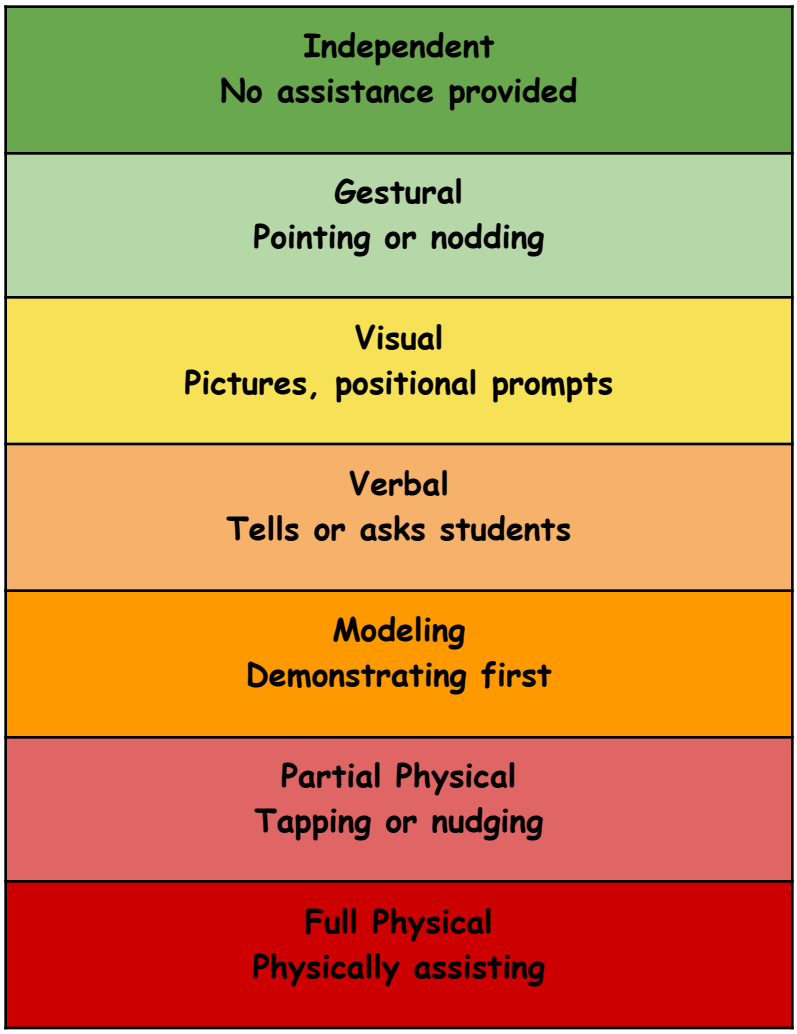
NORTHLAND LEARNING CENTER COOPERATIVE

Documenting the Need for Paraprofessional Support in the IEP

"Research indicates that students with paraprofessional support receive less attention from certified classroom teachers, are more socially isolated, are less self-determined/motivated, and are more dependent on adults. Compared to a certified teacher, paraprofessionals are more likely to over-prompt, over-modify, and otherwise over-assist."
--St. Croix River Education District Case Manager Resources

Public schools are required to educate students in their Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and contrary to belief, paraprofessional support is a highly restrictive service. When working with students and determining additional adult support, we need to think about fostering their independence. Is this student helped too much? How can we tell? What levels of prompting do they need?



As an IEP team, consider these questions when determining if they need paraprofessional support:

1. Does the IEP include goals and objectives for specialized instruction that focus on increasing the student's independence?
2. Is there Assistive Technology that could be tried to help with independence?
3. Have other interventions been tried?
4. Are there accommodations or modifications in place to build a student's independence?
5. Does the student's need exceed the capability of the existing staff?
6. What will the plan in the IEP be to reduce or eliminate the student's need for para support?

