

Harvey County Special Education Paraeducator Handbook 2023-2024

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See Classified Handbook for:

- **Payroll**
- **Absences**
- **Cell Phone Use/Communication**
- **Clocking in/out Procedures and Timesheets**

Job Description

QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Demonstrated aptitude or competence for all assigned responsibilities
2. Such alternatives to the above qualifications as the Board of Education may find appropriate and acceptable

REPORTS TO: TEACHER

JOB GOAL: To assist the teacher in achieving teaching objectives by working with individual students or small groups to help them achieve the skill levels of the class as a whole.

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Assists the student(s) in activities designated by the supervisor.
2. Hears the student(s) in recitation, reading, and other curriculum tasks, providing guided practice.
3. Under supervision of the special education teacher, works with small groups of students to reinforce skills.
4. Accompanies the student(s) to whom assigned when trips outside of the classroom or school are a part of the educational program.
5. Establishes as fully as possible a supportive and caring relationship with the student(s).
6. Serves as a resource person, if and when requested, to the student personnel evaluation team conferring about one of the students to whom assigned.
7. Implements job specific activities under supervision of professional staff.
8. Maintains confidentiality of student information.
9. Implements behavior plans developed by the IEP team.
10. Assists students with self-help skills (dressing, toileting, washing, grooming) when necessary.
11. Performs other duties as assigned by the immediate supervisor.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT: Wage and length of employment to be established by the board of education.

EVALUATION: Performance of this job will be evaluated in accordance with the provisions of the Board's policy on evaluation of support services personnel.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE JOB:

- Ability to assist students in activities designated by supervisor
- Ability to work with small groups of students to reinforce skills
- Ability to implement behavior plans developed by the IEP team
- Ability to assist students with self-help skills

Instructions for Paraeducator Evaluation

Wendy Gile will send out an email reminder to teachers with evaluation due dates.

1. Paraeducator evaluations will be completed twice a year for the first year (or as needed) that a paraeducator is a part of a classroom. This includes all new paraeducators to the district. Evaluations will be completed in October at the end of the 1st quarter or (at the end of the 40 day probationary period for new hires) and in March at the end of the 3rd quarter.
2. Paraeducators who have been part of a classroom for more than one year will be evaluated once a year, in March at the end of the 3rd quarter, (or as needed).
3. Each paraeducator should receive a copy of the evaluation at the start of the school year. It is recommended that supervising teachers review the evaluation with all paraeducators at the start of each school year. This will allow paraeducators to understand supervising teacher expectations in each of the categories listed on the evaluation.
4. A **Performance Assessment sheet** will be filled out by the principal during each evaluation period. This will give an overall performance rating in each of the following categories: Attitude, Initiative, Quality of Work, Efficiency, Interactions with Students and Staff, Instructional Support, and Community Relations. A **rubric** has been provided for principals to use when evaluating. The principal will highlight areas of strength/weakness in each column. Both the rubric and performance assessment sheet will be shared with the paraeducator at the evaluation. The principal will go over the evaluation, along with the improvement form, at the time of evaluation.

Self-Monitoring Sheet and Improvement Form:

The **Self-monitoring sheet and Improvement form for new hires** will be completed during the initial evaluation. Paraeducators will write one personal goal for themselves to monitor throughout the school year. The self-monitoring sheet is part of the evaluation and must be signed and turned in with the performance assessment. The **Improvement form** will be filled out by the principal should any paraeducator receive a “needs improvement” or “unsatisfactory” score in any section of the evaluation. The improvement form will be copied and turned in after the third quarter, however, progress will be monitored until the end of the 4th quarter. Paraeducators will turn in the **self-monitoring sheet** at the end of the third quarter to share personal achievement with the District Office. The self-monitoring sheet and improvement forms must be signed by the paraeducator, supervising teacher, and principal.

***THIS PROCESS IN NO WAY CHANGES THE AT-WILL STATUS OF A PARAEDUCATOR.**

Confidentiality

As paraeducators you are members of an educational team. Educational team members share considerable information about individual students and situations related to performance in educational settings. Access to student information is necessary for team members to provide special instruction and to support the educational progress of students with disabilities. It is essential that each team member respects confidentiality standards. Failing to observe confidentiality is not only disrespectful, but it is illegal.

