Making a Difference

An old man walked up a shore littered with thousands of starfish, beached and dying after a storm.
A young man was picking them up and flinging them back into the ocean.
"Why do you bother?" the old man scoffed.
"You are not saving enough to make a difference.
The young man picked up another starfish and sent it spinning back to the water.
"Made a difference to that one," he said.

Dear Paraprofessionals,

Thank you for your commitment to our students. We consider you to be a vital part of the special education team. The goal of the Coffey County Special Education Cooperative is to provide quality supports and services to all exceptional students.

This guide was designed to be a resource for you. It is a general overview of your roles and responsibilities, special education, characteristics of disabilities, instructional and behavioral strategies, and general resources for Paraprofessionals. Information specific to the students you work with, and further direction will come from the administrators and teachers in your building. Continued professional development will assist you in refining your skills and knowledge related to academic and behavior strategies specific to the students you support.

Our goal is to assist students in becoming as independent as possible and to prepare them for success in their post-secondary lives! We value your work and commitment to our students and thank you for your dedication and professionalism. Please let us know how we may support you in your endeavor to grow professionally. We want you to enjoy your work as a valuable member of our team!

Tonya Barnes, M.Ed.
Director of Special Education
Coffey County Special Education Cooperative

“Everyone makes decisions in their life to do something or change something. I made the decision to change something, but the thing that changed was me.”

Paraprofessional
4 years of service
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Professionalism and Best Practices

Always represent CCSEC in a positive and professional manner

- Follow school policies and procedures
- Observe social protocols/norms and appropriate manners to promote a comfortable, work environment; be friendly, energetic, and show a positive attitude
- Be flexible to changing needs in buildings and district
- Refrain from stating any concerns in front of students/parents/other staff
- Avoid critiquing teachers and staff
- Remember – in many situations, you may not have all the facts
- Promote and maintain positive, respectful, interpersonal relationships
- Requesting vs. Telling – If you have an idea or suggestion, or a need, offer it in the form of a request, (i.e. “Would you mind if...”) rather than in a telling format
- Respect the chain-of-command
- Maintain appropriate attire within school policy

Professional Behavior
Model high, ethical standards, and act professionally. In the best interest of students, and to remain within professional parameters, staff must refrain from engaging in the following:

- Counseling students on personal issues. If a situation warrants, refer students to the professional staff in the school setting (i.e. teachers, counselor, or principal).
- Meeting exclusively with students outside of the school or public social settings. This includes having intimate physical, verbal, written, or social media contact.
- Attempting to meet or provide for the personal needs of students on your own. If you have observed a student has a need, express or report the need to your supervisor. Do not provide students with toys, clothing, money, personal care items, or medication of any kind.
- Providing transportation to students during the school day or during school activities in your personal vehicle.
- Placing a student or leaving a student in a room or area, or behind a closed door, alone or unsupervised.

**Note: If your duties include providing student(s) transportation for school purposes, follow school and legal protocols, never text or use an electronic device while driving, remain within destinations for the purpose of providing specific, student services, never leave a student unattended, and never allow a student to drive.
Supporting the learning process

- The teacher is responsible for instructional decisions/materials and is in charge of the classroom
- The goal is learning; do not confuse this with an answer or an assignment being finished
- Stay with the original assignment/activity & expectations/outcomes unless the teacher modifies
- Avoid providing answers to students; guide and assist in locating answers
- Provide accommodations/modifications to applicable students
- Check with teachers ahead when possible
- Reach as many students as you can each day in a positive way

Perception of your work

- Follow the schedule - be in assigned locations even if student(s) you are supporting are absent; staff are counting on you to be there during the scheduled time, and student absenteeism is not intended to be considered as free time
- Avoid giving perception you have free time or no work tasks during duty hours – seek out tasks when your assigned workload is light due to absences or classroom activities – be student/task focused
- Avoid sitting unless most appropriate for a given situation; continue moving with discretion; check on multiple students; modify volume as appropriate for a situation; promote a quiet, supportive presence in learning environments; minimize student dependence – promote independence
- Be Punctual – Arrive in assigned locations on time; if you need to leave, check with the teacher
- Follow-through and Organization – Create system for managing professional paperwork and deadlines. Keep a log of passwords, email addresses, and phone numbers you need to complete job tasks

Communication devices

- Conduct all personal business outside of duty hours
- Cell phones should not be visible in front of students
- All Internet and technology usage must be relevant to current academic purpose and providing supports to students - remember others can often see your online activity
- Leaving an assigned work area to take a phone call should occur in emergency cases only
Student Interactions/Discipline

- Use discretion – support self-esteem
- Avoid calling them out publicly or for a specific IEP activity
- Positively reinforce students when you observe them doing something the right way or following directions
- Refrain from reprimanding a student in front of peers
- Enforce building policies and behavior expectations
- Remain positive and use a calm tone-of-voice
- Prevent the perception of over-stepping boundaries with student discipline
- Refrain from assigning consequences beyond your scope of responsibility or enforcement
- Prevent escalation by allowing appropriate space, use planned ignoring
- Refrain from applying consequences during an incident

Absences

- Strive to attend work regularly
- Staff are expected to know and follow protocols in assigned buildings for managing absences
- Late arrivals: If you are going to be late (even 5 minutes), call the office or supervising teacher; frequent tardiness should be avoided
- Any amount of time you are not performing job duties (outside of your designated lunch break) needs to be counted as an absence; if you leave the building during duty time, always follow building exit/return protocols
- Document absenteeism in a timely manner
Roles of Special Education Teachers and Paraprofessionals

These are intended only as examples of the various types of job duties to be performed. The omission of specific duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is a similar, related, or logical assignment to the position. Duties may be assigned by the principal. These duties may vary from school to school.

I. Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special Education Teacher’s Role</th>
<th>Paraprofessional’s Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Determines appropriate objectives for groups and individual students.</td>
<td>• Follows schedule and implements plans designed by teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develops and implements student Individual Education Plans (IEP) goals, accommodations and modifications.</td>
<td>• Implements student IEP goals, accommodations and modifications as directed by the teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Plans weekly schedules, lessons, room arrangement, learning centers, and activities for the entire class, as well as modifications and accommodations for students with IEP’s.</td>
<td>• Provides direct, individual assistance to student(s) so that they can participate, as independently as possible, in the least restrictive environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teaches lessons to the entire class, small groups, and individual students.</td>
<td>• Implements student IEP goals, accommodations and modifications as directed by the teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Administers and scores assessments.</td>
<td>• Administers informal assessments under the direction of the teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Determines the appropriate use of assistive technology to meet the needs of students.</td>
<td>• Facilitates the use of assistive technology,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develops data collection tools and collects data on student progress.</td>
<td>• Collects data on student progress as designated by the teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“The best part of my job is learning something new about my students every day. Working with students with special needs children certainly has unique challenges. However, the rewards in seeing even small steps in their progress are immeasurable. It is extremely gratifying to know you are helping to make a difference in a child’s life.”

