CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY SAN MARCOS

PROJECT SIGNATURE PAGE

PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF ARTS

IN

EDUCATION

PROJECT TITLE: Creating a Classroom Team:
Collaborating and Communicating with Paraeducators
A Resource Handbook for First-Year Teachers

AUTHOR: Samantha Scott

DATE OF SUCCESSFUL DEFENSE: November 21, 2013

THE PROJECT HAS BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE PROJECT COMMITTEE IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTERS OF ARTS IN EDUCATION

Jacqueline Thousand
PROJECT COMMITTEE CHAIR

Kelvin Santiago
PROJECT COMMITTEE MEMBER

11-21-13
DATE

11-21-13
DATE
Creating a Classroom Team:
Collaborating and Communicating with Paraeducators
A Resource Handbook for First-Year Teachers

By
Samantha Scott

In partial fulfillment of the Master of Arts in Education

School of Education
College of Education, Health, and Human Services
California State University San Marcos

November 2013
# Table of Contents

Abstract .......................................................................................................................... 2  
Chapter One: Statement of the Problem ......................................................................... 3  
Chapter Two: Review of Literature ............................................................................... 10  
Chapter Three: Methodology ...................................................................................... 18  
Chapter Four: Results .................................................................................................. 23  
Chapter Five: Discussion ............................................................................................. 27  
References ..................................................................................................................... 32  
Appendix ......................................................................................................................... 35
Abstract

Instructional assistants, also known as paraeducators, play a vital role in general and special education classrooms through assisting the teacher, while also helping to meet the needs the students in the classroom. Although instructional assistants are continually increasing in our classrooms, there is little training and resources provided to teachers in how to effectively work with their paraeducators. Many first-year special educators have little to no experience in working with paraeducators. In addition, general education teachers, whether new teachers or teachers who have been working for years, may for the first time have another adult in the room. Based on common themes presented in the literature review, a handbook was developed to help first-year special educators and general educators in working alongside with their paraeducators. The handbook provides several tips, strategies, and resources that can be implemented in special and general education environments.

Keywords: Collaboration, communication, general education, special education, team building.
Chapter One

Statement of the Problem

As the number of students who are identified as needing special education services is continually increasing, at any given time, general and special education teachers may find themselves managing and supervising one or more paraeducators in their classrooms (Devlin, 2008). The need for paraeducators is continually growing, as more students need extra support academically, emotionally, and behaviorally within special and general education classrooms. The Bureau of Labor Statistics has projected a 15% growth in jobs for instructional assistants between 2010 and 2020, with there being approximately 1.3 million employed in instructional assistant positions, as of 2010 (U.S. Department of Labor, 2012). Although the number of paraeducators is continually increasing within the classroom, there is still a limited amount of training offered in teacher preparation programs to help new teachers become aware of how to supervise and manage paraeducators.

Over the years, the roles and responsibilities of paraeducators have changed dramatically, beginning with completing clerical jobs (grading papers, handling paperwork) to working more directly with the students in developing academic, emotional, and behavioral skills (French, 1999). These changes in paraeducator roles have been present and addressed in new legislation, particularly the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2001) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, 2004). The NCLB has set specific qualifications that paraeducators must have prior to obtaining a job, or need to complete if they already have the job. These
CREATING A CLASSROOM TEAM

requirements include two years of study completed at an institution of higher education, hold an associates or higher degree, or demonstrate knowledge and ability to assist in instructing reading, writing, and mathematics through the completion of an assessment (Part A, Subpart 1, Section 1119). The IDEIA, requires that paraeducators are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained through the completion of professional development activities (Part D, Subpart 1, Section 651, 654). These trainings could include educating paraeducators on how to teach a specific academic concept to students, how to interpret data, or how to implement a behavioral intervention. The implementation of trainings can help paraeducators grow, as well as work more effectively with the teacher and students.

With the increase of paraeducators in the classroom, in addition to new legislative mandates, it is crucial that teachers have the appropriate resources and skills to enable them to run and manage a successful classroom team. Current research has suggested that teachers take on the role, as the leader of the team, with training, supervising, evaluating, and managing team members. Although there is ongoing research, in regard to paraeducators and teachers, researchers have found that there is still a need to provide specific resources and strategies for those first-time teachers, in helping them begin and manage their new classroom team.

Purpose of Project

The purpose of this project is to research and develop a resource handbook for first-time teachers to assist them in creating a classroom team based on effective communication and collaboration with their paraeducators. The handbook created will
ultimately answer the research question, what strategies and resources can first year teachers implement to ensure effective communication and collaboration with their paraeducators?

A special educator may be entering the classroom for the first time and could be working with multiple paraeducators, depending on the needs of the students. A general education teacher, whether new or continuing, may suddenly be working alongside a paraeducator based on the needs of a particular student or multiple students. It is the job of the teacher to establish and manage the classroom team, which entails building relationships with one another through effective collaboration and communication.

This project is designed to supplement the first-year teacher with strategies, tips, and resources in creating his or her own classroom team. The project will expand on previous and current research, in relationship to how teachers and paraeducators can work together as a team. Through the use of this handbook, a first-time special educator or general education teacher will have the tools to create and manage a classroom team, in which brings about effective communication and collaboration. Through creating a classroom team, everyone can work effectively together, have the opportunity to developmentally grow, and focus on the needs of the students.

**Definition of Terms**

*Individualized Education Program (IEP):* a document mandated by IDEIA, in which defines individualized objectives, goals, accommodations, and services provided to a child with a disability.
CREATING A CLASSROOM TEAM

*Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA):* a federal law mandating free and appropriate education to all children with disabilities from the ages 3 to 21 in a least restrictive environment.

*Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):* a key term used in IDEIA, in which means that students with disabilities should have the opportunity to be educated in an environment with non-disabled students, to the greatest extent possible.

*No Child Left Behind (NCLB):* a federal law mandated to provide extra educational assistance to improve academic success of students.

*Paraeducator:* Through various research findings, paraeducator is also stated as instructional assistant, paraprofessional, educational assistant, teacher's aide, or classroom assistant. A paraeducator is a school employee who works under the supervision of a certified teacher. Although there are many interchangeable terms, the term "paraeducator" will be primarily used throughout the literature review and project.

**Preview Literature**

The research indicates that as paraeducators are increasing in classrooms, teachers and paraeducators need to work together to keep the classroom organized to promote the academic and socioemotional well-being of all students (Carnahan, Williamson, Clarke, & Sorensen, 2009). With limited training and experiences, many first time teachers find it challenging to collaborate and supervise paraeducators. Research has found that teachers should be clear in defining the roles and responsibilities of all paraeducators. Paraeducators should know exactly what is and what is not expected of them (Ashbaker & Morgan, 2012). In addition, research shows that an effective classroom team should
contain communication and collaboration between all team members. Collaboration is defined as "the agreement and development of shared goals, expectations, and directions between two or more people" (Capizzi & Da Fonte, 2012). To develop shared goals and expectations, a team should communicate through formal meetings, unfortunately most researchers have reported that teachers are often challenged with finding time to meet on a weekly basis (Carroll, 2001, Riggs, 2004). Through defining roles and building a team based on communication and collaboration, all team members can build a relationship, which will enable them to work together more effectively.

**Preview Methodology**

Through classroom observations, personal experiences, and a review of literature a handbook was created to assist first-year teachers in building a classroom team where everyone is collaboratively working together. The focus of this project is to include tips, strategies, and resources that will assist teachers in defining roles and responsibilities of all members of the team, as well as assist in helping to build a team relationship based on communication and collaboration. The themes, as found in chapter two, compiled through research will serve as a guide for the development of the project. Chapter three, offers additional information regarding a description of the project and the procedures used to create the project.

**Significance of Project**

The significance of the project is to provide first-year teachers with strategies and resources that will help guide them toward creating a classroom team. The handbook will provide information on the roles and responsibilities of the teacher and paraeducators, the
benefit of building a relationship, and strategies to help ensure effective collaboration and communication between all team members. As there is limited training provided to teachers in working with paraeducators, this handbook will serve as a guide in how teachers can build and maintain a classroom team.

On a personal level, through student teaching and my own brief experiences as a paraeducator, I have been able to see both sides of the team, being the teacher and the paraeducator. I have witnessed teams that work exceptionally well together, as well as teams that lack communication and collaboration. Although I already have experiences in working in a team, I do not feel adequately trained or ready to supervise my own team. This handbook is a useful tool in providing me with the strategies and resources to build my classroom team and supervise the paraeducators I will one day be working with.

**Limitations of Project**

There are several limitations to this project. First and foremost, there will be no time to implement this project in a classroom setting. Without being able to implement the project, the effectiveness and successfulness of the project will be unknown. Second, the information gathered is from a research standpoint, there is limited information from teachers or paraeducators who currently serve in the classroom.

