



Helping Inspire Success and Dreams

Huron Intermediate
School District

Teaming:
Classroom Teacher and
Paraprofessional Handbook

This handbook is intended to be used by the classroom teacher and paraprofessional as a guide to facilitate open communication and teaming.

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Teaming

Some classrooms have the benefit of having paraprofessional support. The role of the paraprofessional may be different in each classroom based on the unique needs of the students and school environment. Paraprofessionals may assist students in one or more areas associated with academic activities, daily living skills, behavior difficulties, emotional needs, or social problems. The paraprofessional may be required to complete documentation, Medicaid, and reporting of incidents.

Descriptions of Paraprofessionals

Title One Paraprofessional: works with students in academic areas within the general education setting

General Education Paraprofessional: supports students in the general education setting for academic and/or behavior needs

Special Education Paraprofessional: supports students receiving special education based on an IEP team decision

HISD Inclusion Paraprofessional: provided by the HISD to support specific students in general education based on an IEP team decision

Role/Responsibility of Staff

All students are the classroom teacher's responsibility, including students that have paraprofessional support. The teacher needs to take ownership of all students and make the educational decisions needed for student growth.

Instructional research supports students working in small groups as compared to one on one. Give careful consideration to the needs of all students when creating small groups. The paraprofessional is there to support and implement the decisions that the teacher makes. This is the importance of teaming.

When the teacher is absent:

Paraprofessional is aware of where sub plans are kept and the materials for classroom activities

Sub plans reflect:

- times a paraprofessional will be in the classroom
- activities the paraprofessional will complete
- students the paraprofessional will assist

When the paraprofessional is absent:

Classroom teacher is aware of where paraprofessional sub plans are and the materials needed for instruction

Sub plans reflect:

- daily schedule
- emergency contact information
- maps
- emergency/safety plans
- student specific behavior plans/medical concerns
- passwords/usernames necessary to complete daily tasks
- staff to ask questions of
- student specific transportation information

During the times that a paraprofessional is assigned to a classroom, the classroom teacher is responsible for creating the schedule for the paraprofessional. This schedule should include which student(s) to work with and the activities to complete. When creating the schedule keep in mind the paraprofessional must have a safe working environment that is conducive to student learning.

Classroom teachers play a critical role in the IEP team process. The classroom teacher provides information about the student's academic and/or behavior progress. The classroom teacher guides the team in decisions about the needed accommodations and/or modifications. Classroom teachers should be provided with a copy of the current IEP.

Both the classroom teacher and paraprofessional may be responsible for documentation that includes tracking behavior plans, reporting behavioral issues, goal progress for the IEP, parent contact, parent logs, and accommodations. There may be days or times that either the classroom teacher or paraprofessional must be absent. In order for the students to have minimal interruption to their educational programs, it is critical that each be aware of the substitute folder plans. There may be specific items that any given school asks be left for a substitute.

Teaming and Communication

Classroom teachers and paraprofessionals are given the task of working together for the academic and behavior success of all students. Maintaining good communication between the classroom teacher and the paraprofessional is a key role in student success. Both parties must remember that all information including; email, voicemail and written documentation are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

There are several strategies that the team can employ to help build and maintain a working relationship. These strategies include:

- The teacher recognizes their role as an immediate supervisor for the paraprofessional
- The teacher provides classroom orientation for the paraprofessional. Orientation includes:
 - philosophy/perspective on the classroom learning environment
 - grade-level academic expectations
 - daily classroom routine
 - building and classroom expectations
 - personal and collaborative responsibilities (See Classroom Orientation)
- Work at building trust
- Be respectful

Working Through Issues and Conflict

Conflict is an inevitable part of any relationship. When an issue arises it is important to deal with it and come to resolution in a professional manner. The following are general guidelines that promote successful conflict resolution:

- Address the concern directly with the staff member keeping in mind that everyone has a different perspective on all students and situations.
- If the issue is not able to be resolved through this initial meeting then the issue should be addressed with the next person in the chain of command.

Tips for Engaging In Difficult Conversations:

General Guidelines:

- Set the tone and purpose of the conversation
- Get to the point and name the issue professionally
- Give one or two specific examples
- Describe the effect of the issue on the school, colleagues or students
- Share your willingness to resolve the issue and have discussion

Options to Consider:

- Should the information come from me or someone else?
- Has the person been given the opportunity to discover the issue on their own? Could I help them realize without entering a difficult conversation?
- What is the most appropriate medium? Would face-to-face be most productive?

- Remember to be confidential. Staff may only share information with others directly involved with the issue, conflict or concern.
- If information has to be shared find a quiet area away from other staff members so that no one else is able to hear the information.
- Issues should never be addressed in front of students.

Disability Awareness

Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder:

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): a developmental delay manifested through significant difficulties with socialization, communication and behavior

- Use visual prompts
- Minimal verbal interactions
- Allow student to have a larger amount of physical space
- Allow for special interests
- Leave emotions out of interaction

Students with Visual Impairments:

Visual Impairment (VI): means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance; the term includes both partial sight and blindness.

