a big production! Confrontation is not an effective form of discipline. In fact, this often makes the behavior escalate.

Group Management Strategies

Students spend a majority of the school day working in groups. It is important for paraprofessionals to have some useful strategies for successfully managing behavior of students during these times. The following strategies involve short, routine measures that redirect off-task behavior, don't disrupt instruction and refocus attention on the classroom staff and instruction.

The strategies are most effective at the beginning stages of misbehavior and with minor problems. The strategies should be used in conjunction with established classroom rules and procedures.

- **Planned ignoring** – sometimes the most effective way to deal with student misbehavior is to ignore it.

Pointers for When to Ignore Behavior:

- When the inappropriate behavior is unintentional or not likely to reoccur.
- When the goal of misbehavior is to gain attention or avoid completing tasks.
- When you want a behavior to decrease.
- Do not intervene when there is nothing you can do.

Pointers for When to Intervene:

- When there is a physical danger or harm to you, others, or the child.
- When a student disrupts the classroom.
- When there are violations of classroom rules or expectations.
- When there is interference with learning.
- When the inappropriate behavior will spread to other students.

- **Providing Cues to Students** – An important aspect of behavior management is developing ways to communicate with students that provide reminders that support your expectations. It's simply a way to let the student know that you want their attention, or you're aware of the behavior, and that you want it changed. These cues can also be used to reinforce positive behavior patterns as well (i.e., reminders to continue the quality of interaction during an activity). These techniques may be nonverbal, including eye contact, physical gestures, tapping or snapping of your fingers, body posture, using visual icons, etc.
- **Proximity Control** – A fancy term, but you've probably used the technique quite frequently. You're aware how effective it is to stand near a student who's experiencing difficult behaviors. Simply moving around the classroom closer to the student having difficulty can often help them remain on task because of your "proximity" to them. As a caution, it's important not to reinforce the inappropriate behavior or call attention to the student.
- **Ways to Increase Student Motivation** – Motivation to work helps students remain on task for longer periods of time and increases their attention to the tasks/instruction. There are a number of ways to increase the motivational level of students with which you work.
 - Relate the material to things of interest to them. Make it relevant to them and things they like.
 - Demonstrate an active interest in the child.
 - Demonstrate an active interest in the activity.
 - Use lots of praise both verbally and nonverbally.

- **Removal of Nuisance Items** – It is difficult for both teachers and paraprofessionals to compete with certain objects, either found at school or brought from home (i.e., electronics, toys, fidget toys, etc.). Often times, in order to gain student’s undivided attention, you may be required to deal with these types of competing items. Often times, however, the removal of such belongings will only lead to further conflict.

Strategies for Increasing Positive Student Behaviors

As a paraprofessional, it is necessary to meet with the supervising teacher to discuss and decide what behaviors are desired. Paraprofessionals often assist teachers in the classroom by working with small groups or one-on-one with students. The following techniques may be used to increase students’ positive behavior.

- **Praise** – Praise is a positive interpretation of factual data. Praise is immediate, specific, deserved, and related to behavior. Paraprofessionals should praise appropriate behaviors by describing the appropriate behaviors they see students perform. Paraprofessionals and other staff ought to praise each other in front of students (modeling).
- **Provide Rewards as Positive Reinforcement** – Involves the presentation of a “reward” (smiles, high fives, stickers, points, etc.) following a student performing a particular targeted behavior. The reward is designed to increase the frequency of the desired response and works particularly well when the reinforcement is something highly preferred or desired by the student. If the reinforcement is to be effective, the student must get the reinforcers only after performing the target behavior. A reinforcer should be delivered immediately after the target behavior is performed.
- **Concept Reframing** – Is a technique in which staff attempts to increase a student’s awareness of certain strengths and capabilities. A teacher/paraprofessional will recognize the strength each time a student demonstrates it and then will describe it to the student (i.e., you do a wonderful job sitting nicely). This feedback is delivered on an individual basis, not in front of the group.
- **Modeling** – Is used by a teacher/paraprofessional to increase appropriate behaviors. Modeling is a process in which appropriate behavior of a peer is reinforced who is in the proximity of a student behaving inappropriately.
- **Extinction** – Is used to decrease behavior. Extinction is the removal of all reinforcement. This is commonly known as “ignoring.” Extinction may be used if a student is not harming himself, another student, or damaging property. Be aware that the inappropriate behavior may worsen with this technique before it becomes better. Changing behavior takes time.

