Berrien Regional Education Service Agency

Procedural Guidelines for Determining the Need, Supervision, and Fading of Student Aides

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APPENDICES

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES
FOR DETERMINING NEED, TRAINING, SUPERVISION,
And FADING of Student Aides

Intent

The goal for all students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is to develop and maintain independence in the curricular and extracurricular activities in the least restrictive school setting. (20 U.S.C. § 1400(C) (1); 34 CFR. §300.1. For all students, additional paraprofessional support may only be included in the IEP within the context of this goal. Thus, when a Student Aide is assigned to assist the student in fulfilling an IEP goal or other goals (e.g. behavioral, self-help, academic, communication, etc.) the annual IEP goal(s) for which the Student Aide will provide support should reflect as much independence as is appropriate for the student; and short-term objectives or benchmarks should be written to reflect increased independence, as appropriate for the student, until the annual goal is reached. Some areas, such as health/personal care needs may not be appropriate for goals. These supports should be noted on the "Supplemental Aids/Services Need List" page of the IEP.

Law

State and federal special education laws require that all students with disabilities, *to the maximum extent appropriate*, be educated with their general education peers, and participate in nonacademic and extracurricular activities. Removal from the general education environment may only occur if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in the general class with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. In making program and placement decisions, the IEP team must consider a continuum of program options, and select the option that is the least restrictive environment (LRE), in which the goals and objectives of the student can be met. If supports, services or modifications are needed in order for the child to benefit from his/her educational program, including supports for the teacher, these must be provided.

> [The IDEA's] LRE is intended to ensure that a child with a disability is served in a setting where the child can be educated successfully. Even though *IDEA does not mandate [general] class placement for every student with a disability,* IDEA presumes that the first placement option considered. . is the school the child would attend if not disabled . . .Thus, before a [student with a disability] can be placed outside of the [general] classroom setting *must be considered.* (Federal Register, March 12, 1999 [Vol. 634, No. 48] p.12471).

The consideration of supports and services must be made for each of the placements along the continuum. "Consider" does not mean that an IEP team must actually try the student in all placements along the continuum. It does mean, however, that the IEP team must use its best judgment, based upon knowledge of the student, to select the appropriate learning environment for the student.

Use of Student Aide

The use of a Student Aide is only one support or service that may permit a student to achieve satisfactory progress and participate in a less restrictive environment. Unless this additional assistance is assigned with the goal of fostering independence, such a support can actually

restrict the student's access to the general curriculum, social opportunities and other benefits of being assigned to a general education classroom. An IEPT may include additional Student Aide support only within the context of IEP goal(s) and objectives(s) that are written to reflect attaining as much independence in the performance of the of the goal(s) and objective(s) as is appropriate for the student. The IEP must also include a schedule for evaluating the student's performance on meeting the goal(s) and objective(s) and for withdrawing or fading the support, as appropriate.

In every case, critical steps to take before assigning a Student Aide are to carefully define the student's needs and then review all existing staff, programs and resources at the school site. This must include a review of general, as well as special education, resources, and should consider such alternatives as peer support for the student, the use of existing paraprofessionals at the school site, and mentoring and other collaborative models for teacher support. A decision to assign a Student Aide may **never** be made outside of the IEP process. In all instances, the final decision **must** involve the appropriate program administration. A training plan for the teacher and Student Aide, and a plan for withdrawing the support, shall be developed.

Determination of Need

It is important that the team consider each type of assistance listed below in order to determine if the student needs assistance from a student aide with a particular activity and to estimate the amount of time that will be needed.

1. Heath/Personal Care
   a. Self-help and bathroom needs: If a student needs assistance with toileting or other self-help skills, the team should note the times and duration for this activity. This should only be for brief periods during the day.
   b. Assistance during snack or lunch: If the student requires assistance with feeding, note the type of assistance needed and note the times and duration required. Encourage reliance on peer helpers (with supervision) or other natural supports as much as possible for getting out food, opening containers, etc.
   c. Specialized Care: If the student requires specialized care the team should note the times, duration, and details of care.
   d. Assistance with medical needs: Some students need additional assistance for medical reasons. If so, the team should consider the doctor's orders and the time of day and duration. Some medically-related supports might be necessary only for brief periods per day/week. (i.e. catheterization, suctioning, tube feeding)

2. Behavior
   a. Due to behavior challenges, some students may need intensive support from an aide in order to assist classroom staff in implementing a Positive Behavior Support Plan.
   b. An aide may be needed for a brief period to collect data while regular classroom staff is implementing a Positive Behavior Support Plan.