**Summary**

As more students and classrooms are in need of paraeducator support, it is crucial that teachers educate themselves on how to effectively supervise and maintain a classroom team. Together teachers and paraeducators can learn from each other, maintain classroom expectations, and focus on meeting the needs of all students in the classroom.
The development of this project, a resource handbook for first-year teachers will serve as a guide in developing a classroom team based on communication and collaboration.
Chapter Two

Review of Literature

As the number of students being identified and classified for special education services is continually increasing, there is now a higher need for paraeducators or instructional assistants to work alongside special and general education teachers. Although the number of paraeducators in the classroom are increasing, many teachers have limited training or experiences in working alongside these paraprofessionals. Many teachers, especially new teachers, are concerned about how to work effectively in a team with their instructional assistants.

This chapter explains the roles and responsibilities of both the paraeducators and teachers, the importance of establishing a team, building that initial relationship, team building through communication and collaboration. Based on a review of the current literature, a handbook was developed to help first year special and general education teachers establish a team and work effectively with their assigned paraeducators.

Roles and Responsibilities

As the number of paraeducators in the classroom have been changing, so have many of their roles and responsibilities. Originally, paraeducators were employed to perform clerical and routine tasks in the classroom such as grading, taking attendance, and handling paperwork (French, 1999). At this time, paraeducators have taken on a wide range of roles, including one-to-one instruction, small and/or large group instruction, data collection, prepping, playground or bus supervision, and managing behavior (Ashbaker et al., 2012; Carnahan et al., 2009; French, 1998). Paraeducators are
beginning to have more responsibility in working with students and helping them meet their Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals. Additionally, Pickett (1997) has noted that paraeducators also provide support as a translator for non-English students and as a liaison between the school and the community. Pickett has found that many teachers commute from communities miles away from where they teach, whereas paraeducators usually live within the local community of the school. Living locally allows paraeducators to bridge the widening gap between the schools and the communities, which can be especially important in many urban and rural communities.

As paraeducators have taken on numerous roles in working alongside the teacher and working more directly with students, it becomes the teacher's job to be the director, monitor, delegator, planner, and coach of the team (French, 1999). The teacher is ultimately responsible for supervising paraeducators, preparing lessons, and providing instructional support (Morgan & Ashbaker, 2009; Trautman, 2004). It is crucial that the teacher provide instructional support, as it states under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), "A paraprofessional may not provide any instructional service to a student unless the paraprofessional is working under the direct supervision of a teacher" (Section 1119, Part G, 3(a)). In other words, the paraeducators are responsible for supplementing the instruction, as provided by the qualified teacher (Nevin, Villa, & Thousand, 2009). When looking at all of the adults in the classroom as a team, the teacher is ultimately the coach of the team, in which he or she is responsible for overseeing all actions and instruction provided by the paraeducators.
When assigning paraeducators their roles and responsibilities, it is important to consider their qualifications, previous training, and experiences (Morgan et al., 2009). Paraeducators come with a wide range of experiences and can be very useful in certain areas. Devlin (2008) suggests working around their skills, interests, and talents. For instance, if a paraeducator enjoys math and is good at teaching the content to students, it would then be helpful to have this paraeducator teach a math lesson or work with students on math skills in a small group. Considering the skills, interests, and experiences of the paraeducators can help benefit the growth of the paraeducator, as well as help meet the needs of the students. In addition to assigning roles, it is important that the teacher clearly defines the job description assigned with that specific role (Riggs, 2004), as well as provide guidance and instruction on what is and what is not expected of each team member (Ashbaker et al., 2012; French, 1998). Paraeducators should not be left to guess how they should complete a task, the teacher is responsible for teaching and directing each member on how to thoroughly complete each task. It is also important for teachers to provide paraeducators with a detailed analysis on what he or she expects of each team member.

**Building a Team Relationship**

When working alongside paraeducators, it is important for the teacher to establish a team, in which all adults are building a relationship with each other. An effective relationship is based upon trust, good communication, respect, and recognition (Capizzi et al., 2012; Gerlach et al., 1997). Riggs (2004) adds that showing respect to paraeducators allows them to know that they are appreciated for the work that they do.
Paraeducators should feel valued for the work that they complete, should know what is expected of them daily, and should be praised on what they do well. Ashbaker and Morgan (2012) commented that in helping paraeducators feel valued, teachers should accept paraeducators as fellow education professionals who serve as positive contributors to the classroom team. One way in establishing a team and building a relationship with one another is through building a team rapport. A rapport can be established through active listening and understanding one another (Devlin, 2008; Gerlach et al., 1997).

Teachers and paraeducators should be willing to listen to one another's ideas, comments, and questions so they can provide useful advice or tips, which can help the team grow together.

Conducting regularly scheduled meetings is an important tool in collaborating and building an effective team (Ashbaker et al., 2012; Carnahan et al., 2009). Teachers often find it hard to determine a time to hold regularly scheduled meetings, in which allows all paraeducators to attend. It is important that the teacher become creative in finding time to hold meetings such as at lunchtime, before school, after school, or during prep time. French (1997) has suggested creating an agenda, posting it in a common location, and encouraging all team members to post items on the agenda that need to be discussed at the next meeting. This helps prioritize the topics that need to be discussed at the meeting and alerts everyone on what topics will be discussed so they can be well prepared. At these meetings, it is important to establish group norms to help the meeting run smoother (French, 1997). These norms should be established in the first meeting as a team and can include whether there will be snacks, who will record notes, who can keep track of time,
who will facilitate the meeting, and possibly how the team will handle challenging issues. Through regularly scheduled meetings, the team is better able to help each other grow and develop skills that allow them to work effectively together.

**Team building through collaboration.** One of the major challenges that first year teachers face is how to collaborate with other adults (Ashbaker et al., 2012). There is little training in teacher programs on how to work with other adults in the classroom, while also little training in preparing paraeducators on how to work effectively with the teacher. With little training and experience, teachers and paraeducators are brought together in one classroom and expected to collaborate effectively with one another, which can become a challenge. To begin, collaboration is defined as "the agreement and development of shared goals, expectations, and directions between two or more people" (Capizzi et al., 2012). To ensure effective collaboration between all team members, there should be set goals on what the team wants to accomplish for the week, month, or year. Carnahan et al. (2009) have also suggested creating a shared philosophy, which includes a summary of the team's values, goals, and desires for the school year. Once the team has established this summary, they can create observable and measurable statements that describe how each individual can meet these values or goals on a daily basis. This shared philosophy is a practical tool in holding each individual on the team accountable for the work they complete in the classroom, as well as provides a consistent way of working in the classroom.

An important aspect of collaboration is through sharing responsibility of the various roles and responsibilities performed daily. French (1997) has suggested that the
teacher delegate work to the paraeducators, but when doing so the teacher should consider the styles and preferences of the paraeducators, the student and program needs, and the skills and confidence of the paraeducators. Delegation allows the teacher to complete work that the paraeducators cannot do, such as formal assessments and instruction planning, while also allowing paraeducators to develop new skills. When delegating certain work to paraeducators, the teacher may find it useful to first teach the content or a specific teaching approach to the paraeducator before allowing him or her to work with students. For example, the teacher may have a certain way of teaching double-digit multiplication to the class and should instruct the paraeducator on how to implement this strategy into the math lesson. It is helpful for the teacher to provide various approaches in teaching the paraeducator academic content, such as through written instructions, using concrete language, providing examples, modeling, and checking for understanding (Carnahan et al., 2009). The teacher may check for understanding by having the paraeducator role play the specific task or through observing the paraeducator while he or she completes the task with the student(s). These approaches can be useful in teaching paraeducators various concepts such as behavior management, data collection, and teaching methods.

**Team building through communication.** To help build a team and establish relationships with one another, it is important for all team members to participate in effective communication skills. Effective communication includes setting clear expectations and priorities for student learning (Devlin, 2008). Everyone on the team should be aware of the needs and goals of the students they work with. It is the teacher's
CREATING A CLASSROOM TEAM

responsibility to communicate these needs and goals to all team members. It is also important to have open and effective communication, in which ideas, comments, questions, and concerns can be shared between all on the team. Capizzi et al. (2012) have found that open lines of communication encourages information to be shared about students, improves instructional planning, increases the overall motivation for the job, and promotes constructive feedback. Open and effective communication allows the team members to work more efficiently together, learn from each other, and help each other in meeting the needs of the students in the classroom.

Communication can occur through speaking, written notes, gestures, facial expressions, and body language (Morgan et al., 2009). For instance, a nod and smile can reaffirm the paraeducator that they are doing well. Many teachers have created a communication binder for their team, in which they include notes about new procedures or updates in the schedule. Through the various forms of communication, it is important that the information shared should be explicit and detailed enough that the paraeducators understand what is and what is not expected of them (Morgan et al., 2009; Riggs, 2004). Devlin (2008) has also found that when communicating, teachers should avoid personal attacks and should convey information in the paraeducator's preferred style. It is important for teachers to communicate the good qualities of the paraeducator, while also providing feedback on areas in which they can improve in. Teachers should provide feedback of the strengths and needs of each paraeducator's performance throughout the school year (Capizzi et al., 2012). Feedback allows the paraeducators in the classroom to
learn new skills, feel appreciated for the work they complete, and feel valued as a member of the team.