On the Northland Learning Center webpage, there is the NLC Abilities Assistance Needs Matrix that should be used when considering the addition of paraprofessional support to an IEP. There is also the Student Task Analysis for a student's daily schedule to look at needs and identify areas of needs, next step processes, and follow-up with teachers or related staff.

https://www.northlandsped.org/page/2888

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1z9yAYdI7RBYMzSQGHONMTOw0ewXlZLH94MCaa9ykSzg/edit

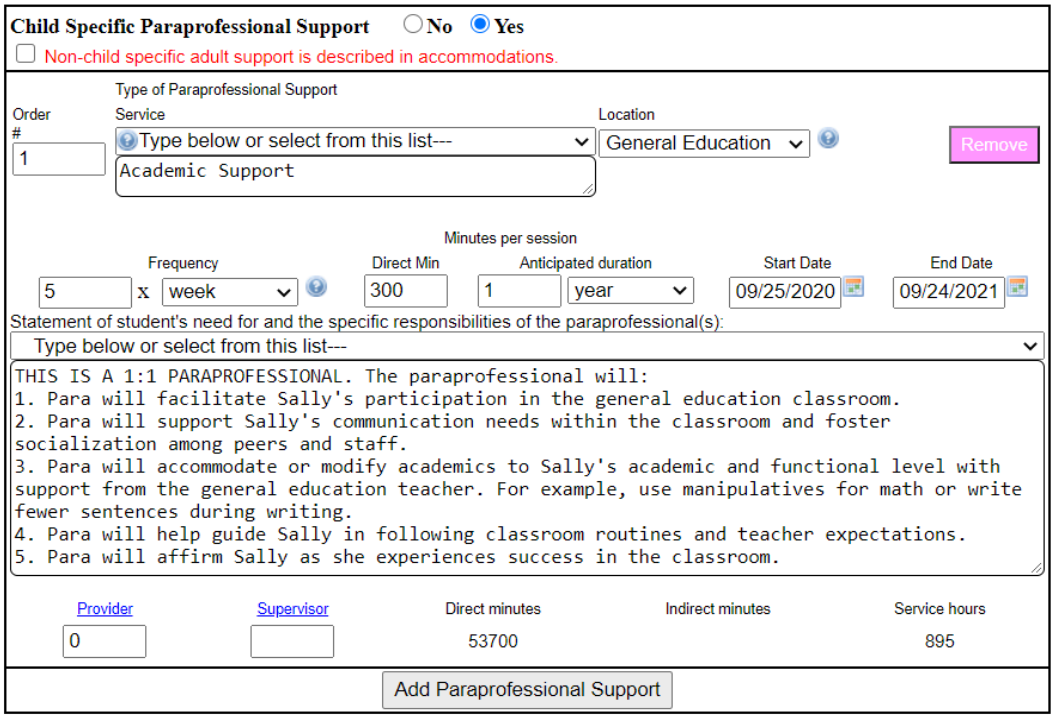
Definitions of Paraprofessional Types and How to Document the Need

Paraprofessional (1:1, Shared, or Child Specific): This describes paraprofessional services specifically for this particular student. This does not mean 1:1 para unless it states it in the section below. This may involve more than one paraprofessional through the course of the day, meaning it does not have to be the same person with that child for the entire day. It could be for a 30 minute time block or for an entire day, depending on the unique needs of the student.

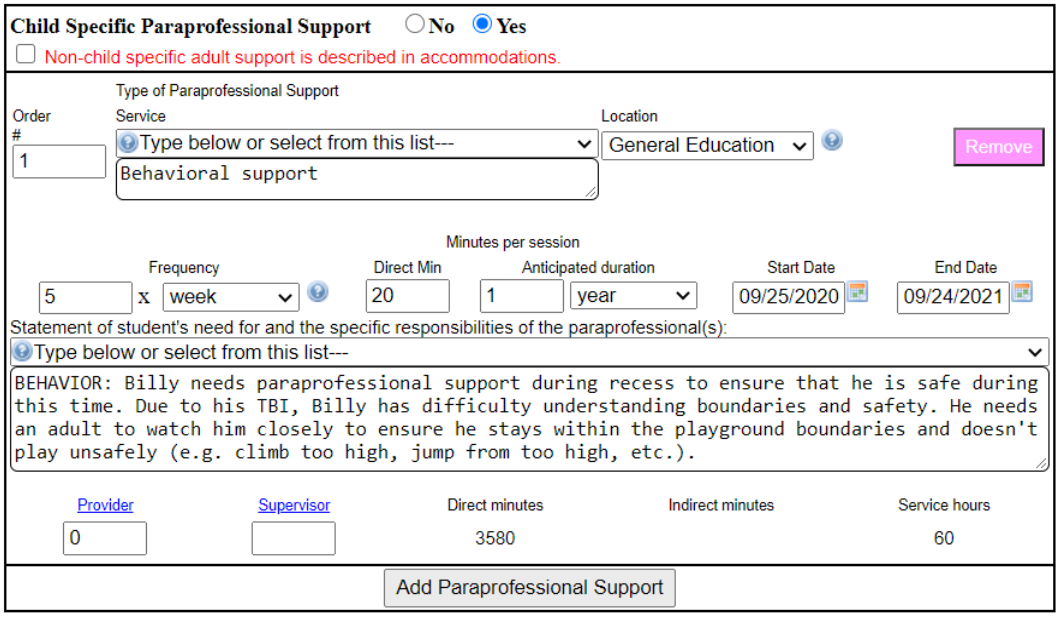
Documentation:

- On the service page in the **Child Specific Paraprofessional Support**
- section, click "**YES**."
- Complete the service boxes--Service, Location, Frequency, Minutes, Duration, State/End dates, and Provider Numbers.
- In the services, enter a **statement of the student's need for** and the **specific responsibilities of the paraprofessional**. Make sure to indicate if this is a 1:1 paraprofessional. When completing the statement of student needs, think of it as a *job description* for the paraprofessional when working with this particular student.

1:1 Paraprofessional



Shared or Child-Specific Paraprofessional

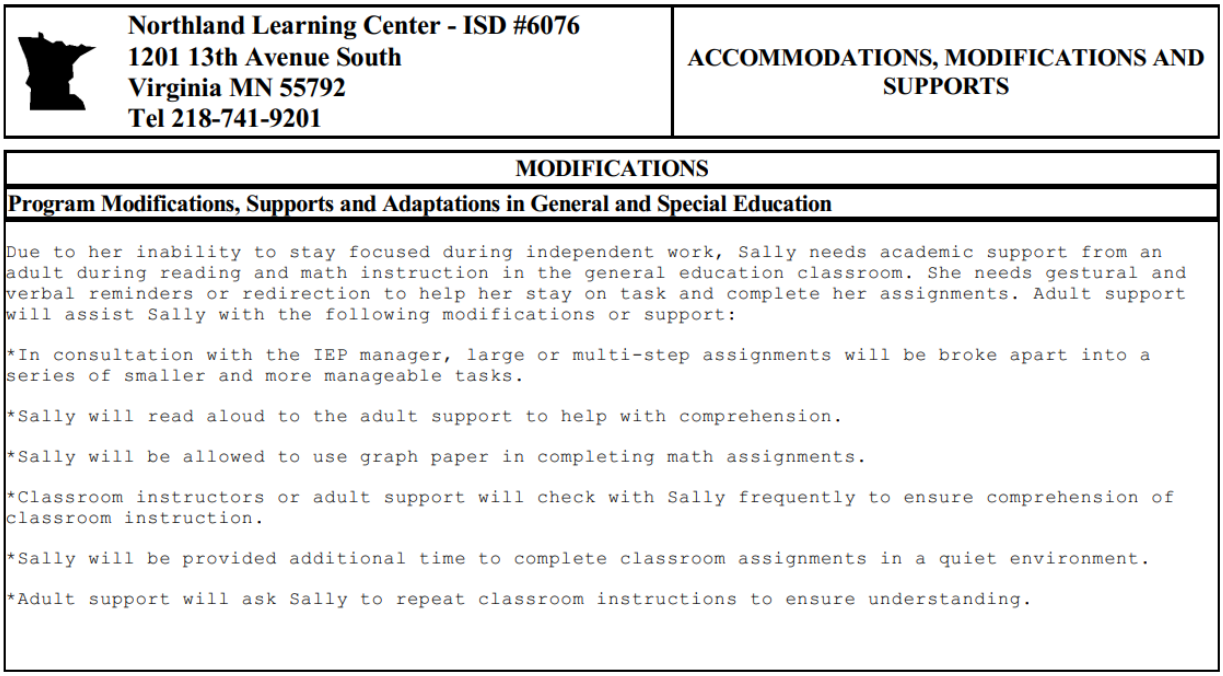


Paraprofessional (Non-child specific): This describes paraprofessional services that are given to more than one student at a time in the regular education setting. Again, the minutes for this service may involve more than one paraprofessional throughout the course of the day.

Documentation:

- On the service page in the **Child Specific Paraprofessional Support** section, click "**NO**" and then check the "**Non-child specific adult support is described in accommodations.**"
- Explain the services in the **PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS** section in the IEP.





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ACCOMMODATIONS, MODIFICATIONS AND SUPPORTS

MODIFICATIONS

Program Modifications, Supports and Adaptations in General and Special Education

Due to her inability to stay focused during independent work, Sally needs academic support from an adult during reading and math instruction in the general education classroom. She needs gestural and verbal reminders or redirection to help her stay on task and complete her assignments. Adult support will assist Sally with the following modifications or support:

*In consultation with the IEP manager, large or multi-step assignments will be broke apart into a series of smaller and more manageable tasks.