Paraprofessional
3 Years of Service
## II. Behavior and Social Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special Education Teacher’s Role</th>
<th>Paraprofessional’s Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Observes behavior, behavior support plans (BSP) and implements behavior intervention plans (BIP) and strategies for the entire class and for individual students.</td>
<td>• Implements behavior support plans (BSP) &amp; behavior intervention plans (BIP) and strategies under teacher direction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Facilitates appropriate social interactions between students.</td>
<td>• Facilitates appropriate social interactions between students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develops data collection tools and collects data on student behavior.</td>
<td>• Collects data on classroom behavior as designated by the teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## III. Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special Education Teacher’s Role</th>
<th>Paraprofessional’s Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Communicates with administrators, related service providers, general educators, Paraprofessionals, and appropriate staff regarding student progress.</td>
<td>• Communicates with providers or teachers as appropriate regarding student progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communicates with parents regarding student progress.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## IV. Personal Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special Education Teacher’s Role</th>
<th>Paraprofessional’s Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Provides personal assistance to students, as needed, to address mobility, positioning, personal care, daily activities, and utilizing the restroom.</td>
<td>• Provides personal assistance to students, as needed, to address mobility, positioning, personal care, daily activities, and utilizing the restroom.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## V. Clerical

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special Education Teacher’s Role</th>
<th>Paraprofessional’s Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Develops, models, and/or provides detailed instruction on preparing instructional materials.</td>
<td>• Prepares instructional materials based on a model and/or detailed instructions provided by a teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develops an organizational system to manage student work samples and materials.</td>
<td>• Assists with organization of student work samples and materials, as directed by the teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Working with Students with Health and Physical Needs

Health and Safety Practices

- Seek training from school nurse on Universal Precautions.
  http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00000039.htm
- Practice universal precautions at all times to protect yourself and others.
- Wear gloves when coming into contact with bodily fluids. (changing diapers, feeding, wiping noses, etc.)
- Use proper hand washing techniques to protect yourself and others, before and after assisting with feeding, when coming in contact with bodily fluids. Wash with soap and water for at least 15 seconds.
- Seek input and training from the school nurse concerning the health procedures for specific students.
- Clean materials and items mouthed by students only with a safe cleaner provided by the school’s custodial staff.
- Call for a custodian to clean blood, vomit, urine, and bowel spills.
- Follow the proper disposal of diapers recommended by your school nurse and custodians.
- Place soiled clothes in a double lined plastic bag and seal tightly.
- Alert nurse of any skin breakdown or rash noted during diapering.

Self-Care Strategies

- Always be discreet when assisting with the self-care needs of students. Carry diapers and supplies to the bathroom in a bag.
- Provide supervision of self-care skills as needed, yet allow for privacy when appropriate.
- Discuss IEP goals related to self-care skills with teacher and reinforce throughout the school day.
- Independence should be encouraged and taught while assisting a student with self-care skills. Allow the student to do as much as possible while completing self-care tasks. It will take longer in the beginning, but will pay off as the student becomes more independent! Always be mindful of safety.
- Occupational and Physical Therapists may provide guidance on toileting, feeding and dressing strategies.

Mobility

- Seek training from the Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapists, and/or Special Education Teacher concerning lifting and positioning for specific students.
- Encourage independence of students.
- Be aware of evacuation plan for students using walkers/crutches or wheelchairs.
Medical Issues - Students with medical issues have an individualized health care plan. Discuss the specifics of the plan with the special educator and school nurse prior to working with the student. The protocols for specific students may vary and should be followed as written.

- **Seizures – General Guidelines** - The protocols for specific students may vary. Consult with the special educator and nurse prior to working with the students.
  - Discuss with the teacher and nurse the students who have a history of seizures.
  - Discuss with nurse and special educator the typical nature, length of time of seizures and protocol to follow for particular students (see Emergency Action Plan).
  - Stay calm
  - Take note of the time the seizure started
  - Clear area/Protect from injury
  - Do not leave student unattended
  - Do not try to restrict motor movements of the seizure
  - Do not place anything in student’s mouth.
  - Call for the nurse if necessary
  - If student falls to the floor, position student on his side, when possible
  - Observe and be prepared to describe the pattern of the seizure, i.e. what part of the body was affected, type of movement, length of seizure
  - When the seizure is over, allow the student to rest when necessary
  - Document the nature and length of time of the seizure
  - Report to special educator and/or nurse as directed

- **Allergies- General Guidelines** - The symptoms and protocols for specific students may vary. Consult with the special educator and nurse prior to working with the students.
  - **Allergic Reactions**
    - Become aware of symptoms of allergies such as respiratory problems, swelling of face, lips or tongue, rashes on the skin, hives, vomiting and report to the school nurse.
    - Become aware of procedures for students in need of an Epi pen. The school nurse will provide instruction (follow emergency action plan).
  - **Food Allergies**
    - Become aware of the food allergies of students you are feeding or are assisting with feeding. This information may be obtained from the school nurse.
    - Become aware of symptoms of food allergies such as respiratory problems, swelling of face, lips or tongue, rashes on the skin, hives, vomiting and report to the school nurse immediately.
    - Remain with student; do not send student alone to the nurse’s office.
o Latex Allergies
    ▪ Wear non-latex gloves for students with latex allergies.
    ▪ Be aware that latex may be in the following: Gloves, band aids, balloons, rubber bands, koosh balls, paint, rubber/foam puzzles, glue, and erasers. Check with the school nurse for a complete list of materials not to expose to students with latex allergies.

“Fair is not everyone getting the same thing. Fair is getting what you need to be successful.”
- Unknown

Equality doesn’t mean Fair

EQUALITY  FAIR
Characteristics and Instructional Strategies for Specific Disabilities

Educational disabilities include: Autism, Deaf-blindness, Deafness, Developmental delay, Emotional Disturbance, Hearing Impairment, Mental Retardation, Multiple Disabilities, Orthopedic Impairment, Other health impairment, Specific learning disability, Speech or language impairment, Traumatic brain injury, or Visual impairment. This is a general list of characteristics and instructional strategies of the most common disabilities that may or may not apply to all students with each disability. Please seek input from the teachers you work with to discover additional information that will assist you in meeting the unique needs of our students.

Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD)

Categorized as Other Health Impairment

ADHD is a neurobiological disorder. Typically, children with ADHD have developmentally inappropriate behavior, including hyperactivity, inattention, and impulsivity which occur in several settings such as home, school and extra-curricular activities.

General Characteristics May Include:
- Hyperactivity
- Distractibility
- Inattention
- Impulsivity
- Social skills deficit
- Difficulty Focusing
- Poor organization of materials and thoughts
- Fails to give attention to detail and makes careless mistakes
- Varied perception of time (difficult tasks may seem like they take a very long time, preferred tasks maintain their attention for longer periods of time)
- Difficulty following through with directions and completing assignments
- Difficulty with problem solving

Instructional Strategies:
- Minimize distractions
- Provide uncluttered workspace
- Provide structure and routine
- Provide organizational tools and strategies
- Provide visual and graphic organizers
- Break tasks into smaller segments
- Highlight important ideas
• Color coding
• Use of timers and providing reminders of remaining time to complete an assignment
• Modified instruction
• Set behavioral expectations
• Provide structured breaks between assignments
• Allow for movement opportunities
• Active learning
• Use of fidget objects, wiggle cushions, and/or other sensory integration tools.

Autism
A developmental disability that significantly affects verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction.

General Characteristics May Include:
• Verbal and nonverbal communication deficit
• Narrow interests with stereotyped behaviors
• Resistance to environmental change and daily routines
• Engages in repetitive activities (i.e. repeating a phrase/story or performing same motor task over and over)
• Literal and concrete thinker
• Unusual responses to sensory experiences
• Varying levels of intelligence and ability
• Difficulty with social interaction skills
• Motor difficulties

Instructional Strategies:
• Obtain the student’s attention and establish eye contact before giving a direction or talking with the student.
• Provide structure, consistency, and routine.
• Allow enough time for the student to respond.
• Reduce amount of talking to the student.
• Provide choices for students when possible.
• Use visual supports (objects, photos, picture, symbols, gestures, or sign language) to increase understanding.
• Prepare students for transitions and changes in schedule or routine (First give a verbal prompt; then chart through use of a picture schedule or visual timer.)
• Avoid using idioms, words with double meanings, and sarcasm.
• Allow the use of a “fidget” or sensory object when appropriate.