3. Instruction
   a. Curriculum adaptations: Adaptations of the curriculum (highlighting, copying, enlarging, adding icons, cutting and pasting, etc.) should be done under the direction of the teacher. Most students will require no more than 1-11/2 hours daily for curriculum adaptations.

b. Instructional support: Sometimes classroom staff need assistance in supporting a student in staying on-task or providing follow-up instruction. This should be faded as soon as schedules and/or behavior support are put into place. At times in may be possible for one aide to provide instructional supports to multiple students with one classroom.

4. Inclusion
   a. Recess or other activities: Assistance may be necessary if there are safety concerns with the student. If may also be needed when staff is attempting to facilitate social interactions with peers. Care should be taken that the development of natural peer supports and/or use of existing resources are the goals of the extra assistant, otherwise the adult may become the student's sole companion.
   b. Assistance with transition: If a student has difficulty transitioning from classroom to classroom, classroom to playground, playground to classroom, or between activities, extra support may be needed. When needed, the team should indicate type(s) of transition(s) as well as time of day and duration.
   c. Assistance with classroom centers or other activities: If there is a particular activity or time of day which is difficult for the student, extra help may be needed. When needed, the team should specify activity, time of day and duration.

Support to Teacher

The majority of special education students do not require "extra" Student Aide support. When the IEP team determines that a Student Aide is needed to assist a student for special circumstances, the Student Aide is assigned to the teacher, not to the student. The primary role of the Student Aide is to support the staff working with a special education student.

Oral directions in a typical classroom are often given quickly and may need to be repeated or rephrased for the student. It is important for the Student Aide to allow the teacher to give the initial instructions to the student and wait for the student to respond independently (or with help from a peer). If the student does not respond, the Student Aide may need to check for understanding, and if necessary, repeat, rephrase or clarify the directions. The Student Aide should step in to assist only when needed. The Student Aide may pre-teach or re-teach concepts as needed, and as directed by the teacher.

A student's over-reliance upon a specific staff member will not give the student the opportunity to learn to respond to other staff. It is important for the Student Aide to assist other students as well as the identified student. This reduces the pressure on the identified student and has a greater positive impact on the whole class. When the Student Aide works directly with the student, the goal is to assist the student and then fade back, rather than "hover" over the student (Ingham ISD, Oct. 2013).

Student Aides must never be provided on a one-to-one basis without first considering less intrusive alternatives that do not compromise the student's safety or ability to fully participate, and without a written plan to ensure that the student is permitted to do as much for himself/herself as is possible. In addition, it should <u>never</u> be assumed that these students will need such supports permanently, without medical evidence to the

contrary; and the goal should always be to foster as much independence as is possible and appropriate for the student.

Inappropriate Use of Student Aide Support

1. Student groupings: If the grouping in a classroom is such that the teacher cannot meet the needs of the students without additional support, the grouping may be inappropriate and the classroom composition may need to be reconsidered. However, the first step should always be to consider existing school staff and resources that might be put together in a collaborative way to assist the teacher; e.g., review of existing paraprofessional/Student Aide's schedules in the school, peer support from general education, etc.

2. Disability/Placement stereotyping: Every student's needs must be addressed individually, and determinations must be based upon the student's needs, not labels or programs. A student with a cognitive impairment or a student included with his/her nondisabled peers does not compel the conclusion in every case that he/she requires additional assistance or any given program that is based upon such a model.

3. Class or program change: The need for the assistance of a Student Aide must first be carefully defined and all alternatives to meet the need considered before determining that this is the only answer. It should not be assumed that a student moving from one program option to another (e.g. preschool to kindergarten or one grade level to another) will continue to require the assistance of a Student Aide.

4. Supplemental instructional time/tutoring: Direct instruction is the responsibility of the classroom teacher. Student Aide support is provided to assist a student with accessing the teacher's direct instruction, but does not supplant that instruction. Further, Student Aide support is provided under the supervision and direction of the classroom teacher and the IEP case manager.

Procedures for Determining Student Aide Support

Step 1 - *Process initiated*
- Request for Student Aide (for initials only, otherwise continue to Step 2)

Step 2 – *IEP Case manager coordinates completion of Forms A & B:*
- Form A (Rubric to Determine Need)
- Form B (School Day Analysis)

Step 3 – *Case manager schedules team meeting:*
- Analysis of data collected from team (Forms A & B)
- Develop Student Aide – Plan for Assistance (Form C) if team suspects a need for Student Aide based on the data analysis

Step 4 – *Schedule follow-up meeting to:*
- Review Student Aide – Plan for Assistance (Form C)
- Determination of next step(s)
    - Revision of Plan for Assistance, if needed—OR—
    - Schedule IEP
        - Bring DRAFT copy of Form C to IEP meeting.