Summary

A review of the literature on paraeducator support reveals that paraeducators play a vital role in helping teachers in the classroom, while also providing assistance in meeting the needs and goals of students. As paraeducators are increasing in numbers throughout schools nationwide, it is important that teachers know how to effectively build a team where communication and collaboration are effectively shared between all team members. Through working as a team, the teachers and paraeducators grow professionally and the students become the primary focus in the classroom. The following chapter, Chapter 3, describes the methodology used and steps taken to develop the project, a handbook for first-year special and general education teachers regarding their relationship and responsibilities with paraeducators.
Chapter Three

Methodology

As the employment of paraeducators is continually increasing in classrooms nationwide to service the needs of students with disabilities, there is now a higher need for teachers to be prepared to manage and supervise these paraeducators. Unfortunately, there is little training in teacher preparation programs that prepare new teachers for working alongside paraeducators. The focus of this project was to address the research question: What strategies and resources can first year general or special education teachers implement to ensure effective communication and collaboration with their paraeducators?

As researched and discovered in the literature review, there are several components and strategies that teachers can implement to manage and supervise a classroom team. These components and strategies were used to create a resource handbook for first year teachers, providing them with support to create a classroom team. This chapter will provide an explanation into the design of the project, the setting it was designed for, the intended audience, the procedures used to create the project, and an evaluation of the process used to determine the benefit of the project.

Design

The *First-Year Teacher Handbook: A Guide to Creating a Classroom Team* is designed to provide strategies and ideas for first year teachers to help them create a classroom team with their paraeducators. In planning for the format and structure of the handbook, the author decided to develop chapters to help address important components
of creating and managing a classroom team. The author wanted the format of the handbook to be such that it would be a quick and easy read for general and special educators who work alongside paraeducators.

Recognizing that it can become a challenge when teachers are not prepared for training, guiding, and equipping paraeducators with the tools they need to effectively perform their duties (Capizzi et al., 2012), the author wanted to be sure that the chapters provided usable strategies, information, and tips to help teachers prepare to work as a team with his or his paraeducators. The handbook covers a range of topics that the author assessed would be must helpful to prepare teachers and paraeducators to collaboratively work together. The topics selected to be covered in the handbook include roles and responsibilities of paraeducators and teachers, preparing for the arrival of paraeducators, building a relationship with all team members, and strategies to ensure effective collaboration and communication among the team.

Setting

This handbook is designed to be a resource guide for general and special education teachers who work alongside paraeducators in general education and specialized settings (e.g., Learning Center) within a local public school. This handbook could easily be used by new teachers who work in early childhood education classrooms through high school education classrooms. The information in the handbook can be used by resource teachers, special education teachers, and general education teachers. The handbook can help these teachers to work alongside their paraeducators to create a classroom team.
Audience

First year teachers are often challenged with how to work alongside paraeducators, as well as how to supervise, manage, and train a team. These first year teachers include teachers who are new to special education classrooms, who may be teaching for the first time, or may, for the first time in years, have a paraeducator in their general education classroom. Teachers could be assigned to work with one paraeducator or multiple paraeducators depending on the class size and needs of the students within the classroom. Paraeducators may be employed as a classroom support or directly assigned as a one-on-one support for a specific student. No matter what duties the paraeducator was hired to complete, it is important for the teacher to manage his or her classroom team, which includes the teacher and paraeducators. Collaboration and communication are key in making sure the classroom is run smoothly, all team members are aware of what to do, and there is consistency is the daily routine.

Procedures for Handbook Development

The planning process for developing this handbook began with a review of literature that centered on communication, collaboration, and classroom teams involving teachers and paraeducators. From the literature review, several themes emerged in terms of important components of creating a classroom team. These themes included strategies, tips, and information on how teachers can create a classroom team with their paraeducators. This information included the roles and responsibilities of team members and the building of a classroom team based on collaboration and communication. These themes became the basis of the information provided in the resource handbook.
The author decided that the handbook should begin with two chapters on helping teachers prepare for the arrival of his or her paraeducators and how to create a team relationship with all members, including the teacher. The first chapter is important in getting teachers prepared for working with paraeducators through understanding the mandated policies as stated in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA). This chapter also provides tips on how teachers can prepare themselves and the classroom for the arrival of their paraeducator. The second chapter provides tips on how the teacher can create and facilitate a team relationship with all members. This chapter explores a variety of information that the teacher should share with all paraeducators.

The author further decided that the chapters that follow should include identifying the roles and responsibilities of the paraeducator and teacher, tips for collaboration and communication, as well as strategies to promote effective communication. Finally, the author decided that the handbook should conclude with resources that can benefit and be used by the teacher when working alongside the paraeducator. These resources could include sample schedules, lesson plans, checklist, and handouts to be used by the teacher and/or paraeducator.

In summary, when creating the handbook, the author wanted the handbook to be user-friendly and appealing to the reader. The author also wanted to ensure that the handbook was short and to the point without overwhelming the new teacher (or reader of the handbook) with too much information. As new teachers are often busy setting up the classroom, holding meetings, preparing lesson plans, and setting goals and objectives for
the school year there is little time to read through books and extensive handbooks. This handbook compiled the themes provided from several research articles and books into one easy to read handbook that can be thoroughly read in one sitting, if desired. In addition, the author wanted to create resources and examples that could be used in an instant and modified by the teacher to better suit the needs of the students, program, and interests of the teacher and paraeducators.

Summary

Ultimately, as a new teacher, working with one or more paraeducator can become very challenging. The development of this project, a resource handbook for teachers, is intended to better prepare general and special education teachers to work alongside paraeducators. It further was created to be a resource guide to help the new teacher prepare, manage, and supervise a classroom team.

This handbook supports the research question by providing specific information and strategies to ensure effective communication and collaboration between all team members. There are specific chapters to address the importance of communication and collaboration with each chapter providing tips and strategies to ensure these areas are met by all team members. Through creating a classroom team based on communication and collaboration, more effort can be put forth toward meeting the needs of the students.

In the following chapter, the resource handbook is presented and the reader is guided through the chapters and topics that will be important to a beginning teacher.
Chapter Four

Results

As the number of students being identified with needing special services is continually increasing, the number of paraeducators being employed in classrooms is also increasing. More paraeducators are beginning to appear in resource classrooms, special day classrooms, as well as in general education classrooms. Teachers are often ill-prepared for the responsibility of managing and supervising their new paraeducators. This has become the basis for the research question: What strategies and resources can first year teachers implement to ensure effective communication and collaboration with their paraeducators? In response to the research question, a handbook was created to help these new teachers in creating a classroom team that successfully facilitates effective communication and collaboration.

Handbook Description

The handbook was written in a simple format making it both user-friendly and a quick read for new teachers in special and general education classrooms. The information that was gathered for the handbook was broken into chapters that followed a simple format of providing information and tips to help the teacher in creating a classroom team. Each chapter focuses on a different theme, as gathered from the review of literature and provides support for the teacher in working alongside his or her paraeducators.

The first chapter, *Getting Prepared*, provides the teacher with information on preparing for the arrival of his or her paraeducator. This chapter provides an overview of federal laws that teachers should look closely into before their paraeducator arrives.
These federal laws include policies and qualifications as set by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA). This chapter also includes several tips on how the teacher can prepare herself or himself, as well as the classroom for the arrival of the paraeducator.

The second chapter, *Building a Team Relationship*, includes an overview of important topics that the teacher should discuss with the paraeducator during an orientation. These topics include confidentiality, classroom rules, teacher expectations, absences, dress code, and various other topics that should be discussed during the first week the paraeducator begins working. This chapter also discusses the importance of developing a shared philosophy and how developing consistent goals and values builds upon the team's relationship with one another.

Chapter three, *Roles and Responsibilities*, describes the job description and responsibilities of both the paraeducator and the teacher. In addition, this chapter provides a table of the differences in responsibilities between the teacher and the paraeducator. It is important for both the teacher and paraeducator to understand that the paraeducator supports the teacher and should never be left to design, create, or set daily activities, lessons, or modifications. This is an important table for the teacher to read through, as well as share with all paraeducators. As like the other chapters, this chapter also includes a list of tips that the teacher can follow to help determine how to set, display, and explain the roles and responsibilities of each team member.

The fourth chapter, *Collaboration*, begins by explaining the advantages of collaboration within a team and how collaboration benefits all team members. Within this
chapter, the new teacher can read about creating and providing lesson plans for paraeducators, delegating tasks to certain team members, and the importance of co-teaching. Co-teaching is a valuable tool for paraeducators as it enables them to learn new skills and allows the students to receive additional support. This chapter provides a table of four approaches to co-teaching with an explanation of each, as well as the advantages and cautions that teachers should be aware of when considering implementing a co-teaching approach.

The fifth, *Communication*, and sixth, *Communication Strategies*, chapters provides a detailed look into communication and the importance it plays within a team. The reader of the handbook can read about the advantages of communication within a team and classroom. They can also learn about the ways to communicate, including verbal, non-verbal, and written communication. Within chapter five, the reader can also learn about the importance of active listening and what are some crucial topics that should be discussed before a paraeducator begins working with a student. Chapter six provides communication strategies such as team meetings, classroom schedules, and evaluation opportunities. Through these strategies, the teacher is better able to communicate with the paraeducators and helps to build that team relationship.