All information about students and/or employees is treated with the strictest confidence. Disclosure of confidential information gained through employment is an action prohibited conduct subject to formal disciplinary action. Maintaining confidentiality is a very serious responsibility held by all professionals, including paraeducators.

Confidentiality Guidelines

1. Questions from parents regarding their children should be directed to the teacher
2. Never discuss information about a student with parents of another student to any other individuals uninvolved in the delivery of educational services.
3. Never discuss information about a student with other students. Refrain from making statements about students in the presence of other students. Students tend to hear everything even if that is not our intent.
4. Become familiar with confidentiality policies specific to your school and your supervising teacher.
5. Follow proper procedures to view student files.
6. Never discuss information about a student in a public place such as: the staff lounge, hallway, grocery store, etc...
7. When you talk about your job, never use student names, specific information about students, or any other identifiable information.
8. Maintain personal notes regarding student educational performance/behavior in a folder in a secured location.

9. If you are unsure about the need for confidentiality of certain information, then don't share it. When in doubt, it is best to say nothing.

10. Direct specific questions about students from staff members or other building personnel to the teacher.

Confidentiality Laws at a Glance

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

This federal law applies to all students in schools that receive federal funds, not just students with disabilities. It gives parents of children under age 18 and students over age 18 the right to see and amend the educational record. FERPA protects the information contained in the record from disclosure to any unauthorized persons. Educational records are any type of records directly related to the student, which are kept by a school or a person acting on behalf of the school. These include, but are not limited to: paper files, computer data, or other forms of records. However, private notes made and kept by one person and not shown or shared with anyone else are not considered educational records.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA 2004)

The federal law IDEIA is the primary law governing special education. It requires schools to:

Locate, identify, and evaluate children with disabilities.

1. Provide a free, appropriate, public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE), to all children whose disabilities meet eligibility standards set by the state; and
2. Hold an annual case conference to develop an individualized education program (IEP) for each child.

IDEIA also requires the school to protect the confidentiality of "personally identifiable information" information by which a student's identity could reasonably be determined, that is obtained or used in connection with the student's special education.

Each state is required by IDEIA to develop procedures for the implementation of IDEIA.

Confidentiality Do's and Don'ts

Confidential Student Information Sharing Dos	Confidential Student Information Sharing Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do treat all information regarding students with respect. • Do share information regarding student academic, behavioral, or family situations only with staff that have academic or supervisory responsibility for the student. • Do discuss confidential student information in educational settings that are private enough that confidential information is not inadvertently disclosed. • When in doubt as to whether to disclose information, do refrain from sharing the information and ask a supervisor or an administrator. • Do store student information in a secure location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not discuss confidential student information in public places (grocery store) or in educational settings (staff lounge, hallway) where information may be inadvertently disclosed. • Do not discuss student academic, behavioral, or family situations with anyone who does not have academic or supervisory responsibility for the student. • Do not leave confidential student information where those without legitimate educational purpose may see it.

Strategies for Answering Student Questions About Students with Disabilities in the Inclusive Setting

- Try to divert conversation to a specific behavior, condition, or characteristic instead of the child with the disability.
- Make sure questions are answered. Don't pass along wrong or unnecessary information. The more you know, the better prepared you will be when questions arise.
- Don't alarm students by giving too much detail or description of disabilities or disabling conditions.
- Encourage students to offer help and support, but emphasize the importance of independence for students with disabilities.
- Refrain from sharing any information with students that would infer upon the confidentiality rights of the child with a disability.
- If you are unsure how to address the questions presented by students, then approach the supervising teacher or an administrator.

- Choose your words carefully when asking students to offer assistance to a child with a disability. Instead of saying, “Will you take him?” say, “Would you like to go with...?” This implies a more equilateral relationship between the students.

Responding to Comments or Questions

Student Comments/Questions	Possible Responses
What is wrong with him/her?	He/she is different from you in some ways, but alike in some others.
Why does she get the easy work? That’s not fair!	What is fair, when everybody gets the same thing at the same time or when everybody gets what he/she needs? It is fair because ___ is working on what she needs and you are working on what you need.
He looks funny.	You’re not used to being around someone who looks different. We all look different in one way or another. Did you know that ___ sometimes causes a person to look different?
She sounds funny.	You are having a hard time understanding ___; some people talk differently, Maybe you could try really hard to listen and you might understand.
How does he eat?	He eats the same as you, but may need a little extra help.