- **Overcorrection** – Is also used to decrease behavior. This is used to teach students to take responsibility for their behavior and teach them the appropriate response. Overcorrection is based on exaggerated experiences.
 - **Restitutive Overcorrection** – When a student must restore an environment to its original condition. The student must make improvements beyond the original condition (i.e. pick up the books thrown on the floor plus the pieces of paper that were already on the floor).
 - **Positive-Practice Overcorrection** - Involves engaging the student in the exaggerated experience of an appropriate behavior. At the same time the staff person recites the rules for doing the behavior the “right way” (i.e. keeping hands to yourself).

- **Contingent Observation Time-Out** – The process used to remove a student from all reinforcement for a brief period of time following misbehavior. During the time-out, a student is not given verbal prompts or eye contact. The child is reminded of what appropriate behavior is. It is important when entering or exiting a time-out that a paraprofessional focuses the student on the *appropriate behavior only*.

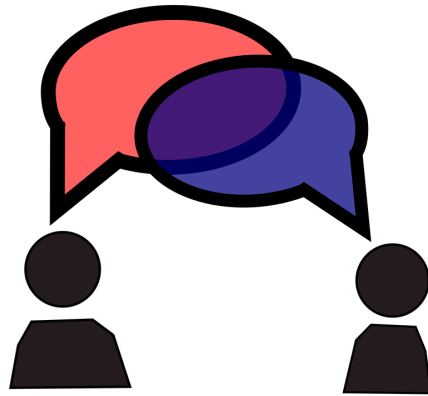
- **Redirection** – This is a very effective behavioral technique. There are a variety of ways to positively redirect behavior in order to avoid using an aversive procedure.
 - Many times a paraprofessional can ignore what a student does or says and can simply change the subject or redirect the student back to the task/activity at hand. A child can be distracted by a positive statement, an unrelated question, or by giving an unrelated direction.
 - Another way for a paraprofessional to redirect behavior is by replacing the behavior (i.e., a child may not be allowed to put materials in their mouth but may be given an appropriate chewy to satisfy the need for oral motor stimulation). Often, giving a student a time and place for a certain type of behavior helps to eliminate it at inappropriate times. In order to not reinforce the behavior, the paraprofessional must *under react* to the student’s inappropriate behaviors and use a sense of humor when dealing with a difficult situation.

The key to making these behavior management strategies successful is to build good relationships with students and to be consistent. Good relationships are developed through consistency, caring, cooperation, and trust. Students need to feel they can trust paraprofessionals. Trust is built by consistent behavior. A student needs to see the paraprofessional doing what he or she says in a consistent fashion. If the paraprofessional nags students with warnings, they will not get consistent compliance. Paraprofessionals need to verify with the teacher the types of privileges they can remove or withhold. It is essential to have both

the authority and means of implementing the consequences you choose because the students must see that you will do what you say. Remember, for consistency whoever gives the directive that is not complied with should carry out the correction procedure.

Section 7: Behavior Management

Classroom Conversations



1. Are you using any of the strategies listed in this chapter with any specific students?
2. What is the classroom behavior management system? What is each person's role in implementing that system?
3. What are some ways to build rapport or relationships with students?
4. What are some interests each student has?
5. What should I do if I am feeling stressed by a behavioral situation with a student?
6. What are behaviors that I should ignore? (Can be student specific.)
7. When should I definitely intervene?
8. What are some types of cueing that are used in the classroom?
9. What types of positive reinforcement are used or should be used?
10. What types of consequences can be given for behavior? What privileges can be removed? When does the para or teacher need to get another staff member?
11. Have all individuals been trained in CPI? If not, please check the Henry-Stark website for training dates and times.

Notes and Good Ideas



Section Eight

Assessment and Evaluation



Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment is the process of collecting and interpreting information relating to a child with a disability for the purpose of determining the child's present skills to form a base on which new learning experiences can be planned. Before a child can receive special education services a thorough evaluation is carried out. Depending on the area(s) of concern, it would include a comprehensive look at the child's physical, cognitive, academic, social, emotional and language development. Generally, teachers and other professional staff members are responsible for conducting the assessment activities. Often, however, paraprofessionals are asked to help identify the child's functional capabilities or provide specific observations regarding the child.

Paraprofessionals are often asked to provide data regarding a student they work with during the evaluation process as a means of documenting progress and determining areas of need. This documentation may be in the form of anecdotal reports, checklists or formal and informal observations.

Observing and Keeping Good Data

Acquiring and using objective skills of observation and keeping data are important to all paraprofessionals. Much of the information needed by the team to determine whether or not children are gaining new skills is acquired by careful observation and good record keeping. In addition, observational data will keep the team posted on whether or not the individuals are learning and using the functional skills necessary to let them achieve the objectives and long-term goals that are outlined in the IEP.

The written information as to what has been observed is called "data." It serves as a more permanent record of what is seen or heard and, when done well, is an objective account of the individual's activities and skills. It is important to keep written data on all of the observation activities. If this is not done, there is a risk of inaccurately reporting what has happened.