The handbook concludes with resources that teachers can implement within their own classroom, including sample lesson plans, as well as examples of schedules and meeting agendas. The resources also includes handouts, one of which allows paraeducators to introduce themselves, and another to be provided by the teacher, that includes all important information about the school and classroom. There is also an IEP
at a glance provided in the resource section, in which can be used and modified by the teacher to help the paraeducators comprehend and become aware of all goals, adaptations, and modifications needed for each student they work with.


**Summary**

Although paraeducators are continually increasing in classrooms, there is still little preparation or training provided to new teachers who will be managing and supervising these paraeducators. The handbook is designed to provide tips and strategies to help these new teachers in working alongside paraeducators. The intended result is that teachers and paraeducators will be able to collaboratively work together to meet the needs of the students in the classroom, grow from one another, and create an educational atmosphere that promotes teamwork.

Chapter five offers insight into the next steps for this handbook and its feasibility as a resource guide for teachers who are new to working with paraeducators.
Chapter Five

Discussion

In recent years there has been an increase in the employment of paraeducators to help service the needs of students with disabilities. Paraeducators work closely with students in helping them to meet their academic, behavioral, and social goals. Paraeducators also work closely with teachers, whether in special or general education classes, through working together in daily activities. Although more teachers are working alongside paraeducators, there is still little training and resources available in helping teachers prepare to manage and supervise the paraeducators they work with. There are many teachers who are new to special education, new to teaching, or new to acquiring a paraeducator accompany them in a general education setting.

As Carnahan et al. (2009) state, "Paraeducators provide important support and instruction to children in educational settings" (p. 34). In order for paraeducators to provide adequate support to students, they need the appropriate supervision and training from the qualified teacher. The product for this project, the *First-Year Teacher Handbook: A Guide to Creating a Classroom Team*, provides the teacher with the appropriate tools and resources to help manage and supervise paraeducators. As the teacher learns to manage, supervise, and create a classroom team all team members are better able to work together in meeting the educational needs of the students within the classroom. This chapter will provide a brief summary of the project, the author's future plans for the project, any limitations that were present, and comments on future research and projects.
Summary of Project

The First-Year Teacher Handbook: A Guide to Creating a Classroom Team, is a resource handbook in which provides special and general educators the tools and resources for creating a classroom team with their paraeducators. As more educators are working alongside paraeducators because of the increase of student needs, there is a higher need for resources and trainings to prepare teachers in working collaboratively with his or her paraeducator. The handbook developed offers teachers, who are for the first time working with paraeducators, strategies and resources to implement a classroom team where all team members work together. The chapters in this handbook portray how the teacher can prepare for the arrival of their paraeducators and how to build a team relationship with all team members. The handbook also covers the roles and responsibilities of the teacher and paraeducator, as well as collaboration and communication strategies. In addition, the handbook offers a variety of resources that can be implemented and modified by the teacher to fit the needs and preferences of the teacher, paraeducators, and classroom.

Plans for Implementing the Handbook

The author's plans for this handbook is to make it available for teachers who are new to working with paraeducators. This includes teachers who are new to special education, as well as general education teachers who may for the first time have a paraeducator in the classroom. With little to no training offered to teachers on how to work with paraeducators effectively, this handbook can be a useful resource in supporting new teachers in creating a classroom team with his or her paraeducators.
The author plans to offer this handbook to students enrolled in a teacher preparation program, as well as to new and seeking educators. The author will seek educators and university students through her enrollment in the education specialist program at California State University San Marcos, as well as her employment as a paraeducator through her local school district. The author will provide these educators and university students with a brief overview of the handbook, while also describing the importance it plays in the classroom, the team, and the students. The author will provide the handbook through a digital or hardcopy to any interested educators and university students.

In addition, the author will implement this handbook when she becomes a special educator. Through her own experiences as a student teacher and paraeducator, the author understands the importance of creating a classroom team. The author would implement the strategies and resources presented in the handbook when working with one or more paraeducators in her future classroom. As a new teacher, the author would implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies, tips, resources, and information presented in the handbook. The author would also like to research further information that could make the handbook more effective in meeting the needs of what teachers need to know when working with paraeducators.

**Limitations to the Project**

With the completion of the project, the original limitations, as presented in chapter one, remain. The completed project will not be implemented in a classroom prior to the completion of this thesis project. Given that the project will not be implemented,
there is no evidence or data to prove whether the handbook will be effective or successful for first year teachers in working with paraeducators.

Additionally, a second limitation is that the information gathered for the project is from a research standpoint, with limited information from teachers or paraeducators. It could have been more successful to gather information from teachers on what they found as being helpful in working with paraeducators or what information they would of liked to know before beginning to work with paraeducators. It could have also been helpful to have paraeducators discuss their experiences and ideas on how to create a classroom team. Although due to time constraints and a lack of participants, this information was not gathered.

**Future Research**

Through the development of this project and the information gathered in the literature review, the author suggests future research in the initial training for beginning teachers on how to manage and train paraeducators. As noted, there is little training offered in teacher preparation programs on how to work with paraeducators. Most teachers learn how to work with paraeducators through firsthand experiences. Teacher preparation programs and school districts need to focus on training new teachers on how to manage, supervise, and train their paraeducators *prior* to the arrival of his or her paraeducators.

In addition, the author suggests future research on how teachers can train his or her paraeducators within the classroom setting. Many paraeducators do not receive the appropriate training prior to beginning their employment in the classroom. The teacher,
CREATING A CLASSROOM TEAM

as a leader, is responsible for training paraeducators on how to work with students, collect data, observe behaviors, and many other daily activities. There is little research offered on how teachers can effectively take time from a busy schedule to train paraeducators. Further research could help teachers in working alongside paraeducators, as well as better prepare paraeducators in working with students.

Conclusion

Paraeducators are an essential key to successfully providing support to students with special needs in the educational setting. To be successful, paraeducators need the appropriate training and supervision from the classroom teacher. Unfortunately, new teachers often lack the training and experiences in supervising, training, and managing paraeducators. To provide teachers with support in working with paraeducators a handbook was created, in which provides tips, strategies, and resources for first year teachers in helping to create a classroom team.

When paraeducators and teachers are working as a team, they are creating an educational atmosphere that is favorable for positive student learning (Devlin, 2008). In supporting teachers with resources and strategies, the author of the handbook hopes that teachers and paraeducators in classrooms nationwide will better be able to work together as a team and work toward meeting the needs of the students. This project began with the author's own experiences in special education classrooms where collaboration and communication were not being prioritized between the teacher and paraeducators. The authors hopes that this handbook will bridge the gap that often occurs when teachers and paraeducators begin working together in a classroom.
References


First-Year Teacher Handbook:
A Guide to Creating a Classroom Team

Play, Learn and Grow... Together!
Table of Contents

Introduction 3

Chapter 1 4
Getting Prepared
• Let’s Imagine!
• Become Aware!
• Tips

Chapter 2 7
Building a Team Relationship
• Orientation
• Creating a Shared Philosophy
• Tips

Chapter 3 11
Roles and Responsibilities
• Job Description
• Differences in Roles and Responsibilities
• Tips

Chapter 4 14
Collaboration
• Advantages of Collaboration
• Lesson Planning
• Delegation
• Co-Teaching
• Tips

Chapter 5 18
Communication
• Advantages of Communication
• Ways to Communicate
• Active Listening
• What to Communicate?
Chapter 6
Communication Strategies

- Team Meetings
- Schedules
- Evaluations

Resources

- A. Introduce Yourself
- B. Essential Information for Paraeducators
- C. Checklist for Orientation
- D. Lesson Plan Template
- E. IEP at a Glance
- F. Meeting Agenda
- G. Schedule
- H. Paraeducator Evaluation
- I. Additional Resources: Books and Resources

References
Introduction

"Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much"

-- Helen Keller

Each year, teachers face many rewards and challenges. As a new teacher to special education or a teacher who is new to working with a paraeducator, you will be faced with many rewards and challenges on a daily basis. As the employment of paraeducators has increased dramatically in the last few years, teachers are now faced with the challenges on how to manage, supervise, and train these paraeducators. As a new teacher you may have one paraeducator in your classroom or multiple, depending on the needs of your students. Despite the number of paraeducators employed to work in your classroom, it is your responsibility as the teacher to manage and supervise each team member.

This handbook was created as a result of my own personal experiences in observing, substituting, and working in classrooms that contained multiple paraeducators. I have observed classrooms where there seemed to be a disconnection between the teacher and paraeducators. In these teams, there was little communication and collaboration present, in which resulted in an unorganized and chaotic classroom setting. I have also worked and observed in classrooms where the team members were communicating throughout the day, all team members knew what was expected in the various activities, and the overall classroom setting was well organized. I have seen the best and worst qualities of a classroom team, as well as how these qualities affect the overall classroom setting. In the past, I often feared that I will not have the right knowledge, communication skills, or leadership abilities to work alongside paraeducators when I become a teacher. This handbook was created to help me address my own uncertainties of the challenges that can occur when working with paraeducators.