Professional Development Requirements

The Harvey County Special Education Board believes that continuous education is important for all staff members. New initiatives are being introduced every year, along with new research, and new ways to address students' needs. Professional Development is meant to help you integrate those new learnings into your daily interactions with students. We also know it is difficult to find time to collaborate with your supervising teacher and other teachers you work with. We hope that PD days give you a chance to collaborate.

You will be required to document 35 hours of PD into Frontline. You will be paid for up to 35 hours of PD.

Enrolling for Professional Development

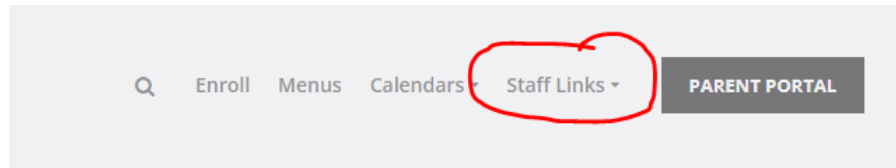
Clocking in does **NOT** record your professional development attendance.

To record professional development:

If the PD is not sponsored by USD 373

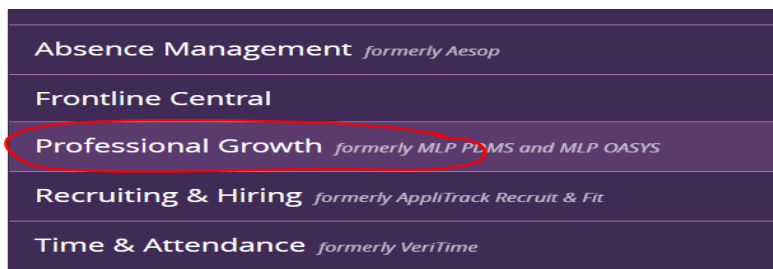
BEFORE the event:

Go to the USD 373 Website



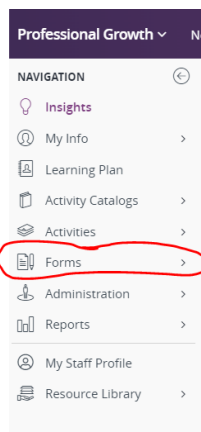
1.

2. Click on “Frontline Education”

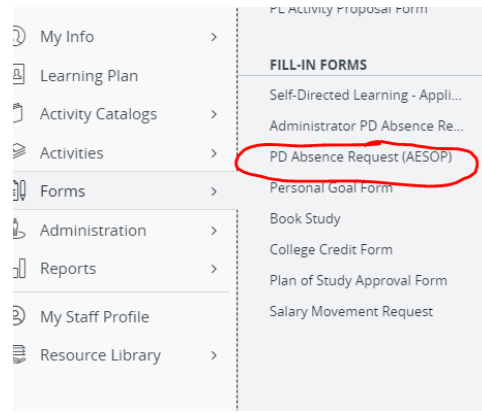


3.

4.



5.

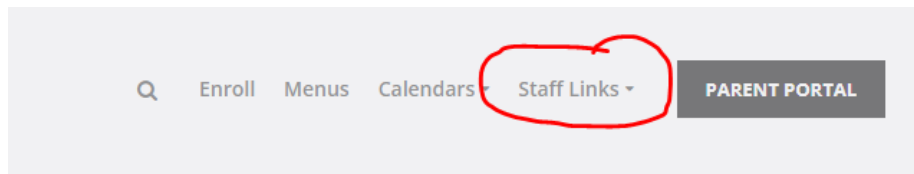


After the event, you will need to go back to Frontline (Professional Growth) to manage events.