- Call student by name
- Tell student exactly what you want them him or her to do
- Use descriptive words

- Give oral directions
- Teach the student to talk through tasks
- Provide auditory or rhyming cures
- Use a ruler, marker, or index card while reading or completing paper/pencil tasks to draw eyes to visual and keep the place
- Get his or her attention before giving instructions
- Use jingles, catchy stories, mnemonic strategies, cheers, or songs
- Allow student to read aloud quietly
- Allow oral responses

Students with Hearing Impairments:

Hearing Impairment (HI): students who are deaf and those who are hard of hearing where the hearing loss interferes with development or adversely affects educational performance

- Speak Clearly
- Allow student to read your lips
- Do not ask yes or no questions
- Have the student repeat the request or question back to ensure understanding
- Keep requests and questions short and simple
- Change visual materials to auditory using someone's voice
- Use visual materials
- Teach visualization
- Allow him or her to read silently
- Provide written directions
- Provide visual materials during lectures such as outlines and diagrams
- Place the student near the presentation area
- Teach the student to take notes
- Keep noise distractions to a minimum
- Don't move around while talking to him or her

Students with Cognitive Impairments:

Cognitive Impairment (CI): students who have significant difficulties with educational performance associated with cognitive difficulties, have reading and math skills below the 6th percentile, and have impaired adaptive behavior; these are students who have an IQ lower than 70; students with moderate cognitive impairment typically have an IQ lower than 50

- Be short and precise
- Allow wait time for processing of request

- Repeat often
- Questions should require short answers
- Read assignments to student or have audio available

Students with Emotional Impairments:

Emotional Impairment (EI): students who have significant difficulties with one or more of the following: interpersonal relationships, inappropriate behaviors under normal circumstances, depression and/or fears associated with personal or school problems

- Be consistent
- Allow student to vent emotions without arguing with them
- Acknowledge student's feelings, especially when setting limits
- Calmly state consequences of actions
- If you state a consequence you must be able to follow through
- State a desired behavior as a command, not a question ("You need to sit down please." not "Will you please sit down?")

Students with ADD and ADHD:

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD): students who have trouble staying focused and staying on task

- Provide manipulatives
- Allow student to trace maps and diagrams
- Give instructions before passing out materials
- Keep work periods short
- Reduce long periods of sitting
- Use proximity
- Keep the student away from trash cans, bulletin boards and bookshelves
- Let the student make instructional materials
- Use role-play
- Have students construct things
- Cut worksheets into smaller segments
- Use active learning
- Have student write answers with his or her finger during oral work

Students with Physical Impairments:

Physical Impairment (PI): means severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a student's educational performance

- provide appropriate working space
- may require assistive technology

- extended time for transition

Students with Other Health Impairments:

Otherwise Health Impaired (OHI): often students with medical conditions or ADD or ADHD

- very student specific
- could include breaks
- could include time to take care of medical needs

Students with Specific Learning Disabilities:

Specific Learning Disability (SLD): significant difficulties in one or more of the following areas: Basic Reading*Reading Fluency*Reading Comprehension*Math Calculation*Math Reasoning*Written Expression*Listening Comprehension*Oral Expression

- break learning into small steps
- supply regular, quality feedback
- use diagrams, graphics and pictures
- provide ample independent, well-designed intensive practice
- model instructional practices
- provide prompts

Continuum of Special Education Services

Below is the continuum that is offered to students who have a disability. It is designed to go from least restrictive environment to the most restrictive environment. Placement along the continuum is determined through an IEP team decision based on the student's individual needs. Paraprofessional support may be provided based on an IEP team decision.



Accommodations and Modifications

Accommodations and modifications are types of adaptations that are made to the environment, curriculum, instruction, or assessment practices in order for students with disabilities to be successful learners and to actively participate with other students in the general education classroom and in school-wide activities.

Accommodations

- change how a student accesses information and demonstrates learning
- do not substantially change the instructional level, content, or performance criteria
- provide the student with equal access to learning and an equal opportunity to show what he or she knows and can do
- accommodate for all students when needed
- accommodate for students with an IEP identified as working toward a diploma (as specified in IEP)

Modifications

- change what a student is expected to learn
- provide the student with opportunities to participate meaningfully and productively along with other students in classroom and school learning experiences
- modify for students with an IEP identified as working toward a certificate of completion (as specified in IEP)
- never modify for a student that is working toward a diploma, as modifications restrict the student's access to the general curriculum that is required for completion

Additional information about accommodations and modifications can be found on the Huron Intermediate School District website at www.huronisd.org under Special Education → Supplementary Aids → Accommodations and Modifications.

Classroom Orientation

This section is to be completed by the classroom teacher.

Who will be responsible for:	classroom teacher	para	specialist	shared	Notes:
Accommodating or modifying instructional activities					
Organizing instructional materials					
Teaching study skills and learning strategies					
Completing daily communication logs between school and home					
Taking care of daily routines <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Attendance● Lunch routines● Recess● Entrance and exit procedures● Transitions within the school					
Handling disruptions <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Student behavior issues● Visitors at the door● Phone calls					
Preparing instructional materials <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Copies● Bulletin boards● Manipulatives					
Sharing annual school calendar and schedule changes.					

Collaborative Reflection and Solutions Worksheet

Date _____

Things that are going well:

Issue/Concern:	Possible Solutions: (Brainstorming)	Action Plan:		
		What? (Specific action to resolve the issue/concern)	Who?	By When?

Notes