Developmental Delay
The student has below average functioning in one or more of the following areas: physical, cognitive, adaptive behavior, communication, or social or emotional development; that adversely affects a child’s educational performance. Since the characteristics and instructional strategies for individual students will vary, consult the teacher for recommendations for each student. This exceptionality is only used with students through age 9.

Emotional Disability (ED)
Characterized by one or more of the following: Displayed pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression, consistent or chronic inappropriate type of behavior or feelings under normal conditions, inability to learn that cannot be adequately explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors, displayed tendency to develop physical symptoms, pains, or fears associated with personal or school problems, inability to build or maintain interpersonal relationships with peers and/or teachers.

General Characteristics May Include:
• Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings
• Uncooperative
• Withdrawn
• Low self-esteem
• Difficulty with social skills and interacting with peers and adults
• Resists authority
• Poor coping skills
• Poor social skills
• Poor self-control
• Aggressive behavior
• Anxiety

Instructional Strategies:
• Set clear rules, boundaries, and expectations
• Learn what might trigger a student’s behavior and work with the student to prevent or de-escalate the behaviors.
• Avoid power struggles.
• Provide choices of two things you want them to do.
• Encourage the use of self-control strategies (deep breathing, counting backwards).
• Consistently follow the behavior plan or behavior strategies recommended by the teacher.
• NEVER use physical restraint unless you have completed Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) training.
• Refrain from “rehashing past behavior”.

**Deafness/ Hearing Impairment**

Students have a wide range of hearing loss. The term deaf implies that a person has a very severe hearing loss and relies primarily on lip reading or sign language for communication.

**General Characteristics May Include:**

- Language and speech delay
- Different voice characteristics
- May misunderstand information presented
- Difficulty understanding concepts that are not concrete
- Takes things literally

**Instructional Strategies:**

- Use of visuals
- Gain the student’s attention before speaking
- Face the student when talking
- Speak clearly and at a normal pace
- Be sure the student is seated close to the speaker
- Allow time for the student to respond
- Assistive Technologies as determined by the IEP Team.

**Intellectual Disability (ID) (Cognitive)**

A significant overall delay in thinking, communicating, and performing daily life skills.

**General Characteristics May Include:**

- Require more time and repetition to learn things
- May have difficulties with fine and gross motor
- Delayed academic skills
- May have delayed speech and language
- Adult assistance or supervision for activities of daily living (toileting, dressing, feeding)

**Instructional Strategies:**

- Multi-sensory approach (sandpaper letters, gross motor activities, hear it and say it and write it)
- Use of visual supports (objects, photos, picture, symbols, gestures, or sign language) to increase understanding
- Scaffolding (Identify what they know and build on previously learned skills)
- Provide structure and establish routines
- Modeling (showing them how to complete a task, providing model of completed task)
• Allow extra time for response
• Break tasks/assignments into smaller segments
• May need assistance or supervision for daily living activities.
• Use redirection and frequent positive reinforcement
• Modified and/or alternative curriculum(s)

**Orthopedic Impairment**

Physical (motor) difficulties in mobility, writing, and or sitting.

**General Characteristics May Include:**
• Limited movement and functioning of arms and/or legs
• Involuntary movements (cannot control)
• May need assistance with activities of daily living (toileting, dressing, feeding)

**Instructional Strategies:**
• Remove or accommodate barriers for student
• Allow students to be as independent as possible
• Speak to the person on their level (sit down if they are in a wheelchair)
• Allow enough time for student to respond, complete activities
• Ensure proper positioning for access and comfort prior to instruction

**Specific Learning Disability (SLD)**

A disorder in one or more basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself through an ability to listen, think, speak, read, spell, or do mathematical calculations.

**General Characteristics May Include:**
• Have difficulty in one or more academic areas, yet may excel in others
• Difficulty processing information either visually or through spoken language
• Average or above average intelligence
• Distractible
• Easily frustrated
• Inattention
• Social skills deficit

**Instructional Strategies:**
• Use the student’s strengths to support learning in more difficult areas.
• Chunking (Breaking assignments down into smaller, more manageable tasks)
• Allow extra time for responses
• Graphic organizers
• Visual organizers
• Use of strategies (Example: COPS Capitalization, Overall Appearance, Punctuation, Spelling)
• Multi-sensory approach (sandpaper letters, gross motor activities, hear it, say it, and write it)
• Scaffolding (Identify what they know and build on previously learned skills)
• Color coding
• Use of timers and providing reminders of remaining time to complete an assignment or task
• Modified instruction

**Speech/Language Impairment**
Difficulty in understanding or expressing language, stuttering, or unusual voice characteristics.

**General Characteristics May Include:**
• Delay in language concepts (sentence length, vocabulary)
• Poor pragmatic (social language)
• Difficulty understanding when speaking

**Instructional Strategies:**
• Model good speech and language
• Allow students to communicate as independently as possible utilizing their mode(s) of communication (verbal, sign language, picture symbols, augmentative communication device/voice output device, computer)
• Ask student to repeat or express in a different way if you did not understand them (show me, point to)
• Allow enough time for student to respond
• Use visual supports (objects, photos, picture, symbols, gestures, or sign language) to increase understanding.

**Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)**
An injury to the brain that adversely affects a student’s educational performance.

**General Characteristics May Include:**
• Impairment may be in one or more of the following areas: cognition, language, memory, attention, reasoning, abstract thinking, judgment, problem solving, motor abilities, processing, and speech
• May need assistance with activities of daily living (toileting, dressing, feeding)
• Anxiety of coping with the loss of previously mastered skills prior to injury
Instructional Strategies:
• Use simple and concrete language, but maintain high expectations
• Repetition of skills
• Modeling
• Break tasks/assignments into smaller segments

Visual Impairment
Impairment in vision which, even with correction, adversely affects a student’s educational performance. Visual Impairment includes partial sight and blindness.

General Characteristics May Include:
• May tire easily from visual tasks
• Sensitivity to light
• May have difficulty finding materials
• Difficulty with mobility
• Poor depth perception

Instructional Strategies:
• Close proximity to teacher and instructional materials
• Enlarged print
• Multi-sensory (hearing, touch)
• Assistive Tech devices (talking calculators, dome magnifier)
• Light boards
• Organized workspace
• Reduce glare
• Use pens or markers vs. pencil
• Slant boards
• Contrast of color/use of contrasting backgrounds

“I have seen children struggle with basic information for weeks on end when all of a sudden, something clicked. What joy to see a student count money, tell time or read a simple book without missing any words for the first time.”