This handbook was written to address the problems and challenges that can arise when working with paraeducators. The handbook provides strategies, tips, and resources to help first-year teachers in creating a classroom team with their paraeducator(s). The handbook is centered around the roles and responsibilities of both the teacher and the paraeducators in the classroom, as well as collaboration and communication strategies. The handbook is beneficial for both special educators and general education teachers who work alongside paraeducators.
Chapter 1

Getting Prepared

Let's Imagine!
You are about to begin your first year teaching in a Special Day Class and you just found out that you will have a total of six paraeducators in your classroom to help support the 10 students on your roster. You have had little experience in working with paraeducators and don’t know where to start planning for their arrival.

You having been teaching fourth grade for six years now and it is the week before school starts, you just found out that you will be getting a new student who requires one-on-one support from a paraeducator. The paraeducator will begin working the first day of school and will be in your classroom all day until the end of the year.

You are a second grade teacher and you are two months into the new school year. You just found out that a new student is transferring to your school and will be placed in your classroom. This new student requires one-on-one support, which means that a paraeducator will be accompanying you in the classroom full-time to help provide support for this student. You have had no training on how to work with a paraeducator and are unaware on what exactly a paraeducator is suppose to do while in the classroom.

One of these scenarios may relate to the challenges you face as a new teacher or as a general education teacher who is receiving your first paraeducator. It may be the beginning of the year or half way into the school year. It may be one paraeducator or multiple paraeducators. Despite the circumstances, it is crucial to prepare yourself for their arrival. This chapter, as well as the following chapters, offers tips, strategies, and resources to prepare yourself for the arrival of your paraeducator and how to establish a classroom team, which focuses on effective collaboration and communication.

Become Aware!
An important part of preparing for the arrival of your paraeducator is to become aware of the laws and policies, as set by your district, school, as well as nationwide. As the number of paraeducators being employed are continually increasing throughout our schools, there are now many policies set in place to ensure that paraeducators are properly trained and are able to provide the best support for the student(s) they work with.
Below is a brief look at the federal laws that as a teacher you should be aware of and look more closely into before the arrival of your paraeducator.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Federal Laws</strong></th>
<th><strong>Brief Explanation</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) | NCLB has set qualifications that paraeducators must have prior to obtaining a job, or need to complete if they already have the job. These requirements include:  
a) Two years of study completed at an institution of higher education,  
b) Hold an associates or higher degree, OR  
c) Demonstrate knowledge and ability to assist in instructing reading, writing, and mathematics through the completion of an assessment (Part A, Subpart 1, Section 1119). |
| Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA) | IDEIA guarantees a free, appropriate public education for all students with disabilities. Through IDEIA, all paraeducators must be appropriately and adequately prepared and trained through the completion of professional development activities (Part D, Subpart 1, Section 651, 654). IDEIA also states that paraeducators must work under the direct supervision of the credentialed teacher. |

**Additional information to look into:**

| **District and/or school policies** | Look into the district's or school's policies for the contractual agreement of all paraeducators working hours, breaks, and supervision policies. It may also be important to gather as much information about the roles and responsibilities that your paraeducator is hired for. |
| **Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)** | The CEC website offers standards on which a teacher should follow when working with paraeducators, these include:  
5.1 Assure that paraeducators have appropriate trainings for the tasks they are assigned.  
5.2 Assign only tasks for which they are prepared for.  
5.3 Provide ongoing information to paraeducators regarding their performance.  
5.4 Provide timely, supportive, and collegial communications regarding tasks and expectations.  
5.5 Intervene professionally when a paraeducator's behavior is illegal, unethical, or detrimental to individuals with disabilities (CEC, 2013) |
**Tips**

- Know the role/job description, in which the paraeducator is hired to perform.
- If the paraeducator is hired as a one-on-one, become aware of the student's needs and goals. Create a document for the paraeducator, in which lists these needs and goals in terms that they can easily comprehend.
- Understand that the paraeducator may be older and could potentially have more experience in working with students with disabilities.
- Write down your classroom expectations and rules that you want the paraeducators to follow. It is also important to provide examples of what these expectations and rules look like.
- Many teachers find it helpful to create a communication binder, designated mailboxes, or a designated space in the classroom for updates. With these tools, the teacher can leave updates, newsletters, and/or important information, in which all paraeducators are responsible for checking on a daily basis.
- It can be helpful to create an introductory letter, in which you can send to the paraeducator before they begin working. Within this letter, you may want to introduce yourself, provide a little about the classroom, state your expectations, and welcome the paraeducator to their new job.
- You may want to provide a handout, in which the paraeducator can complete prior to beginning their first day or on the first day they begin. This handout could allow the paraeducator to introduce themselves, state their experiences, skills, and interests. This is a great tool in getting to know your paraeducator and determine their responsibilities, based on the skills and experience they may already have. See Resource A of the handbook for a sample handout, in which can be used to get to know your paraeducator's better.
Chapter 2

Building a Team Relationship

Orientation

Whether you have one, two, or several paraeducators in your classroom it is important to build a team relationship with all members. Within this relationship, all members should feel comfortable sharing ideas, know what is expected of them, value each other, and respect one another. To establish this relationship, it is important to hold an orientation, in which all team members are present. Through this orientation, the team members can introduce themselves to one another, you can share information to everyone at one time, and all team members can have the opportunity to ask any questions they may have.

There are a variety of topics to discuss at the orientation, a number of important topics to discuss are listed below:

- **Confidentiality:** Ensure that all paraeducators understand the importance of confidentiality. They must never share or talk about a student or their family to anyone who does not need to know. They must not discuss student grades, behaviors, medical records, family issues, or any other personal information.

- **People-First Language:** All students deserve to be treated with respect. A student with a disability, is a person first and their disability is second. Model for the paraeducators what this sounds like. For example we say, "a child with autism", instead of "the autistic child".

- **Classroom Rules:** It is important that all paraeducators understand the classroom rules, as this helps maintain consistency in managing behaviors. It can be helpful to set classroom rules as a team, as this holds all team members responsible. Ensure that the paraeducators understand the rules, as well as the desired consequences, so all team members are consistent when working with any behavioral issues.

- **Teacher Expectations:** If you have any specific expectations, the orientation would be a great time to express these expectations to the paraeducators. This may include your own personal expectations on dress code, how to collect data, complete specific tasks, behavior management techniques, and so forth. It is also helpful to give paraeducators specific examples of what you expect.
- **Absences:** It is important for all paraeducators to know what they need to do in case they need to be absent, come in later, or leave at an earlier time. If you are unaware on how a paraeducator calls in an absence, then you may need to speak with your principal or district office. If the paraeducator knows in advance that they will be out for the day, it is helpful to have them tell you at least a day prior. This will allow you time to get things organized for their substitute.

- **Attendance:** Many paraeducators only work a few hours each day, so it is crucial that they arrive on time. Also, depending on the schedule of the paraeducator they may work early to help pick students up from the bus or stay later to assist in getting students to their families or onto the bus. It is important to communicate with each paraeducator their working hours and the importance of arriving on time.

- **Dress Code:** Ensure that your paraeducators understand the dress code for the school, as well as for their job description. Remind them that they work with children, so they should dress appropriate and comfortable. For example, they may not want to be wearing heels if they have recess or lunch supervision. They should never wear anything too revealing or inappropriate. They should also be mindful to any clothing or accessories that they would not want damaged while performing their job.

- **Communication Tools:** If you have created a communication binder or center, this would be a great time to introduce your paraeducators to it. You may wish to discuss what will go into the binder/center and how you expect each of them to look through any updates daily. Some teachers have their paraeducators initial on the update or on a specific document, in which they have read and understood.

- **Evaluations:** If you choose to personally provide evaluations or feedback to your paraeducators, then it is important that you discuss when these evaluations will be held or when you plan to provide feedback. Explain how you will provide the feedback, what you will be looking for, and how this feedback can help everyone grow professionally.

- **Emergency Procedures:** During the orientation, it may be helpful to discuss the emergency procedures, as set by your school site. This can include what to do if there was an earthquake, hurricane, fire, or unidentified suspect on campus.
Creating a Shared Philosophy
An important aspect of building a team relationship is through the development of a shared philosophy. A shared philosophy is a summary of the team's values, goals, and desires for the school year (Carnahan, Williamson, Clarke, Sorensen, 2009). It is important that the members of the team sit down at the beginning of the school year or when they first begin working with each other and develop their shared philosophy. You may want to begin by having the team members jot down a few of their own personal goals that they want to accomplish for the year, goals they hope to accomplish as a team, and values that they see as being important in working as a team. Together you can then agree on specific goals and values that will help your team succeed throughout the school year. It is then important to

NOTE: You may have other issues/topics to discuss at the orientation, this only provides sample topics on which you can use during your own orientation. Although before holding the orientation, you may want to jot down a few of your own ideas and topics that you want to discuss.

Figure 1. A Shared Philosophy for the Classroom
We believe in and are committed to:
- The use of visual and physical supports to create an atmosphere of working and learning.
- Respecting all students enough to expect high achievement and success. We believe that these expectations foster a sense of dignity and self-respect.