If the PD is hosted by USD 373:

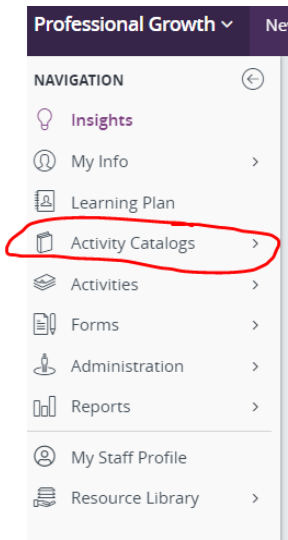
Before the event:

1.

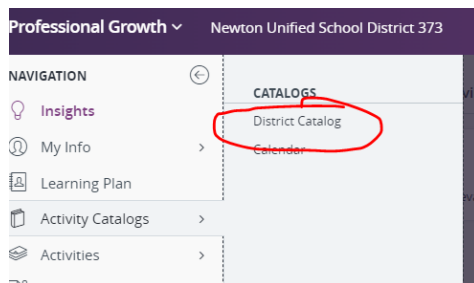


2. Click on “Frontline Education”

3.



4.



5. After you find the session you are going to attend

6.

Activity Registration

Details

New Teacher Induction (NTI) Year 1 (Group 1) 8:00 a.m.-3:15 p.m. (8.31.23)
Program: District Catalog
Dates: 8/31/2023

1 Meeting(s)

#	Date	Time	Location
1.	Thu Aug 31, 2023	8:00 am to 3:15 pm	ETC Conference room

New Teacher Induction for Year 1 (Group 1) teachers.

Purposes	Relicensure
Categories	Professional Standards
Goals	Teaching and Learning
Buildings	All
Departments	All
Grades	All
Groups	Year 1 (Group 1) New Teachers 2023-2024
Instructors	Gail Pryce and Kenya Graber
Registration Options	Request Approval

After the event, you will need to go back to Frontline (Professional Growth) to manage events.

Instructional Strategies

One of the primary responsibilities of paraeducators is to support the instruction for students. This task poses many challenges. To be an effective supporter of student instruction requires planning, organization, and knowledge of expected learning outcomes of each student. Although the teacher makes decisions such as grouping, instructional materials, and teaching strategies, your feedback is crucial to the success of classroom instruction.

Methods of instructional support may vary throughout the day depending on the subject matter, setting of instruction, and the expected student outcomes. Your style of instructional support will also be altered by group size. The dynamics of large group vs. small group instruction differ in the support required, as well as individual instruction.

Here are some tips to help you to effectively use your time with students:

- Find out the time schedules for small group instruction and the specific role you will play as the paraeducator.
- Have materials ready and available for use
- Know where supplies are stored and procedures for how/when to get them
- Be familiar with the format of the lesson. (remember lesson planning is the responsibility of the teacher, but you may be required to follow lesson plans)
- Know daily assignments and student homework expectations
- Communicate with the teacher regarding student progress

Effective Instructional Strategies

- Plan for differences among students.
- Ensure adequate practice time for repetition in order to master skills.
- Gain and maintain student attention.
- Engage students in active learning when possible.
- Check frequently for understanding.
- Maintain an interesting pace for instruction.
- Give immediate feedback to students (kudos, good job, did you think about this)
- Use prompts and cues to redirect student attention to tasks.
- Vary methods to practice skills (use the chalkboard, games, pencil/paper, drills)
- Model positive interaction.
- Recognize appropriate behaviors.
- Praise often.
- Maintain organization to minimize off task time.
- Check for understanding when giving directions
- Offer a sequence of steps to finish assignments.
- Use graphic organizers.

- Help students keep track of assignments
- Model organizational skills for students.

Accommodations and Modifications

As paraeducators presenting lessons or supporting the academic instruction delivered by teachers in the classroom, the need will arise for modifications and accommodations of materials. It is important to remember that accommodations and modifications are addressed through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) for each student who receives special education services. Appropriate accommodations and modifications are a legal requirement of the IEP. This does not mean you should never explore other accommodations or modifications that may assist the student. However, it is required that students receive accommodations and modifications addressed on the IEP. When administering standardized testing, no accommodations or modifications can be offered to students with disabilities that have not been identified on the IEP as necessary for them to progress in the daily curriculum. Even then, accommodations and modifications can only be implemented on specified portions of standardized tests. Therefore, if you notice certain strategies that tend to help particular students, then share them with the teacher. It may be appropriate for these accommodations and modifications to be included in the IEP. **As the paraeducator, you should be aware of the accommodations and modifications required on the IEPs for the students you serve.** If you do not have this information, talk with the teacher to obtain it. And remember, you are part of an educational team. Therefore, possible accommodations need to be discussed with the teachers instructing the students. Also keep in mind that accommodations and modifications are intended to “level the playing field,” not to give students with disabilities undue advantage over nondisabled peers. Select accommodations and modifications on the basis of academic need to avoid creating unhealthy, enabling crutches for students with disabilities.