Paraprofessional
19 Years of Service
## Student Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Communication</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Materials and Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verbal</strong>&lt;br&gt;This student communicates through oral language independently.</td>
<td>• Provide simple, clear, directions.&lt;br&gt;• Restate and implement comprehension checks periodically.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verbal with Prompting</strong>&lt;br&gt;This student communicates in simple words or short phrases. The child will need prompts to generate language.</td>
<td>• Use visuals, gestures, or sign language.&lt;br&gt;• Provide simple and concise language.&lt;br&gt;• Restate and implement comprehension checks periodically.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sign Language</strong>&lt;br&gt;This student may use sign language expressively and/or receptively to assist with comprehension.</td>
<td>• Consult with the special educator, speech therapist or interpreter for direction to assist student.&lt;br&gt;• Sign language is sometimes used as a strategy to increase receptive language (understanding).</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aslpro.com">www.aslpro.com</a>&lt;br&gt;This website provides video tutorials on how to create specific signs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System)</strong>&lt;br&gt;This student may have minimal or no verbal language. He/she communicates through pictures expressively and/or receptively to assist with comprehension.</td>
<td>• Once student provides symbol, read the symbol to indicate your understanding, and then respond to the request; encourage, but do not require verbal participation in the exchange.</td>
<td>Boardmaker, Writing with Symbols 2000&lt;br&gt;PECS manual/video tape/training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Augmentative Communication (Voice Output Devices)</strong>&lt;br&gt;This student has limited, unintelligible, or no verbal communication. The student utilizes the voice output devices for expressive communication.</td>
<td>• Model use of the device in the beginning.&lt;br&gt;• Provide opportunities for the students to use the device for responding.&lt;br&gt;• Make sure the device is available to the student at all appropriate times.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Tell me and I’ll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I’ll understand”
- Chinese Proverb
Keys to Effective Communication

- Maintain close proximity and use a low volume when communicating with students.
- Provide clear and simply stated directions of what you expect the child to do instead of telling them what you don’t want them to do.
- Repeat back to the student what you think they are saying to clarify what the student means.
- Some children may require a model, picture, or sign of the action paired with the verbal direction.
- Use age appropriate language when speaking with students. (Refrain from using “baby talk”). Encourage students to use age appropriate language.
- Allow students time to communicate independently using their mode(s) of communication.
- Allow for extra processing and response time.

For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instead of saying:</th>
<th>Say/Model</th>
<th>Reinforce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| “No yelling!”     | • “Use a calm voice.”  
|                   | • “Use an inside voice.” | • “Speak in a low voice while saying… Now I can listen, you are using a quiet voice.”  
|                   |           | • “Nice job using your inside voice.” |
| “Don’t run!”      | • “We walk in the hallway.”  
|                   | • “Use walking feet.”  
|                   | • “Walk please.” | • “I like the way you’re walking.”  
|                   |           | • “Thanks for walking!” |
| “Stop calling out!” | • “Raise your hand.”  
|                   | • “When you raise your hand, the teacher will answer your question.” | • “Thank you for raising your hand.”  
|                   |           | • “I like the way you raised your hand to share your ideas.” |

“If students don’t succeed at first, try again using different strategies and always remember to have patience and understanding.”

Paraprofessional
Positive Behavioral Strategies and Supports

• Behavior is a means of communication. Consider what the student is trying to tell you with the behavior. Is she hungry? Is he frustrated? Is he trying to get attention? Is she trying to escape the demand? Is he sick?

• Behind most behaviors exists a skill deficit.
  o Language and social difficulties
  o Sensory processing difficulties
  o Academic and writing skill deficits
  o Difficulties managing stress and anxiety
  o Attention difficulties
  o Difficulties handling transition and change
  o Difficulties with self-esteem
  o Organizational difficulties

• Implement classroom and individual student behavior plans created by the teacher and/or IEP team consistently.

• Remind students of expectations prior to the transitions of an activity.

• Be cognizant of triggers/antecedents (what happens prior to the behavior occurring) that may lead to inappropriate behavior.

• Communicate with the teacher regarding student behaviors within a reasonable time frame.

• Encourage, expect, and reinforce age appropriate behavior, even with students with lower cognitive abilities.

• Be proactive when assisting with behavior management. Provide structure and routine in an environment that is conducive to learning.

• When communicating with students, state directions and expectations in a simple, explicit, and positive manner. Tell the students what they are supposed to do. For instance, instead of saying “Don’t run”, say “Please walk in the halls.”

• Offer students choices to avoid a power struggle. Rather than say “Don’t tap your pencil”, state “Would you rather put your pencil in your pencil case or in your desk.”

• Provide and encourage association with appropriate peer role models.

• Avoid overreacting to inappropriate behavior, and view the student’s behavior in professional terms (don’t take it personal). Be aware of the potential impact of your response.

• When possible, ignore attention seeking behaviors that are not disruptive to the classroom.

• Diffuse stressful situations for students through redirection and distraction when appropriate.
• Provide positive reinforcement. Avoid focusing on punitive consequences or loss of privileges.
• Stay in the present. Address behavior incidents individually.
• Separate the child from the behavior. Indicate that the child is valued and liked, but the behavior is inappropriate.

Ways to Positively Reinforce Students

When providing positive reinforcement:
• State the student’s name; and
• State what you like about the behavior; and
• State a reinforcer

Example 1: (Student), I like the way you quietly got in line to go to recess, good job.

Example 2: (Student), I like that you returned your permission slip today. That is very helpful.

“A good motto to live and work by, “start with a clean slate every day”. No matter what had happened the day before, greeting each day with this motto makes life at school a little easier!”
Strategies for Facilitating Student Independence

- Increasing learner independence is the instructional goal for every student! Encourage students to be independent rather than dependent.
- Encourage and allow students to make choices and decisions.
- Encourage students to complete activities as independently as possible prior to offering support.
- Allow student work to be authentic, rather than completed by an adult.
- Allow students to make mistakes and experience natural consequences, unless there is a safety issue.
- When appropriate, sit or stand at a distance from the student who requires additional adult support.
- Break larger tasks into smaller steps to allow student to independently perform parts of task/assignment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional Example</th>
<th>In the computer lab, a student is unable to type their full password. Encourage the student to enter the first or last character of the password. Gradually, increase number of digits/characters entered by student.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Example</td>
<td>A student is expected to write a paragraph. This task could be divided into smaller sections such as formulating ideas, creating a topic sentence, developing supporting sentences, and formulating a conclusion. The student may only complete one or two of these tasks during the class time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Utilize peer support when possible, as approved by the teacher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional Example</th>
<th>A student is unable to tie his/her shoe. Rather than the Paraprofessional tying the student’s shoe, a peer could do this instead. Students may benefit from having a packing up/locker buddy at the end of the day rather than depending on adult support for this task.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Example</td>
<td>During math class, pairs of students work on an activity sheet together. Instead of the Paraprofessional scribing for a student with a fine motor disability, the student’s partner can write for her/him. A student with a reading disability participates in a play during English/Language Arts. This student could be paired with a peer to help him/her learn the lines.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“In learning you will teach, and in teaching you will learn.”

-Phil Collins
Utilizing the Prompt Hierarchy to Facilitate Student Independence

- Always seek direction from the teacher concerning the use of prompts to be used with students.
- A prompt hierarchy refers to different levels of support provided to assist a student who is learning or demonstrating a task.
- In Diana Browning Wright’s handout “Prompting”, we begin with least intrusive and move through to most intrusive. The goal is to begin with the least intrusive prompts. The most intrusive prompts should be used minimally and gradually faded as appropriate under the direction of the teacher.
- Some students may have individualized prompt hierarchies. For example, you would not utilize gesture prompts for a student who is blind or has a severe vision disability.
- Remember, it is important to provide sufficient wait time between prompts.