To maintain these beliefs, we will maintain an environment conducive to learning by:
- Refraining from adult conversation in front of students during the school day.
- Paying close attention to student learning and expanding our language as students demonstrate readiness.

Note: The bulleted items are from a more comprehensive example offered by Carnahan et al. (2009, p. 36)
create observable and measurable statements on how each team member can maintain the values of the group and reach the goals on a daily basis. A shared philosophy allows the team to have consistent goals and values, while also holding each team member responsible for meeting each goal and value throughout the school year. Figure 1, provides a shortened version of a shared philosophy.

**Tips**

- You may find it helpful to create a handbook for your paraeducators or find one online. In this handbook, you can thoroughly explain the topics mentioned above, as well as any other important information.
- Build a rapport with each one of your paraeducators. Get to know who they are, what skills they bring to the classroom, what experiences they have had with children, and what interests them.
- During the orientation, set aside time for each paraeducator to tell the group about their personal background, as well as their hobbies and interests. This allows the team members to feel appreciated and comfortable in the classroom setting.
- Create a handout, in which lists all important information such as phone numbers, names of important people in the school, description of their job duty, school hours, hours they work, and any other duties they are required to fulfill. Resource B of this handbook offers a one page handout of essential information that can be completed and distributed to your paraeducator's.
- It can be helpful to create a checklist of all things to cover with your paraeducator during the orientation. A checklist of information described in this chapter, as well as further information that should be discussed at the orientation can be found in Resource C of this handbook.
Chapter 3

Roles and Responsibilities

Job Description

Paraeducators-
Paraeducators were once hired to complete clerical jobs, such as taking attendance, grading, and handling paperwork (French, 1999). Paraeducators are now working more closely with students. They take on a wide range of roles including one-to-one instruction, small and/or large group instruction, data collection, prepping, playground or bus supervision, and managing behavior (Ashbaker & Morgan, 2012; Carnahan et al., 2009; French, 1998).

Paraeducator responsibilities may include:
* Supervise students on the playground or in the lunchroom
* Reinforce learning in small groups or one-on-one
* Prepare materials for future lessons
* Collect data on student learning and student behaviors
* Carry out lessons, as prepared by teacher

Teachers-
Teachers take on the role of delegator, planner, monitor, director, and coach of the team (French, 1999). The teacher, whether in general or special education, are responsible for all students in the classroom, which includes creating goals, making modifications, and using appropriate teaching strategies. The teacher is also responsible for supervising all paraeducators, planning instruction, and organizing the learning environment.

Teacher responsibilities may include:
* Communicate goals and needs of students to paraeducator
* Create goals and objectives to meet the needs of each student
* Monitor the paraeducator's performance and provide feedback
* Plan instruction material and make appropriate modifications
* Complete formal assessments of student's progress
**Differences in Roles and Responsibilities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Teacher's Responsibilities</th>
<th>Paraeducator's Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instruction</strong></td>
<td>Teaches lesson to the whole class, small group, or individually. Creates lesson plans, individually or with the assistance of a paraeducator.</td>
<td>Teaches content to small groups or individually, under the direction of the teacher. This may include working with the teacher on lesson planning or following along to a lesson created by the teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
<td>Assess/evaluates progress of students through formal and informal assessments.</td>
<td>Evaluates the progress of students through informal assessments. Provides information to the teacher on the progress of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation</strong></td>
<td>Prepares lesson plans to meet state standards and/or student's individual goals. Plans instructional materials, as needed for lesson.</td>
<td>Assists in preparing instructional materials needed for lesson. May assist in developing lesson plan alongside teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classroom Organization</strong></td>
<td>Sets daily, weekly, and monthly schedules, as well as assigns tasks and duties.</td>
<td>Assists in setting daily, weekly, and monthly schedules. Puts materials away and keeps classroom clean and organized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavior Management</strong></td>
<td>Creates behavior support plans, observes behavior, and implements strategies to promote positive behavior.</td>
<td>Supports plans and goals, as developed by teacher. Reports behavior concerns and implementation of strategies to teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building a Classroom Team</strong></td>
<td>Manages and supervises team. Arranges meetings, creates schedules, and organizes responsibilities of each paraeducator.</td>
<td>Contributes ideas to team, actively listens, asks questions, and carries out duties, as assigned by teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from *Project PARA Training Resources for Paraeducators*. University of Nebraska, Lincoln
Tips

- Assign roles based on the skills, experiences, and comfort levels of the paraeducator, while also considering what is best for the students and overall classroom.
- Clearly define what you expect from the paraeducator and what you do not expect in all assigned tasks. It may also help to give specific examples, role play, and observe paraeducator as they complete the task.
- Create a designated area for work that needs to be prepped. Also, create a to-do list on a white board that can be easily added to and erased when finished. Inform paraeducators that during down-time they should work on prepping and completing the to-do list.
- Thoroughly explain the roles and responsibilities of each paraeducator. This also includes any outside supervision responsibilities such as bus, lunch, or playground supervision.
- Create schedules to let the paraeducators know what they will be working on, with who, when, and where (more information in Chapter 5).
- Encourage the paraeducator to ask questions about what is expected of his/her responsibilities throughout the day.
- Allow paraeducators to try various roles to see what works best for them, the students, yourself, and the overall classroom.
- Include the paraeducator in lesson planning or provide space in your lesson plans for them to incorporate their own ideas (more information in Chapter 4).
- Be flexible in creating the roles and responsibilities for each paraeducator, as well as yourself. Events will occur in the classroom, which can prevent tasks from being completed by a certain timeframe.
- If working with more than one paraeducator, switch up the roles and responsibilities every so often. This is helpful, especially if a paraeducator is absent, another paraeducator can quickly complete the responsibilities of the absent paraeducator.
Chapter 4

Collaboration

"Collaboration can be defined as the agreement and development of shared goals, expectations, and directions between two or more people when sharing responsibilities to obtain the set goal"

- Capizzi & Da Fonte (2012, p. 3)

Advantages of Collaboration

Collaborating with other adults is one of the major challenges faced by first-year teachers (Ashbaker et al., 2012). Many teachers may face challenges with paraeducators who have been on the job for several years, who are older than the teacher, who are new to the job, or who have different personalities or teaching styles. As defined above, collaboration is based on sharing responsibilities to obtain set goals. As discussed in chapter two, it is important for a team to develop a shared philosophy, in which helps the team develop specific goals and values to work towards. Collaboration is important because it enables all team members to be focused and working towards the same goals. Through collaboration, the paraeducators in the classroom and the teacher are able to work more effectively together as a team. They are able to make decisions together, support one another, and focus on what is best for the students.

Advantages of Collaborating as a Team

- Teams support one another
- Teams develop unique, creative, and flexible solutions to problems
- Teams establish goals together.
- Members enjoy working together. A team spirit develops.
- Teams foster professional and personal growth by sharing knowledge with one another.

*The bulleted items are from a more comprehensive list offered by Gerlach and Lee (1997, p. 174)*
Lesson Planning
Legally, paraeducators should not make their own plans nor instruct without written plans. It is the duty of the teacher to plan the lessons, the modifications, and the adaptations that are needed for each student (French, 1997). You may search online for lesson plan templates, create your own, or Resource D in the handbook provides a lesson plan template, which can be re-created and modified to fit the needs of any group size or lesson objective. Through lesson plans, the teacher and paraeducator are collaboratively working together on meeting state objectives and individual student goals. Lesson plans allow the paraeducator to know exactly what to teach, what activities to implement, what modifications to make, and what goals and objectives the students should reach by the end of the lesson.

Delegation
An important aspect of working collaboratively together is through delegation. Delegation is when the teacher assigns the paraeducator to complete work that they are well trained to handle. When teachers delegate tasks to paraeducators, they are able to get more work done, in which paraeducators cannot do such as assessing students, planning, and scheduling. Delegation also benefits the paraeducator by helping them develop professionally through completing various tasks and providing more opportunities to expand their knowledge and skills. French (1997) discusses that delegation is compared to a legal contract in which includes agreement on the extent of the task, the goals to be reached, the time frame of the task, the legal implications, and how the paraeducator's performance will be monitored and judged. A paraeducator should only complete a task in which they are trained to carry out and which will not interfere with legal implications. For instance, the paraeducator should not be completing formal assessments for the teacher or providing instruction without a lesson plan, as created by the teacher.