Carrying out observations and keeping data must be done with an objective point of view. Sometimes, we may be tempted to let our biases or prejudices get in the way. We may like one student better than another and tend to look more favorably on his/her activities. It is very important to guard against these inclinations and to put down precisely what is seen or heard and to avoid anything that is stigmatized by personal perceptions of a child or a specific behavior.

Observation Is:

Systematically watching what a person does and says and recording the behaviors in order to make instructional decisions. Observation should:

- Be done for a specific reason;
- Provide samples of a child's/student's behavior over a period of time, in a variety of settings; and,
- Be objective.

Objective Observation Means

- Watching events without being affected by personal biases/prejudices;
- Watching what is happening without guessing at the reasons that cause the action;
- Watching the activity without judging whether it is good or bad; and,
- Producing an objective record that states exactly what an observer sees and hears.

Through observation, we can learn what the child can do, what the child likes or dislikes, how the child behaves under various circumstances and how the child interacts with people.

Observing Objectively

There are two points to remember when making observations:

- A behavior must be **observable** and
- A behavior must be **measurable**.

In other words, we must be able to see or hear a behavior and we must be able to count or time how often a behavior occurs.

Keeping Data

There are several ways to keep data. They include:

Checklists – These may be in the form of standardized checklists that include specific skills and behaviors based on developmental levels, or a list of behaviors compiled by the teacher. When paraprofessionals work with a checklist, they simply watch the child and record whether or not the behavior described is observed.

Anecdotal Records – These usually consist of a sentence or two written in a notebook that describe what the child is doing at a specific moment. When making an anecdotal record, only behaviors that can be **seen or heard** and behaviors that **can be counted** should be recorded.

Interviewing – This is a specific kind of record keeping, one in which the team is trying to determine what the child likes or dislikes, what the child's interests are, or other feelings or beliefs that cannot be observed. When interviewing, it is extremely important to record precisely what the child says. There is no room for editorializing in this kind of record.

Frequency or Duration Notes – Sometimes the information that is to be collected refers to how often or how long a behavior is occurring. For example, the team may want to know how many times a child initiated communication with peers during an activity or task. For this kind of record keeping, paraprofessionals will count the frequency with which the behavior occurs and/or how long the behavior lasts.

Section 8: Assessment and Evaluation Classroom Conversations



1. Who can take data on students in the classroom?
2. Is the type of data collected important?
3. Is there one method of data collection that is better than others?
4. What does “observable” and “measurable” mean?
5. Why is data collection important?
6. Where will you find the appropriate data collection tools?

Notes and Good Ideas



Section Nine

Additional Training Resources



Links to Additional Training Resources

Henry-Stark is a member of Infinitec, which provides free training opportunities in the form of recorded webinars and training videos on a variety of topics. Below you will find links to some recommended items. In order to view the videos, you will have to create an account. Once you are logged in, you can watch any of the videos that you choose by clicking on the video in the “online classroom” section. Infinitec also offers several live webinars throughout the year, which you may sign up for. Often these are recorded and appear in online classroom at a later date.

ADHD:

<https://ucpnet.adobeconnect.com/p39668334/?session=na1breezbshnh4gektay4ap8>

All things Google Chrome:

<http://www.myinfinitec.org/online-classroom#videoTop>

Autism:

What is Autism?

<https://ucpnet.adobeconnect.com/p590b7oc8rv/?session=na1breezbshnh4gektay4ap8>

Autism training path- click on “autism training path” in the drop down box for more videos about autism

<http://www.myinfinitec.org/online-classroom#videoTop>

Infinitec:

<http://www.myinfinitec.org/online-classroom#videoTop>

Overview of the 13 Disability Categories:

<https://ucpnet.adobeconnect.com/p5po56lh47h/?session=na1breezbshnh4gektay4ap8>

Roles and Responsibilities of the Paraprofessional:

<http://www.myinfinitec.org/online-classroom#videoTop>

Student Confidentiality:

<https://ucpnet.adobeconnect.com/p8n9rgly8ef/?session=na1breezftqi29u8atm6emo>

Trauma Informed Care

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KoqaUANGvpA>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95ovIJ3dsNk>

Notes and Good Ideas



FINAL WORDS

Even on the most difficult days, remember that what you do is crucial to the success and development of our student population. **YOU** are an intricate and vital part of the educational team. If things don't go smoothly today, remember that tomorrow is a new day!



**WELCOME!
WE ARE GLAD YOU
ARE HERE!**

Verification Statement



My signature below indicates that I have received the Paraprofessional Handbook. I understand that it is my responsibility to read and adhere to policies and practices contained within the handbook.

(Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Date)

Submit this verification statement to your coordinator upon receiving and reading the manual.