### Definitions of Prompt Types

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Prompt Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Prompt</td>
<td>This level of prompt requires the teacher to give a specific verbal direction in addition to the task direction. Given a task direction, the student is unable to perform correctly until another, more specific, verbal prompt is provided (e.g., After the teacher gives the task direction and allows for wait time, the teacher then says, “Push the button to turn on the scanner.”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gesture Prompt</td>
<td>This level of prompt requires the teacher to move his/her finger, hand, arm, or make a facial expression that communicates to the student specific information (e.g., Teacher taps scanner switch button).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model Prompt</td>
<td>This level of prompt requires the teacher to demonstrate the correct response for the student, and the student imitates the teacher’s model (e.g., The teacher demonstrates how to push the switch and then asks the student to repeat).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial Physical Prompt</td>
<td>This level of prompt requires the teacher to touch the student to elicit a response (e.g., Teacher touches the student’s hand closest to the scanner switch button).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Physical Prompt</td>
<td>This level of prompt requires the teacher to place his/her hand over the student’s hand and move it toward the response (e.g., teacher places hand over student’s hand and places it on the scanner switch button). This is commonly called, “Hand-Over-Hand” support.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Derived from the Alt MSA 2009 Handbook
Inclusion Solutions

Research supports students with disabilities learn best with their typical peers in the general classroom with accommodations and modifications. Our goal, in alignment with federal and state law, is for students to be integrated in the general education classroom to the fullest extent possible.

Tips for Supporting Students in the General Education Classroom

• Implement the appropriate accommodations, modifications, and lesson plans provided by the special education teacher for specific students.

• Become familiar with the content of the unit/course. Ask the teacher for clarification about the material, when needed.

• Provide students with opportunities to ask questions and respond utilizing their mode(s) of communication (verbal, sign language, picture symbols, and augmentative communication/voice output device).

• Implement the classroom and/or individual behavior plan when the student is in the general education setting.

• Provide feedback and data to both the general and special education teachers related to academic progress, work habits and behavior.

• Encourage students to become as independent as possible when following classroom routines.

• Avoid hovering over the student you are supporting. Facilitate student independence by varying the amount of support, monitoring, and prompting based on the need and independence level of the student.

• Assist with other students who need help, on occasion, not singling out the students who receive special education services.

• Be mindful of the volume of your voice in the general education classroom so as you provide direction; it does not distract the learning environment.

• Communicate with teachers about potential situations of increased supports to students, such as transitioning a student to a more structured environment. Discuss ahead of time with the teacher the expectations of student transitions. What are the criteria for the student to return to the classroom? (Including location, alternate activities, length of time, reintegration procedures, and assistance.)

• Encourage students to interact with peers and develop peer relationships, as approved by the teacher.
  • When working with students with limited cognition, social skills or verbal ability, get to know the interests of your student and classmates to share common interests with each other.
  • Have the teacher select appropriate peer role models to work with or assist a student with a task, when appropriate.
Legal, Ethical and Confidentiality Considerations for Paraprofessionals

Laws Regarding Paraprofessionals

FERPA – Family Educational Right to Privacy Act

FERPA is federal legislation in the United States that protects the privacy of students’ personally identifiable information (PII). This act applies to all institutions that receive federal funds.

FERPA states that parents of students under 18, or eligible students (students over 18, or those who have matriculated to an educational institution above high school) be allowed to view and prose amendments to their educational records. The act also mandates that school must obtain written permission form parents or eligible students in order to release a student’s PII.

There are a few exceptions regarding who may receive records without written permission.

Exceptions include:

- Legitimate requests from school officials
- Requests from schools to which a student is transferring
- Cases of “directory information” defined as “information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed,” such as name, address, telephone number and date of birth.

In the case of directory information, the parents or eligible students must be notified of the proposed release of said information and given time to request their information not be disclosed. Social Security numbers and student identification numbers are not included in the category of “directory information” and may never be released without written permission.

Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA.

Paraprofessionals need to be aware that conversations with people who do not have a direct educational involvement with the students are in violation of the law and thus subject to disciplinary action. Remember that matters regarding students are confidential and cannot be a topic for public discussion.

Paraprofessionals working or desiring to work in a Title I building must meet the following requirements:

- Have a high school diploma or GED; AND
  - Complete 48 hours at an institution of higher learning; OR
  - Obtain an Associate’s Degree (or higher) OR
  - Pass a State approved assessment that assess the ability to assist in instruction reading, writing, and mathematics (or reading, writing, mathematics readiness).
Ethical Considerations

As an integral part of the educational team, classified staff has a commitment to maintain ethical standards of behavior in their relationships with students, parents, their supervisor, and other school personnel. A code of ethics provides guidelines for appropriate behavior.

- Discuss a child’s progress, limitations, and/or educational program only with the supervising teacher and those directly involved with the child’s educational program. A breach of confidentiality may result in termination of employment.
- Engage only in non-instructional and instructional activities for which qualified or trained.
- Discuss school problems and confidential matters only with appropriate personnel and only when students are not present.
- Respect the dignity, privacy, and individuality of all students, parents, and staff members.
- Refrain from engaging in discriminatory practices based on a student’s handicap, race, sex, cultural background, or religion.
- Take responsible action to insure that the best interests of individual students are being met.
- Follow district policies for protecting health, safety, and well-being of students.
- Serve as a positive role model for students in personal interactions and communications.
- Use behavior management strategies which are consistent with standards established by the local school district and classroom teacher.
- Follow grievance procedures outlined by the cooperative.
- Respect the confidentiality of information about students and do not communicate progress or concerns about students to parents without authorization of the teacher.
- Refer concerns expressed by parents, student or others to your teacher or supervisor.
- Represent the educational agency in the community and refrain from expressing negative opinions of the program and agency.
- Follow the directions of supervisors.
- Recognize that the supervisor has the ultimate responsibility for the instruction and behavior management of children and follow the directions prescribed by him/her.
- Refrain from a.) Airing school problems and confidential matters, including personalities outside school circles; b.) Discussing administrative, interdepartmental, and intra-school problems in the presence of pupils and c.) Gossiping about problems with those who cannot assist in the solution.
- The Paraprofessional should not be responsible for preparing lesson plans and initiating original concept instruction.
- The Paraprofessional should not be assigned to work alone with the most “difficult” students the majority of the day.
The Paraprofessional should never make value judgments concerning teacher strategies and placements.

Demonstrate a willingness to participate in training activities to improve performance.

Maintain a record of regular attendance, arrive and depart at specified times, and notify appropriate personnel when you must be absent through established protocols.

Confidentiality
Maintaining confidentiality is mandated by the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). It is the law and it is imperative that school personnel follow this ethical code of conduct. Maintaining confidentiality is essential.

Tips for Staff: Never violate confidentiality! Understand the rule “Need to Know vs. Need to Tell”. It will guide you in deciding when and to whom you share student information. Only those people who are directly involved in the education of a special needs student may have specified student information.

- Remember you have both your public and private self. As an educator, you are always scrutinized by your community. It is important to project a professional, ethical image both in and out of school.

- If you are unsure about accessing specific student information, ask your supervisor.

- If you are unsure about sharing student information, ask your supervising teacher.

What are the legal and ethical duties of Paraprofessionals?
Paraprofessionals must:

1. Maintain confidentiality
2. Respect the legal and human rights of children, youth and their families.
3. Follow district policies for protecting the health, safety, and well-being of children and youth.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of distinctions in roles of various educational personnel.
5. Follow the directions of teachers and other supervisors.
6. Follow the chain-of-command for various administrative procedures.
7. Demonstrate dependability, integrity, and respect for individual differences and other standards of ethical conduct.
8. Demonstrate a willingness to participate in training activities to improve performance.
Questions and Answers about Confidentiality

Q. I'm not a licensed/certified employee, does confidentiality apply to me?

**ANSWER:** Most employees of the district know some information about a student that is confidential. However, because you work in a classroom, you have direct access to confidential information. You may know who is in Special Education, who has a seizure disorder or specific services a student receives. However, you should never share that information. Respecting confidentiality is critical for ALL employees.