"Delegation empowers and motivates a paraprofessional, thereby allowing you to make the most of your time with students" - P. Devlin (2013, p. 43)
Co-Teaching
As paraeducator roles have become increasingly more student oriented, the idea of co-teaching has also become more widely used in classrooms. With the support of the general education or special education teacher, a paraeducator is able to assist in instructing academic content to the whole class. If you are in a general education classroom, your paraeducator may only be assigned to work with one student, but they can be a great asset in assisting instruction to all students. There are four approaches to co-teaching that are generally experienced in general education classrooms, but can also be used successfully in special education classrooms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Advantage</th>
<th>Caution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supportive Co-Teaching</strong></td>
<td>One co-teacher instructs whole class, while the other teacher rotates among the students to provide support.</td>
<td>Students who are struggling get that immediate extra support, as provided by the paraeducator.</td>
<td>The teacher who is playing the supportive role should avoid becoming &quot;Velcroed&quot; to individual students or the student the paraeducator is assigned to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parallel Co-Teaching</strong></td>
<td>The paraeducator takes half of the class, while the teacher has the other half. If you have more than one paraeducator, then you would split the class into groups.</td>
<td>Students learning preferences, learning styles, and learning needs are more likely to be met in separate groups. They also have the opportunity to work in smaller groups and get additional support.</td>
<td>Avoid splitting the class into the same groups each time. Through working in different groups and with different teachers, students are able to learn through various teaching styles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complementary Co-Teaching</strong></td>
<td>While the teacher is instructing, the paraeducator is providing support to the lesson at the same time.</td>
<td>The teacher and paraeducator are able to offer their support to the lesson, as well as provide their own experiences and skills to the lesson.</td>
<td>A paraeducator may be unfamiliar with the content, but through planning together they can become more knowledgeable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Team Teaching</strong></td>
<td>Teacher and paraeducator work together to plan, teach, and assess students in the classroom.</td>
<td>Similar to complementary co-teaching. Each team member can assist in the planning of the lesson, as well as the instruction of lesson.</td>
<td>Team members may just stick to their comfort zone or have trouble working collaboratively with another. Through team building, the teams can work together.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Nevin, Villa, & Thousand, 2009)
**Tips**

- Value all team members by showing respect for each other.
- Encourage paraeducators to ask questions when they are unaware of how to complete a task or when they simply do not understand what is expected of them.
- Involve paraeducators in the decision making and planning of instruction. Allow them to provide their experiences, skills, and interests into the planning and delivering of lessons.
- Share information with paraeducators such as school updates, student needs, student goals, modifications needed, and so forth. Paraeducators should be aware of the goals and needs of the students they work with. Sharing information is also important if the student is on a strict diet or a behavior support plan, all paraeducators should know important information that affects their working relationship with students.
- Remember that people have different learning styles. Interact with your paraeducators by recognizing their language and physical cues. Listen and observe whether team members are visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learners.
Chapter 5

Communication

"To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others" --Tony Robbins

Advantages of Communication
Communication is essential to creating and maintaining an effective team in the classroom. Communication increases the effectiveness of collaboration between all team members. As the supervisor of the team, it is essential that you have good communication skills. You are responsible for communicating the goals of each student, the objectives of each lesson, and the schedule for the day, week, and month. You are responsible for ensuring that all paraeducators know what is expected of them and that all tasks are being completed properly. You are responsible for communicating feedback to the paraeducator, which should include their strengths and areas of need. Within the team, there should be a level of open communication, in which allows all team members to actively share ideas, ask questions, comment, and provide feedback. Through open communication, team members have the opportunity to developmentally grow and work more effectively as a team.

Advantages of Effective Communication

- Encourages awareness of goals and objectives.
- Encourages team members to share ideas and ask questions.
- Promotes teamwork
- Improves planning and instruction
- Promotes constructive feedback
- Facilitates professional development

(Capizzi and Da Fonte, 2012)
Ways to Communicate

Communication can be transferred through various forms including gestures, facial expressions, signs, tone of voice, in addition to speech and written communication. There are various ways to communicate and more than one may occur at any time. You should always be aware of how you communicate. Different modes of communication work better with different people. The different ways to communicate can be categorized by verbal, non-verbal, and written communication.

➢ **Verbal Communication:** Verbal communication can occur face-to-face, through the telephone, radio, or television. Face-to-face is often most effective when working with paraeducators. Verbal communication can include praises towards the paraeducator, explanations of tasks, meetings, discussion of students, questions, concerns, the sharing of ideas, and so forth. You should set aside time each day or at least once a week to hold face-to-face meetings (See chapter 6 to learn more about the importance of meetings).

➢ **Non-Verbal Communication:** Non-verbal communication can occur through gestures, facial expressions, body language, eye contact, and tone of voice. You may communicate to a paraeducator that they are completing a task correctly by smiling and giving a thumbs up. It is important to pay attention to your body language, tone of voice, and choice of words as they can often be misinterpreted as negative communication.

➢ **Written Communication:** Written communication can occur through the use of post-it notes, emails, schedules, memos, articles, and letters. Written communication is very common in teaching, as there is usually little time for teachers and paraeducators to talk face-to-face. Although when using written communication it is important to be as clear as possible because your message may be read differently by other people. When leaving a written message use precise language, stay away from jargon, keep sentences short, reread what you've written, and ask for feedback or understanding of the message you left.

Note: As you begin working with your paraeducator observe their communication preferences/style and try to communicate to the him/her in the same manner.
Active Listening
An important aspect to ensure effective communication is through active listening. Active listening is the primary way of getting information and it establishes rapport, as it shows interests in the messages being shared. Active listening allows for team members to feel comfortable with discussing issues, sharing ideas, and asking questions. Through actively listening to your paraeducator, you are showing respect for him/her, building a more effective relationship, and you are better able to understand the concerns and ideas they may have.

Strategies for Active Listening:
- Eye Contact
- Body Language
- Facial Expressions
- Nodding your head
- Paraphrasing
- Summarizing

“Attention, willingness to listen, and desire to understand are important elements in establishing rapport, but accurate understanding is required to build and maintain a relationship”

(French, 1997, p. 179).

What to Communicate?
When working with students with special needs, there is certain information that needs to be shared with all individuals who work with a particular student or group of students. Some of this information includes:

- **Individualized Education Program (IEP):** A student's IEP states their individual goals, modifications, and adaptations that should be implemented in the classroom. Teachers often find it useful to create an "IEP at a Glance", in which lists the goals and modifications for each student. Resource E provides a template of an IEP at a Glance, that can be created for each student.

- **Information about Students:** If any students in your classroom have specific health problems, take medications at a specific time, or on a strict diet all paraeducators should know this information. This can also be written on the IEP at a Glance.

- **Behavior Support Plans:** If students have behavior support plans, paraeducators should be aware of how to read the plan, as well as how to respond to desired and undesired behaviors.

- **Data Collection:** Most paraeducators will be responsible for collecting data on students. Explain how you want your paraeducator to collect data, where it goes, and how to use the information gathered to better help the student(s).
Chapter 6

Communication Strategies

There are certain strategies you can implement, to help build an effective team relationship based on collaboration and communication. These strategies include setting team meetings, creating classroom schedules, and providing feedback.

Team Meetings
Team meetings can play an essential role in building a team relationship based on effective communication. Unfortunately, many teachers find it difficult to find time to conduct formal sit down meetings. As a teacher, it is important that you find the time to conduct regular meetings to help improve the overall work environment, enhance communication, and encourage teamwork.

Advantages of Team Meetings
- Allows team members to share ideas, which demonstrates that the whole team is valued.
- Helps build rapport among team members.
- Allows you to address all issues you or paraeducators may be having.
- You can address any questions or concerns the paraeducators may have.
- You can use a team meeting as an opportunity to train your paraeducators on a new instructional skill, behavior management technique, or data collection tool.
- Meetings allow you to plan instruction and schedules for future dates.
- You can share any important updates on students, school or classroom policies, schedules, or academic material.
- Evaluate student progress, behavioral problems, and academic objectives.
- Enhances team communication and collaboration.

Ideas for Implementing Effective Team Meetings
- You can set aside time at the beginning of the day, at the end of the school day, or during lunchtime to hold your meetings.
- If your students go to the library or computer lab and do not need you or your paraeducator's constant support, then this could be a useful time for a meeting.
• Check with your school or district to see if the paraeducators are allotted any extra pay/hours for classroom meetings.

• Develop a time that will work for all paraeducators. The hours that paraeducators work may conflict with each other. For example, one paraeducator may come in at noon, while another leaves at noon. Some teachers ask paraeducators to come in earlier or leave later in order to attend meeting and then allow them to come in later or leave early on another day.

• If a team member cannot be present, have another member takes notes or you can possibly videotape the meetings so they can watch later.

• Create an agenda that allows the team to stay on track of specific issues that need to be addressed. A great idea is to leave a blank agenda in a common location and have paraeducators add issues that they want to have discussed at the meeting. This allows for you to see what they want to discuss and prepares all paraeducators for what will be discussed at the meeting. Resource F at the end of the handbook provides a template of an agenda, in which paraeducator's can add the issue they want discussed at the meeting, as well as a spot for the discussion of each issue during the meeting.

• Set an allotted time for the meeting, 30 to 40 minutes a week should be sufficient. Although depending on the needs of the class and pressing issues, you may need more time. Although a meeting should be supplemented with daily communication.

• Set team norms early in the initial team meetings. Some teams create norms that include considerations such as how decisions are made, how they will solve a challenging issue, punctuality, team roles and how they will be rotated, method on recording notes, and whether there will be snacks (French 1997). Norms help the meeting run smoothly and consistent.