Strategies to support students with written tests:

1. Give extra time to complete
2. Re-read directions, gives examples
3. Review notes and book information
4. Read tests out loud
5. Reword/Summarize questions
6. Answer orally
7. Provide open book tests
8. Allow use of class notes
9. Provide formulas or diagrams to help with problems

10. Provide a word bank or vocabulary list
11. Dictate Answers
12. Allow second chance for correct answers
13. Alter layout of the test to provide more space
14. Chunk test (present only one part of the test at a time)
15. Chunk matching items into smaller groups (break 20 matching items into 4 groups of 5 words)
16. Delete options on multiple choice
17. Provide a break time

Strategies to Support Students with Note-taking:

1. Provide a peer note-taker
2. Provide a partial outline in advance for student to fill in during the lecture
3. Tape record lessons/lectures
4. Encourage students to listen, then give short summary
5. Correlate notes with textbook pages

Strategies to Support Students with Completion of Study Guides or Worksheets:

1. Provide page numbers for the answers
2. Present questions in the order material was presented
3. Highlight or underline key words, phrases, concepts
4. Provide a word bank or vocabulary list
5. Present materials/handouts in small groups (don't give study guides for entire grading period at one time)
6. Create study groups
7. Assign a peer helper
8. Work in a cooperative group and alternate turns to find all information

Strategies to Support Students with Textbook Use:

1. Read information to the student
2. Assign Buddy Reading
3. Provide audio tapes or computer programs
4. Provide or direct student to visual cues
5. Provide summaries or outlines
6. Provide a parallel text on a lower reading level
7. Present preview questions before reading materials
8. Tap into student's prior knowledge of the subject matter
9. Use study guides
10. Highlight/underline important information (make sure this is approved by building administrator, as certain books may be set aside for highlighting purposes)
11. Teach students to read chapter introductions and end of chapter reviews
12. Use spot checking at the end of each section to determine level of comprehension Teach students to use glossary, index, charts, graphs, and table of contents to locate needed information

Strategies to Support Students with Organization of Notebook:

1. Check assignment book daily
2. Number all pages
3. Separate notebook to correlate with subjects
4. Encourage use of one large notebook with dividers
5. Use color coding to organize subjects, week, month, etc.
6. File pages immediately after completion/return
7. Hole punch completed pages to avoid loss
8. Assign notebook buddies to keep each other on track

Strategies to Support Students with Organization of Materials:

1. Develop self-checking system
2. Copy assignments from the board
3. Put multi-piece projects in an envelope
4. Keep extra materials handy
5. Provide non-verbal cues to promote self-checking/monitoring
6. Use post-it notes to mark assignments
7. Have students restate the materials that are needed.

Strategies to Support Students with Completion of Homework:

1. Reduce amount of work
2. Allow extra time to complete work
3. Reinforce time lines to student
4. Use a timer
5. Mark due dates on a calendar
6. Write a schedule or plan to complete longer assignments/projects
7. Break up large assignments into several due dates
8. Create a checklist

Strategies to Support Students with Staying on Task:

1. Reduce distractions
2. Reward on task behavior
3. Shorten task
4. Chunk tasks (present one part at a time)
5. Provide checklist for sequence of tasks to complete
6. Keep workspace clean
7. Vary activities
8. Provide cubical/isolated area to complete tasks (not to punish, but as a positive, preventative strategy to eliminate distractions for the student)

Strategies for Supporting Students with Reading Written Material:

1. Provide highlighted materials
2. Use taped materials
3. Decrease amount of material present
4. Assign reading helper
5. Present same information in different forms (audio, video, picture, written)
6. Allow extra time
7. Summarize main ideas
8. Allow practice time for oral reading
9. Use study guides Provide preview questions
10. Point out picture clues and context clues
11. Ask questions during reading
12. Control introduction of new ideas until the student demonstrates understanding of material already presented
13. Pre-teach vocabulary
14. Put main ideas on index cards in order of concept introduction
15. Role play, demonstrate, make concepts concrete
16. Relate concepts to student experiences or things familiar to student

Strategies to Support Students Who Are Slow Starters or Have Low Interest:

1. Relate information to previous experiences
2. Relate information to a real life issue
3. Maintain proximity to student
4. Offer cues to student to prepare them for upcoming lesson
5. Present small tasks, rather than one large task
6. Offer verbal praise for compliance to task
7. Have materials available & ready to eliminate down time
8. Sequence tasks from easiest to most difficult
9. Clearly state and restate directions
10. Check-in often to monitor progress
11. Provide a checklist of assignment steps
12. Provide a peer helper
13. Ask off task student to be a helper for another student

Remember, there is no one way that is right or wrong when approaching problems. If one strategy is not effective, then try another. It will take time to learn about students and what strategies work best for them. Remember, doing tasks for students does not help them in the long run. As paraeducators, we need to provide tools for students to use. As students build confidence, many times support can be reduced.

Behavior Management

<https://www.crisisprevention.com/Blog/June-2016/paraprofessionals>

The role of an educational assistant (or a teacher's aide or paraprofessional) is to watch for potential problems and prevent escalation when possible.

With this in mind, it's important for EAs to develop appropriate skills to manage crisis situations. EAs need the ability to intervene proactively before a crisis occurs.

The following characteristics are important to embody when interacting with students with behavioral challenges:

- Honesty
- Confidence
- Openness, care, and empathy
- Humor

By embodying these characteristics, you can work with students to help mold their behavior while helping make sure that their needs are being met.

We find the following strategies useful when intervening appropriately in an escalating situation. A good way to start is building a tool kit of go-to strategies to use when students become agitated. By employing these strategies, you move from *reacting* to emergency situations to *responding* to them.

1. Active listening

It's important to take into account what students are saying verbally and paraverbally. It's vital to try and really understand what they're asking for. Listen for feelings, not just facts.

To engage in active listening, we must acknowledge that each person has their own truth. When you acknowledge that the other person has experiences that are different from yours, it's easier to find common ground to move forward in behavioral change.

Consider engaging in a **Genuine Encounter Moment**. You can do this by:

- Giving the student total and complete focus
- Giving eye contact and having a friendly and open expression on your face
- Listening closely
- Withholding judgment

Children overwhelmingly are exposed to many more negative comments in a day than positive ones. Some studies show that 90% of comments directed to children are negative or directive. The more you can genuinely engage with your students in an

authentic way, the more they feel respected and valued. And this authentic engagement will positively impact their behavior.

2. Set clear limits

Students need to know what they're allowed and not allowed to do. They need to have predictable limits to help them make sense of their world, help them feel secure, and provide them with guidance for acceptable behavior. There are four things to consider when setting limits:

- Avoid using fear, intimidation, obligation, and guilt.
- Clearly state the specific boundary with a corresponding consequence.
- The corresponding consequence should be a logical or natural consequence that results from not following the limit, and it should be enforceable.
- Avoid a power struggle.

3. Sidestep power struggles

A power struggle occurs when two people hold different ideas and both are unwilling to compromise. Sometimes the best approach to dealing with power struggles is to avoid them.

Instead of trying to force students to do what you want, try using these alternatives:

- Establish an agenda for the day.
- Find a common interest and build on that interest.
- Be friendly. Smile!
- Use a one-word direction. Remember that "No" is a complete sentence.
- Provide choice. Find a win-win.
- Compromise.
- Brainstorm solutions.

4. Meet their physical and emotional needs

It's important to teach students to become self-aware and to engage in self-care. When your students' physical needs are not being met, they have the potential to escalate into aggressive or acting-out behaviors. A handy way to teach children to remember their physical needs is to use the acronym **HALT**.