Q: I have a student in my class on an IEP. May I read the IEP? May I have a copy of the IEP?

**ANSWER:** Teachers have a responsibility to share the IEP on a “need to know basis”. They should share the information of the goals, services, accommodations, modifications, and behavior plans with you and other Paraprofessionals who work with that student. You need to know what skills you will be supporting. If the teacher shares the IEP information with you, please hold that as confidential and don’t share it. You should not need a copy of the IEP and none of the information should leave the classroom.

Q: I work with a student who has ADHD, is easily distracted, and sometimes runs away. I know he is going on an overnight scout activity this weekend. May I tell the Scout Master to make sure he takes his medicine?

**ANSWER:** NO. You cannot tell the Scout Master. Your supervising teacher cannot, either, unless the parent signs a “Release of Information” form. Without a signed parental release, you can talk about nothing – not even the fact that the student is in your class. Consult your teacher whenever you are in doubt about whether or not to disclose information. A better way to handle this scenario is for the teacher to talk with the parent. The parent has every right to discuss any concern with the Scout Master.

Q: You are in line at the grocery store and your neighbor asks about a fight at school. Her son was hit by an aggressive student who is identified as emotionally disturbed. Can you tell her about the diagnosis and that the student forgot to take his medication?

**ANSWER:** NO. Tell her to contact the teacher or administrator if she needs more information. This is a good time to practice your listening skills.
Paraprofessional Inservice Requirements

Inservice gives you the opportunity to participate in job related activities. Although inservice hours are required, you should look at them as an opportunity for growth and to further develop your knowledge of the services and systems that are provided in our schools. The following information is taken from the Kansas Special Education Reimbursement Guide and details Paraprofessional inservice requirements:

Tiered Paraprofessional Inservice Requirement:
Staff development requirements are tiered based on the special education experiences and/or credentials for the Paraprofessional. Paraprofessionals are expected to provide evidence of inservice.

Staff Development Hours – Locally Determined
Inservice requirements are determined by the LEA (your local school district) for Paraprofessionals that hold a current Kansas license/certificate in the following areas:

- Teacher
- KSDE Certificate stating NCLB requirements met during current school year.
  - NCLB highly qualified certificate does not expire, but can only be used to meet inservice requirement in the year the certificate was acquired.
- Related service provider, (SLP or OT, PT, etc.)*
- Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA)
- Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA)* or;
- Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)*
  *If working in related area: (i.e. OTA must be assigned as OT Para)

Twenty Staff Development Hours Required: Paraprofessionals who have worked as a Kansas Special Education Paraprofessional less than 3 years (within the past 3 years).

Ten Staff Development Hours Required: Paraprofessionals who have worked as a Kansas Special Education for more than 3 years (including each of the past 3 years). A school year may be counted if it was 9 months (or the full school year) AND the appropriate amount of inservice was obtained. Short breaks may have been taken during the year.

College Credit:
College hours in related subjects may be substituted for Special Education inservice hours. Each college hour will be counted as twenty staff development hours, applied to the school year in which the coursework was obtained.

Incomplete Staff Development:
For Paraprofessionals who have worked the entire 9 month school year, if an LEA does not produce evidence that a Paraprofessional has completed the required staff development, categorical aid will be prorated based on the required number of staff development hours. (Taken from the Kansas Special Education Reimbursement Guide)
Inservice Opportunities:
Our school district will offer a variety of inservice opportunities throughout the school year. Your supervising teacher can help you determine which opportunities are right for you. Below is a list of opportunities that may be used for inservice hours:

- Building and District Inservices
- College or technical college classes. All courses must be related to education and must be preapproved by your supervising teacher. Transcripts will be required for inservice credit.
- Para Pro Assessment
- Crisis Prevention Training (CPI)
- Books and DVDs

Paraprofessional Inservice Record:
You will be given a form to document your inservice hours throughout the year. It is up to you to document the inservice hours that you complete, and it is recommended you keep a copy of all inservice documents.

You MUST:
- Have your supervising teacher initial each of the inservice activities.
- Return 1 (one) copy of your inservice record no later than December 1st documenting all inservice hours completed up to that point.
- Send your original inservice record to the CCSEC office no later than April 15th.

NOTE: Your inservice record is not complete if your supervising teacher has not initialed each activity AND signed where indicated on the inservice form.
CCSEC PARAPROFESSIONAL INSERVICE RECORD

NAME: ______________________________ START DATE (1ST FULL YR.): ____________

SUPERVISOR/TEACHER: ___________________________ REQ. # of HRS: ____________

BUILDING ASSIGNMENT:

NOTE: Completion & documentation of inservice hours is mandatory and is part of your job requirement.

- **20 Inservice Hours Required:** Paraprofessionals who have worked as a Kansas Special Education Paraprofessional less than 3 years *(within the past 3 years).*
- **10 Inservice Hours Required:** Paraprofessionals who have worked as a Kansas Special Education Paraprofessional for more than 3 years *(including each of the past 3 years).*

Inservice includes workshops, special training, college hours, videos and other study materials (required by your position and approved by your supervisor). Per KSDE, you may claim up to 2 hours of inservice for classroom/building orientation. However, you must be specific when claiming orientation hours and you must document what, where, with whom, and how long.

**IMPORTANT**

- Return 1 (one) COPY of your inservice record to the CCSEC office no later than December 1st with the inservice hours you have completed to-date.
- Send your completed ORIGINAL inservice record *(with supervisor signature)* to this office no later than April 15th.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>INSERVICE ACTIVITY</th>
<th>ESTIMATED HOURS</th>
<th>ACTUAL HOURS COMPLETED</th>
<th>VERIFICATION SIGNATURE (REQUIRED)</th>
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</table>

Signature of Paraprofessional  Date  Signature of Supervisor  Date

Signature of Paraprofessional  Date  Signature of Supervisor  Date
Questions for Discussion with Classroom and Supervising Teachers

• Who are the students I will be supporting?

• What are the schedules of students I am supporting?

• What is my schedule?

• Are there student medical issues that I need to know prior to working with individual students?

• What are the school-wide and classroom behavior systems?

• Does a student I am working with have an individual behavior plan? If so, what are the target behaviors, rewards, and consequences?

• What are the safety considerations for individual students?

• How does the student communicate? What strategies are effective in communicating with the student?

• Can we discuss the snapshot IEP (summary of IEP goals, objectives, accommodations and modifications)?

• How will we communicate about instructional plans for the students I support?

• How will we communicate about student progress?

• When will we meet to discuss student successes and concerns?

• What strategies and techniques are effective when working with particular students?

• What level of prompting does a student need to complete assignments?

• What can I do to help facilitate student independence?

• What can I do to assist with facilitating peer relationships?

• What level of supervision/support does the student need for the activity?

• Where are school supplies and how are they obtained?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Question/Concerns</th>
<th>Who do I ask?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What accommodations does the student have?</td>
<td>Special educator/Case manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions about specific subject matter</td>
<td>General Education teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(math algorithms, science vocabulary, comprehension strategies)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which days and hours do I work?</td>
<td>Supervisor/Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions about sick and personal days</td>
<td>Administrator and refer to negotiated agreement/contract/building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and management of absences.</td>
<td>protocols</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional questions I would like to ask:

“If a child can learn one new thing that they couldn’t do before,
I’ve helped to make a difference.”