Roles for Team Meetings

- **Timekeeper:** monitors time
- **Recorder:** writes down the decisions made
- **Summarizer:** summarizes decisions on topic before moving on
- **Checker:** makes sure team members understand discussion
- **Encourager:** encourages team members to participate in discussion
- **Praiser:** provides praises on collaborative skills demonstrated during meeting
- **Jargon Buster:** lets team members know when they are using terms that may not be understood by all.

(Nevin et al., 2009)
**Schedules**

A helpful tool to ensure effective communication of daily activities in the classroom is through the use of schedules. You may already create schedules for the whole classroom or individual students, but it is also helpful to create schedules for your classroom team, which includes yourself and your paraeducators. Schedules should clearly label when a task should be completed, by who, what the task entails, and where in the classroom or school the task should be completed. Some teachers find it helpful to create schedules for each paraeducator, for each student who requires assistance, or for the whole classroom team. It is usually helpful to create a whole classroom schedule, as it enables you to see where everyone is going to be throughout the day. It is important to make schedules short, easy to read, and readily available. Schedules should be placed in a common place so it is readily available to all team members and guests in the classroom. Schedules should rarely contain detailed steps of activity or materials, as this information is left for more detailed lesson plans. A sample of a completed schedule is provided in Resource G of the handbook.

**Evaluations**

Many school districts require schools to conduct yearly evaluations on the paraeducator's employed at that school site. These evaluations are usually conducted by administrators who are unfamiliar with the work of the paraeducator. Although many administrator may ask for your feedback on the paraeducator, it is often more helpful to conduct evaluations in your own classrooms throughout the school year. This approach allows you to deal with issues or problems when they first arise. You can ask your school administer or the district office for evaluation forms, create your own, or use the template provided in Resource H of the handbook. Evaluations are a great tool in communicating the strengths and areas of need of each paraeducator in the classroom. Evaluations should be frequent and specify directly what areas the paraeducator excels in and what areas need improvement. It is important to be honest in the evaluations, a paraeducator cannot grow if you tell them that they are doing a job correctly or well, if they truly are not.
Resources

A. Introduce Yourself
B. Essential Information for Paraeducator's
C. Checklist for Orientation
D. Lesson Plan Template
E. IEP at a glance
F. Meeting Agenda
G. Schedule
H. Paraeducator Evaluation
I. Additional Resources: Books and Websites
Resource A

Introduce Yourself

Name: __________________ Hire Date ______________

Phone Number: __________________ (Home) __________________ (Cell)

Emergency Contacts

Name: __________________ Phone Number: ______________

Name: __________________ Phone Number: ______________

Experiences and Interests (Use back or additional paper, if needed)
Describe your past experiences in working with students with special needs
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________

What are your strengths in working with children or within a classroom?
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________

What do you believe are your areas of weakness with working with children or within a classroom?
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
What areas are you interested in learning more about (i.e. data collection, behavior management, delivering reinforcement, etc.)

_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________

List any skills you have that can benefit the students or classroom (languages, computer, etc.)

_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________

What do you think makes a classroom a positive place to learn?

_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________

What do you think are the qualities needed to create and maintain a successful team?

_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________

Any additional information you want to share or questions you have:

_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________
Resource B

**Essential Information for Paraeducator's**

School: ___________________________ Phone Number: __________________

Classroom: _______________________ Room Number: __________________

Supervising Teacher: ______________ Phone Number: __________________

Paraeducators: ___________________ Phone Number: __________________

Principal:________________________ Assistant Principal: _______________

Secretary: _________________________

*Other School Personal and their Roles*

**Job Duty/Responsibilities:**

**Daily Schedule**
(Your schedule is subject to change as student, school, and program needs change.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start Time</th>
<th>Break</th>
<th>Lunch</th>
<th>End Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Resource C

Checklist to Orientation

- Fire evacuation routes and other emergency procedures
- Building layout (classroom, lunchroom, library, front office, principals office, nurse’s office, speech room, mailboxes, workroom, etc.)
- Names of school personal (principal, vice principal, secretary, nurse/health clerk, psychologist, speech therapist, librarian, custodian, etc.)
- Location of first aid supplies and fire/safety equipment in and around classroom
- Playground rules and procedures
- Lunchroom rules and procedures
- Procedure to report an absence
- Policies regarding confidentiality
- Procedure for reporting suspicion of child neglect and/or child abuse
- School hours (provide school calendar, if available)
- Paraeducator’s job hours, including break, lunch, and start/end time.
- Describe paraeducator’s specific responsibilities (include information about responsibilities within the classroom and outside)
- Dress code policies
- Importance of using people-first language
- State your personal expectations for the classroom, behavior management, etc.
- Provide a brief tour around the classroom
- Explain how schedules will be created and where it will be displayed
- If creating a communication corner or binder, show paraeducators where it will be and what they can find in it.
Lesson Plan Template

Paraeducator Name: __________________________ Date: _______________
Subject: ___________________ Content Area(s)________________________
Duration of Lesson: _______________ Location: ________________
Lesson Objective(s):

Materials Needed:

Instruction Type: (check which the paraeducator will be responsible for and the student(s) to be pulled, if individual or small group)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Small Group</th>
<th>Whole Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sequence of Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instruction/Activity (Detailed sequence of lesson activities)</th>
<th>Modifications, adaptations, and/or support needed for each student</th>
<th>Assessing learning of students (How paraeducator will assess student learning?)</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Resource E

## IEP at a Glance

### Basic Info:
- Student’s Name: ______________________
- Eligibility: __________________________
- Grade: __________
- Behavior Plan: _____ Yes _____ No
- ESL: _____ Yes _____ No
- Services:
  - ___ OT
  - ___ APE
  - ___ Speech

### Medical Info:
- Seizures: ____Yes ____ No
  - If yes, plan: ______________________
- Allergies: ____Yes ____ No
  - If yes, what: ______________________
- Special Diet: ___ Yes ___ No
  - If yes, explain: __________________
- Medication & times:

### Strengths:

### Accommodations & Modifications

### Goals:

### Behavioral Strategies:
# Meeting Agenda

**Meeting Date:**

**Time:**

**Setting:**

**Staff Present:**

**Staff Absent:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics to Discuss (set prior to meeting)</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Resolution/Assignment (if needed, include who will complete assignment and by when)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Resource G

### Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>John</th>
<th>Sam</th>
<th>Jack</th>
<th>Tommy</th>
<th>Billy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:50-9:00</td>
<td>Students arrive at classroom Unpack backpacks, lunchboxes, folders/school work, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00-9:20</td>
<td>Morning Meeting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:20-9:45</td>
<td>Motor Lab</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45-10:15</td>
<td>Language Arts in room 30, work from L.A. bin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45-10:15</td>
<td>Language Arts in room 30, work from L.A. bin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45-10:15</td>
<td>Math in room 31, work on subtracting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45-10:15</td>
<td>Math in room 31, work on adding with manipulatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45-10:15</td>
<td>Math in room 31, work on adding with manipulatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15-10:35</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15-10:35</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15-10:35</td>
<td>Mainstream to Room 40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15-10:35</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15-10:35</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:35-10:50</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:50-11:00</td>
<td>Mainstream to Room 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:50-11:00</td>
<td>Mainstream to Room 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:50-11:00</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:50-11:00</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:50-11:00</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00-11:30</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:15</td>
<td>Math in room 31, work on multiplication facts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:15</td>
<td>Math in room 31, work on multiplication facts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:15</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:15</td>
<td>Language Arts in room 30, work from bin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:15</td>
<td>Language Arts in room, work from bin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15-12:30</td>
<td>Whole Group: Story</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30-1:00</td>
<td>P.E.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00-1:30</td>
<td>Art Craft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30-2:15</td>
<td>Mon- Computers, Tues- Music, Wed.- Clean up, Thurs &amp; Friday- Art/Choice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:15-2:45</td>
<td>Sensory Stations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45-3:00</td>
<td>Clean up classroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Resource H**

### Paraeducator Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paraeducator:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Area of Focus

#### Observations

- Materials Ready ___
- Uses Appropriate Prompts ___
- Uses Varied Reinforcements ___
- Responds appropriately to disruptive behavior ___
- Provides Praises ___
- Demonstrates Prompt Fading ___

#### Strengths:

### Notes

#### Overall Comments

#### Possible Next Area of Focus

**Feedback Provided:** _____Yes _____No

**Teacher Signature** __________________________ **Date** ________________

**Paraeducator Signature** ______________________ **Date** ________________

---

Resource I

Additional Resources

Books:


Websites:

- National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals (NRCP)
  http://www.nrcpara.org/
  This website offers news updates, resources, and materials for paraeducators, teachers, and administrators across various states.

- Project PARA at University of Nebraska, Lincoln
  http://para.unl.edu/
  University of Nebraska, Lincoln has set up this project that offers web-based study programs for paraeducators and/or teachers.

- National Education Association (NEA)
  http://www.nea.org/
  This website offers a wide range of tools, ideas, news updates, and issues all related to education.

- Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
  http://www.cec.sped.org/
  CEC maintains up-to-date publications of issues, policies, standards, and professional development opportunities.
References