- **H** – Hungry. Hunger can be a physical or an emotional need. If the hunger is physical, offer nutritious snacks. If the hunger is emotional, help them name the emotional need they're feeling.
- **A** – Angry. Anger is a normal, healthy emotion. Anger becomes destructive when people express it inappropriately. It's important to name the emotion and to

explore what's causing it. Offer solutions like mediating if the student is angry at another person. Physical activity also helps with feelings of anger. Go for a walk. Go to the gym. Do some push-ups.

- **L** – Lonely. Loneliness can occur both in a crowd and by oneself. Students with emotional regulation issues and behavior disorders withdraw into themselves for a variety of reasons. If you notice your student is withdrawn, engage them in conversation. Reach out and engage in active listening. Help the student connect with a peer.
- **T** – Tired. When we're tired, we find it difficult to cope. Problems seem bigger; the world seems more hostile when we're tired. If your student feels tired, encourage them to rest or to take a short nap. If that's not possible, go for a walk around the block or encourage them to take a couple of deep breaths.

5. Daily physical activity

Exercise is an important tool to help students manage both their physical and mental health. Exercise is an effective treatment for mild to moderate depression, anxiety, and stress. Exercise releases endorphins that make you feel good. It promotes neural growth and releases tension. It also allows students to focus on physical activity and interrupt negative thinking. As an added benefit, it improves memory, enhances self-esteem, and improves sleep.

Take your students for a walk through the halls; use the fitness facilities in your school. Even jogging on the spot and doing push-ups and jumping jacks can boost endorphins and reduce tension.

Participate in physical activity with your students. Be a role model for positive behavioral change. Build daily physical activity into the school day. Make moving a lifelong habit.

6. Mindfulness and breathing exercises

Mindful breathing is the process of focusing your attention on your breathing and nothing else. You concentrate on the process of your breath moving in and out of your body. The results of mindfulness are stress relief, decreased blood pressure, and

improved sleep. It has been used to help in the treatment of depression, eating disorders, anxiety, and substance abuse.

There are many examples of breathing exercises that can be found on the Internet. Here we offer one strategy to get you started.

Balloon breathing:

- Inhale fully. Place your hands on your belly and breathe in slowly through your nose. Feel your belly fill up as if it's filled with a giant balloon.
- Exhale fully. Open your mouth and blow all of the air out of your body.
- Let your belly get flat like an empty balloon. Repeat five times.

6. Catch them being good

Sometimes negative behavior is the only way that students can communicate their need to you. It may be the only way they know how to get your attention. Instead of reinforcing the negative behavior, try to catch them being good. The goal here is to praise the positive behaviors and neutralize or ignore the negative behaviors.

Steps for catching a student being good:

- Identify the negative or disruptive behavior (one or two behaviors).
 - Identify the times when negative or disruptive behavior occurs in the classroom.
 - Identify fixed time intervals through the course of the day in which you will assess to see if your student is engaging in negative behavior.
- o If, at those fixed intervals, the student **is not** engaged in the negative behavior, praise them or reward them.
 - o If, at those fixed intervals, the student **is** engaged in the negative behaviors, ignore the behavior (if at all possible).
 - o Direct your attention to those students who are acting appropriately and give them praise/rewards.

7. Model prosocial skills

Prosocial skills are those behaviors that we engage in that benefit others. These behaviors include cooperation, sharing work, sharing toys, and emotionally supporting others who are in distress.

Students who have behavior disorders often have not developed strong prosocial skills.

You can support prosocial skill development by:

- Being a positive role model. The more that students see positive adult interactions, the more likely they are to engage in such activities themselves.
- Talking through common social situations and providing feedback about appropriate social interaction.
- Role-playing. Have students act out social situations and appropriate responses.
- Encouraging structured social play between peers. Play is one of the best ways to encourage sharing, cooperation, and helping.

8. Offer choices instead of giving orders

Offering students choices instead of giving an order elicits their cooperation. Choices communicate that their EA/paraprofessional respects them and their opinions. It provides an opportunity for students to build responsibility and be empowered.

Use these guidelines when offering choice to your student:

- Provide two positive options.
- Be clear and specific.
- Make sure that both choices are acceptable and feasible.

When your students are comfortable making choices, modify this choice by using the “First/Then.”