Paraprofessional
3 Years of Service
Evaluation Process for Paraprofessionals

Probationary Period –

Each new Paraprofessional will be placed on a 30-day probationary period. This will permit the Paraprofessional to adjust to new duties and become acquainted with operational procedures of the Coffey County Special Education Cooperative.

Evaluation Timeline -

Following the first 30 days on the job, the work performance of the new Paraprofessional will be evaluated by the immediate supervisor. At that time, employment may be continued or terminated.

Thereafter, an evaluation will be held:

- Paraprofessionals that have been employed as a Para in this district for 3 years or less will receive two (2) evaluations per year. Your first evaluation will be completed on or before November 15th and your second evaluation on or before April 15th.
- Paraprofessionals that have been employed as a Para in this district for more than 3 years will receive one (1) evaluation per year to be completed on or before February 15th.
- In addition, evaluations can be held as deemed necessary by the immediate supervisor and/or administrative staff in accordance with Board policy.

Note: It is understood that during the course of a work day, there is constant evaluation between the employer and employee. Problems or questions of either party should be discussed when the need arises.
Accommodations and Modifications

Accommodations and modifications are types of adaptations that are made to the environment, curriculum, instruction, or assessment practices in order for students with disabilities to be successful learners and to actively participate with other students in the general education classroom and school-wide activities. Specific accommodations and modifications are identified and approved for students by the IEP (Individual Education Plan) Team. The special education teacher will share the specific accommodations and modifications for each student to be successful. As a Paraprofessional, you will assist in providing the appropriate accommodations and modifications in academic settings.

Accommodations vs. Modifications

Accommodations

• Change **how** a student accesses the grade level curriculum
• Reduces barriers of student access

Modifications

• Changes **what** a student is expected to learn
  o Modified curriculum level
  o Modified quantity of material covered
  o Modified application level
  o Modified level of understanding

Accommodations and Modifications should be implemented seamlessly/discreetly in the classroom, documented for fidelity, and implemented consistently. **Always** consult with the responsible teacher before implementing or changing an accommodation or modification; Paraprofessionals are not to determine the accommodations and modifications for students; but do assist with implementation.

Presentation:

• Audio vs reading
• Audio with text
• Fewer items per page
• Larger print
• Reader for text
• Give instructions orally
• Recorded lectures/reviews
• Lesson outlines
• Words webs/visual – graphic organizers/graph paper for math problems column alignment
• Provide notes
• List of instructions
• Repeated/restated directions
• Vary activities often
• Manipulatives
• Have student(s) repeat instructions
• Highlighting material

Responses:
• Oral responses
• Use of scribe
• Picture symbols
• Extended time for responses
• Written assignments in electronic format
• Calculator or math facts chart

Setting:
• Separate setting – quiet room with fewer distractions
• Preferential seating
• Special lighting
• Small group setting
• Sensory items
• Locations in classroom provided for all students to remove themselves from group
• Locker with adapted method of entry

Timing:
• Frequent breaks
• Extended time
• Wait time for processing – additional
• Challenging tasks in the morning
• Modified arrival/exit times for extra-curricular activities

Scheduling:
• Provide visual schedule – create so finished tasks can be “moved” to indicate completion
• Additional time to complete tasks/projects
• Chunking tests/assessments over several sessions
• Complete a test in a different order
• Give tests at a specific time of day
Organization:
- Set a timer for task
- Use color-coding for subjects and schedule
- Assistance with putting assignments in order
- Assistance completing a planner
- Weekly home-school communication tool
- Snapshot with technology resource of visual notes/reminders
- Tech organization (alphabetizing, time order, use of time, order of tasks)

Assignments:
- Complete fewer homework problems than peers
- Write shorter answers or papers
- Answer fewer or different test questions
- Word banks
- Matching items
- Fill-in-the blank (closed paragraphs)
- Give multiple alternate assignment formats
- Provide model for copying
- Chunking assignments
- Alternate grade level curriculum
- Alternate grade level spelling program
- Avoid time tasks
- Progress monitor at lower grade level
- Outline of report versus a written essay
- Portfolio projects (Note: Be aware of any limitation of modifying standardized resources or tools.)

Grading:
- Avoid penalizing for spelling/penmanship
- Rubric
- Essential elements
- Use of Portfolio for projects
- Pass/Fail
- Grade for finished product vs. participation in learning activity
- Average a first score with a corrected score

“Smiling faces and open minds are what the children respond to!”
Acronyms

**Education and Special Education:**

- ACT – College Readiness Assessment (known as American College Testing)
- ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act
- ADHD – Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- AFO – Ankle-Foot Orthotic
- ASL – American Sign Language
- AT – Assistive Technology
- AYP – Adequate Yearly Progress
- BIP – Behavior Intervention Plan
- BOE – Board of Education
- CBI – Community-Based Instruction
- CBM – Curriculum-Based Measurement
- CCR – College & Career Readiness
- CCSEC – Coffey County Special Education Cooperative
- CCSS – Common Core State Standards
- CPI – Crisis Prevention Intervention
- DLM – Dynamic Learning Maps (Alternate assessment)
- EEs – Essential Elements
- ELL – English Language Learner
- ESEA – Elementary and Secondary Education Act
- ESI – Emergency Safety Interventions
- ESY – Extended School Year (Not summer school)
- FAPE – Free Appropriate Public Education (IEP reasonably calculated to provide educational benefit)
- FBA – Functional Behavior Assessment
- FERPA – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
- GEI – General Education Interventions
- GPA – Grade Point Average
- IDEA – Individuals with Disabilities Education Act – (Special Education Law P.L.94-142)
- IEE – Independent Educational Evaluation
- IEP – Individualized Education Plan
- IFSP – Individualized Family Service Plan
- KSDE – Kansas State Department of Education
- LEA – Local Education Agency (local school district)
- LRE – Least Restrictive Environment
- MAP – Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA – Northwest Educational Association)
- M-CAP – Mathematics Concepts and Applications
- M-COMP – Math Computation
- MDR – Manifestation Determination Review
- MTSS – Multi-Tiered System of Supports
- NCLB – No Child Left Behind (no longer in effect)
- OSEP – Office of Special Education Programs
- PBIS – Positive Behavior Instructional Supports
• PDC – Professional Development Committee
• PECS – Picture Exchange Communication System
• PLAAFPs – Present Levels of Academic Achievement & Functional Performance
• PLC – Professional Learning Community
• PLEPs – Present Levels of Education Performance
• PWN – Prior Written Notice
• R-CBM - Reading Curriculum-Based Measurement
• ROI – Rate of Improvement
• RTI – Response-to-Intervention (MTSS in Kansas)
• SAT – Standardized test for college admissions (formerly known as Scholastic Assessment Test)
• SEAC – Special Education Advisory Council
• STEM – Science – Technology – Engineering – Math
• TMN – Notice of Meeting
• TMR – Team Meeting Record

Special Education Eligibility Categories:
• AM – Autism
• ASD – Autism Spectrum Disorder
• DB – Deaf/Blindness
• DD – Developmentally Delayed (must be changed prior to 10th birthday)
• ED – Emotionally Disturbed
• GI – Gifted
• HI – Hearing Impaired
• ID – Intellectual Disability
• LD – Specific Learning Disability
• MD – Multiple Disabilities
• OHI – Other Health Impairment
• OI – Orthopedic Impairment
• SL – Speech/Language Disorder
• TBI – Traumatic Brain Injury
• VI – Visual Impairment

Assessment Tools:
• C-TOPP – Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing
• DIBELS – Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills
• GORT – Gray Oral Reading Test
• PAST – Phonological Awareness Skills Test
• QPS – Quick Phonics Screener
• TOWL – Test of Written Language
Common Terms and Definitions

Assistive Technology (AT) – Any item, piece of equipment, or product, which is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of students with disabilities.