*Sally will read aloud to the adult support to help with comprehension.

*Sally will be allowed to use graph paper in completing math assignments.

*Classroom instructors or adult support will check with Sally frequently to ensure comprehension of classroom instruction.

*Sally will be provided additional time to complete classroom assignments in a quiet environment.

*Adult support will ask Sally to repeat classroom instructions to ensure understanding.

NOTE: For non-child specific support, the adult assistance is not limited to a paraprofessional. It can be the special education teacher or general education teacher implementing the accommodations and/or modifications.

Program Paraprofessional: These services are the paraprofessional services that are offered in the special education classroom and are available to *all* of the students in that particular classroom.

Documentation:

- On the service page in the **Child Specific Paraprofessional Support** section, click "**NO**."
- Enter an explanation of paraprofessional responsibilities in the Program Modifications, Supports and Adaptations in General and Special Education section of the IEP. For example:
  - "While in the resource room, the student will have access to a program paraprofessional. The paraprofessional will…..*start the description of what the para will be doing with that particular student in the resource room.*"

REMEMBER:

- NEVER use “as needed,” “may use,” “when the student feels like it” or any language that would indicate that the plan is not clearly developed, unless you have CLEARLY explained the circumstances around when it would be used.

- If you have a student that needs **paraprofessional support on school transportation**, please indicate that in the **SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION section in the IEP**. It does not need to go into the Child Specific Paraprofessional section.

- If the paraprofessional is needed all day, the time entered in the service grid for paraprofessional time should total up to how long the student is in school. It should not reflect more time than they are in attendance.

- Please verify with your School Nurse to verify the statement is accurate and capture the best amount of minutes for recoupment.

Description of Support Examples

Generic:
In [insert setting(s)], XXX will have access to paraprofessional support to provide [what the paraprofessional will do] when [conditions that trigger the support/when the para needs to offer the designated support].

Personal Care Assistance (PCA):
Activities of Daily Living: [XXX requires hands on assistance when changing a pull-up throughout the day. XXX also needs cueing and constant supervision while attempting to use the toilet.] XXX’s Personal Care Assistance (PCA) Plan of Care will be maintained as a separate document.

Health-Related Tasks: [XXX requires assistance with range of motion and passive exercises to maintain muscle function and strength.] XXX’s Personal Care Assistance (PCA) Plan of Care will be maintained as a separate document.

Observation, Redirection, or Intervention of a Behavior Episode: [XXX engages in behavioral episodes on an ongoing basis which involve the Level 1 behaviors of self-injury, physical aggression towards others, and destruction of property. During these episodes, a paraprofessional must be fully engaged to implement the response strategies included in XXX’s Positive Behavior Support Plan (PBSP).] For paraprofessionals working with XXX, XXX’s PBSP will function as their Personal Care Assistance (PCA) Plan of Care. XXX’s PCA Plan of Care will be maintained on a separate document.

Behavior/Engagement:
Paraprofessional to Implement PBSP: In [insert setting(s)], during all activities, XXX will have access to paraprofessional support to facilitate implementation of the prevention, reinforcement, and response strategies included in XXX’s Positive Behavior Support Plan (PBSP).

Paraprofessional to Support Self-Advocacy: In [insert setting(s)], XXX will have access to paraprofessional support to promote generalization of self-advocacy skills. The paraprofessional will frequently check in with XXX to ensure that they are comprehending directions, course content, and assignment expectations. If XXX indicates a need for clarification, the paraprofessional will prompt them to approach a peer or the classroom teacher.

Paraprofessional to Support Stress Management: In [insert setting(s)], XXX will have access to paraprofessional support to promote generalization of stress management and impulse control skills. The paraprofessional will monitor XXX for visual indicators of agitation, including [insert student-specific indicators- e.g. grimacing, hand-wringing, fidgeting, loud breathing, unbroken or diminished eye contact], and provide an early prompt for them to engage in an appropriate self-control strategy.

Functional Academic Modifications:

Paraprofessional to Facilitate Alternative Participation: Because XXX's classwork and assessments in [insert class(es)] will be modified by their teacher to provide opportunities for alternative participation and, therefore, XXX's task expectations will diverge significantly from those presented to the whole group, during all activities in the class, XXX will have access to paraprofessional support to provide task-related prompts.