You can use **First/Then** in this way:

1. Present the student with a work task that needs to be accomplished.

2. Give the student a choice of two options that they would like to engage in after the work task is completed. It could include:
 - o Computer time
 - o Time on the playground
 - o Coloring/drawing
3. When the student has completed the work task, allow them to engage in the second “reward” task.

Using **First/Then** promotes delayed gratification. It enforces the idea that first work has to occur before they are rewarded with a choice task.

10. Alter the volume and cadence of your voice

Often we overlook how we can affect the emotional state of our students. Emotions can be infectious. When we are angry, aggravated, excited, anxious, or nervous, these emotional states can impact the state of escalation of our students.

If you notice that your student is escalating and becoming visibly agitated, try these techniques to control your own emotions:

- Lower the volume of your voice and speak more quietly. As you speak more quietly, your student will have to become quieter to hear you.
- Alter the cadence of your voice and speak more slowly.
- Modulate your tone of voice and be calm and supportive.
- Simplify your vocabulary.
- Remember that as your student starts to escalate, they’re starting to lose rationality.
- Speaking loudly and quickly will increase their agitation.

Final thoughts

We’ve offered some skills to develop in order to help you respond to escalating behavior. When you’re in the presence of an escalated student, the first thing to realize is that **you** are actively managing the crisis situation. **You** are controlling your own behavior. **You** are making decisions that will impact how the situation unfolds.

Remember, the outcome of the situation will be impacted by the strategies that you use to de-escalate the agitated student.

Take a deep breath and calm yourself. Don’t *react* to the situation. Use the strategies described above to *respond* to it. Use your tool kit to help support your student.

Beginning of the School Year To Do List

Building tour

- Programs operating within the school (Latchkey, etc...)
- Location and use of equipment, supplies, and materials within the building (book room, workroom, paper and office supplies, adult restrooms, etc...)
- Fire and tornado drills- where to go
- Where to park
- What door to enter in the AM

Building MTSS Procedures

1. What is MTSS?
2. When does MTSS start (The second week of school? October?)
3. When do groups change (monthly? quarterly?)
4. Will the paraeducator have a group?
5. Where will groups meet?
6. What materials will the paraeducator use if they have a group?

Physical Classroom Arrangement

If you share a room with a supervising teacher:

1. Where does the paraeducator put his/her belongings?
2. Where does the paraeducator work with students?
3. What spaces are off limits for students?
4. Location and use of equipment, supplies, and materials within the classroom.

Teacher Questionnaire

Communicating with a Gen. Ed. Teacher

Teacher's name: _____

Time in room: _____

For the following students: _____

1. Is there a place I can leave my tools?
2. While the student with an IEP is my main priority, how would you like me to assist with other students?
3. Is it okay if I bring in a coffee/can of cola/tea?
4. What is your classroom behavior policy and is there a role that you would like me to play in supporting this?
5. When can I get lesson outlines and assignments from you so that I can make accommodations? How will I get them online? Face to Face? Can we meet during your plan time for a few minutes?
6. If the student(s) are doing something they can do independently, would you like me to talk to you for further direction, leave, or stay nearby?
7. Where should I take a small group to read aloud or reteach, etc...?
8. When I enter the room would you like me to come directly to you for instruction, look for written directions, walk around the room to observe students, etc...?
9. If you make a mistake* like we all do* (misspell a word, write the wrong date on the board, etc...) do you want me to correct you? Out loud? Quietly? Not at all?
10. When it comes to co-teaching- where are we?

Supportive- Person A in front of class, Person B roaming room-

Parallel- Person A has a group, Person B has a group-

Complementary- Person A does most of the talking, Person B supplements with

comments-

Team-Teaching- Person A and Person B are in front of the class interacting
equally-

11. Am I comfortable if you leave the room?

12. Other....

Paraeducator Schedule Goes Here

From Handbook:Lunch Periods and Break Information:

Classified employees shall normally have at least a 30 minute duty free lunch. Federal wage and hour guidelines do not require employers to allow for morning and afternoon breaks.

Your Specific Building Info. Goes Here

Building Handbook?

Map of Building?

IEPs At A Glance Go Here

Please remember these contain confidential information.