Behavior Support Plan (BSP) or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) – A plan including target behaviors, behavioral strategies, positive reinforcement, and consequences for student behaviors. The plan is designed to teach students to demonstrate appropriate behavior and social skills.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) – The opportunity for a child to progress in the general educational curriculum and make progress towards annual IEP goals; also defined as a reasonable calculation for an educational benefit.

Extended School Year Services (ESY) – Special education and related services during the summer. The purpose of ESY is to prevent a child with a disability from losing previously learned skills. The IEP team approves ESY goals for the student to work on. Not all students receiving special education services receive ESY.

Fine Motor – Motor skills related to the small muscle groups such as handwriting, using both hands to complete tasks, and buttoning.

Gross Motor – Motor skills related to the large muscle groups such as walking, sitting, and jumping.

Individual Education Program (IEP) – a written program for students determined to have an exceptionality and qualify for special education services, developed by parents, special education and general education teachers, an LEA representative, related service providers, outside agency personnel, and students when appropriate. The program must include the educational placement, special education and related services needed by the child, goals and objectives, accommodations and modifications, identify the student’s strengths and needs, and the specially designed instruction the child needs that otherwise cannot be accessed through the general education classroom or setting.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) – Students receiving special education services must have an appropriate educational placement for the provision of special education and related services that allows them to be educated with their general education peers to the maximum extent appropriate, and receive an educational benefit. The placement must be indicated in a student’s IEP, and must be reviewed and determined annually by the IEP team that the LRE is being provided.

Occupational Therapist (OT) – Works with students to improve access to the curriculum and daily life skills as related to post-secondary outcomes.

Physical Therapist (PT) – Works with students to improve gross motor skills (large muscle groups) and mobility.
Special Education – Children determined to be eligible for special education are provided with special education and related services to provide the specially designed instruction or services to meet their individual needs, which otherwise could not be accessed through the general education classroom or setting without the provision of such services. The services must enable the child to advance appropriately in attaining their annual IEP goals, be involved and progress in the general curriculum, and participate in extra-curricular and nonacademic activities with their nondisabled peers to the greatest extent possible.

Speech and Language Pathologist – Provides therapy to help a student develop or improve articulation (pronunciation), communication skills, pragmatics (social skills) and oral-motor skills.

“Know the person, not the disability, in fact look past the disability and you will see a person, a person who has the same thoughts and feelings as anyone else.”

--Author Unknown
Preparing for a Substitute

The following is a list of helpful information that may be included in a Paraprofessional substitute folder:

**CAUTION:** Substitute folders should be general information and not include specific confidential student information.

### SPECIFIC POSITION INFORMATION FOR ____________________

#### GENERAL INFORMATION:
- A welcome
- Building map
- Daily building schedule

#### STUDENT RULES AND EXPECTATIONS:
- Discipline philosophy/procedures
- Lunchroom
- Recess/playground
- Hallways
- Restrooms
- Library
- Bus (arrival and dismissal)
- Special occasions/activities
- Emergencies
  - Escape routes (fire drills)
  - Tornados
  - Lockdowns, etc.
- Nurse
- Other

#### BUILDING PROCEDURES:
- Obtaining/requesting supplies materials, and equipment
  - Copier information
  - Art supplies
  - Paper, pencils, etc.
  - Computers
  - Others
- Locations
  - Staff lounge/lunchroom
  - Staff restroom
  - Staff phone
  - Personal storage areas
  - Staff workroom
- End of day procedures
  - Reporting
  - Sign out
  - Timesheet

#### INDIVIDUAL DAILY SCHEDULE:
1. Classroom/program times and locations
2. Bus, recess, lunch duties (if applicable)
3. Your lunch and rest periods
4. Planning/conferring time with supervisor(s)
5. Schedule changes, special events, activities

#### PARAPROFESSIONAL/SUPERVISOR WORKING ARRANGEMENTS:
*Should include:*
1. Levels of authority
2. Level of independent decision making
3. Specific lessons to be implemented (if applicable)
4. Location/site (i.e. classroom) rules and management style
5. Behavior management role techniques
6. Confidentiality

#### PARAPROFESSIONAL/STUDENT WORKING ARRANGEMENTS (may include):
1. Special needs programs of each student
   - Students to be served
   - Location
   - Academic needs
   - Social needs
2. Specific lessons to be implemented
3. Location/site (i.e. classroom) rules
4. Behavior Management roles and techniques
5. Confidentiality

We at _(school name)_ hope that this information will help make your time here as pleasant as possible. We would appreciate a note summarizing your time with our students. Thank you!
# Substitute Worksheet

Paraprofessional: ___________________________  Date: ________________

Classroom/Program: ___________________________  Hours: ________________

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**Bus/Recess/Lunch Duties:**

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**Lunch and Rest Periods:**

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**Planning/Conferring Time With Teacher:**

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**Schedule Changes/Special Events or Activities:**

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**Substitute Response:**

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We hope this information helped to make your time in our school as pleasant as possible. We would appreciate a note summarizing your time with our students. Thank you!!

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*Adapted from the Services Reference Guide for Special Education Paraeducators*  
*(San Diego Unified School District – Division of Special Education – 8/30/2010)*
It’s the Person First-Then the Disability

What do you see first? When you see a person in a wheelchair unable to get up the stairs into a building, do you say, “There is a handicapped person unable to find a ramp”? Or do you say, “There is a person with a disability who is handicapped by an inaccessible building”? What is the proper way to speak to or about someone who has a disability or exceptionality?

Consider how you would introduce Jane Smith who doesn’t have a disability. You would give her name, where she lives, what she does or what she is interested in – she likes swimming or eating Mexican food, or watching Robert Redford movies. Why should you do it any differently for a person with disabilities?

In speaking or writing, remember that children with disabilities are like everyone else–except they happen to have a disability. Speak of the person first, and then the disability, do not use words that label or stereotype a person. For example, say “she has cerebral palsy”. Do not use terms like C.P./spastic. Say, “The student; who is deaf, and communicates in sign language”, not he is deaf and dumb. Say, “She uses a wheelchair”, not “she is confined to a wheelchair”. Say, “He has seizures”, not “he has fits”. Say, “He has a learning disability”, not “is learning disabled”. The following are tips for changing the way you think and refer to people who have disabilities:

- Emphasize abilities, not limitations
- Don’t give excessive praise or attention to a person with a disability; don’t patronize him/her.
- Speak to older students with severe multiple disabilities or intellectual disabilities in an adult voice and tone. Do not use “baby talk” simply because they have difficulty with reciprocal communication.
- Choice and independence are important; allow the person to do or speak for him/herself as much as possible.
- And remember a disability is a functional limitation that interferes with a persons’ ability to walk, hear, speak, and learn.
- ‘Handicap’ is a word used to describe a situation or barrier imposed by society, the environment, or oneself.

"Aerodynamically the bumblebee shouldn't be able to fly, but the bumblebee doesn't know that so it goes on flying anyway" - Mary Kay Ash
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