Step 5 – *Develop & Monitor Training & Fading of Student Aide*

Tips for Fading Student Aide support – learning for independence.
"Fading" refers to the progressive change from more intrusive prompts and supports to less intrusive and more natural prompts and supports, while maintaining and developing student performance and behavior. During the acquisition of new skills and behavior, not all learning curves are smooth or straight-line, but overall progress is expected. The task for instructional staff is to find a balance between attainable steps in learning, and what individualized staff support is needed to productively "get through the day." In this context, practical instructional suggestions for fading are (and not limited to):
- Modeling, peer support
- Development of student response to prompting from already existing and routine sources, possibly with some change in normal building practices
- Backward-forward chain learning through a task-analyzed series of steps to achieve goals
- Developing student self-awareness, e.g., through daily charting marked by the student
- Provision of student choice of preferred activities for appropriate behavior
- Generalizing new learning to occur with support from different staff, in different locations and with different activities
- As learning occurs, fade physical proximity of extra staff

- Planning absence/redeployment of extra staff during specific activities, parts of the day, entire days
- Watch before assisting. Can the student ask for help from teacher or peer?
- Can the student problem solve on his/her own?
- Have high expectations for what the student understands or can do independently.
- Provide consistent classroom schedule (posted, visual, at desk if needed, reinforcement periods included. Teach student how to use it
- Start with the least intrusive prompts to get student to respond.
- Prompt, then back away to allow independent time
- Use strengths and weaknesses, like and dislike
- Model: guide (watch and assist); check (leave and check back)
- Teach independence skills (raising hand, asking for help, modeling other students)
- Encourage age appropriate work habits. See what other students are doing
- Be aware of proximity. Sit with the student only when necessary
- Encourage peer assistance and partnering. Teach peers how to help, but not enable
- Utilize self-monitoring checklists for students
- Color code materials to assist with organization
- Use transition objects to help student anticipate/complete transition (i.e., head phones for listening center)
- Break big tasks into steps
- Use backward chaining (i.e., leave the last portion of a cutting task for the student, then gradually lengthen the task)
- Assist in encouraging a means for independent communication (i.e., PECS)
- Provide positive feedback (be specific to the situation)
- Ask facilitative questions ("What comes next?" "What are other students doing?" "What does the schedule say?" "What did the teacher say?")

Berrien RESA (Appendix A)
Rubric to Determine Need for Student Aide Support

Student:_____ DOB:_____ Eligibility:_____ Date:_____

Teacher:_____ Program/School:_____

Completed by:_____ Title:_____

	Check the box that includes factors that best describes the student in each rubric category that is appropriate. Determinations based on multiple observations.			
	Health/Personal Care	**Behavior**	**Instruction**	**Inclusion**
0	General good health. No specialized health care, or procedure, or medications taken. Independently maintains all "age appropriate" personal care.	Follows adult directions without frequent prompts or class supervision. Handles change and redirection. Usually gets along with peers and adults. Seeks out friends.	Participates fully in whole class instruction. Stays on task during typical instruction daily. Follows directions with few to no additional prompts.	Participates in some core curriculum within general education class and requires few modifications. Can find classroom. Usually socializes well with peers.
1	Mild or occasional health concerns. Allergies or other chronic health conditions. No specialized health care procedures. Medication administration takes less than 10 minutes time. Needs reminders to complete "age appropriate" personal care activities.	Follows adult direction but occasionally requires additional encouragement and prompts. Occasional difficulty with peers or adults. Does not always seek out friends but plays if invited.	Participates in groups at instructional level but may require additional prompts, cues or reinforcement. Requires reminders to stay on task, follow directions, and to remain engaged.	Participates with modification and accommodation. Needs occasional reminders of room and schedule. Requires some additional support to finish work and be responsible. Needs some social cueing to interact with peers appropriately.
2	Chronic health issues, generic health care procedure. Takes medication. Health care intervention for 10-15 minutes daily.	Has problems following directions and behaving appropriately. Can be managed adequately with a classroom behavior support plan, but unable to experience much success without behavior support plan implementation.	Cannot always participate in whole class instruction. Requires smaller groups and frequent verbal prompts, cues or reinforcement. On task about 50% of the time with support. Requires more verbal prompts to follow directions.	Participates with visual supervision and occasional verbal prompts. Requires visual shadowing to get to class. Needs modifications and accommodations to benefit from class activities. Regular socialization may require adult facilitation.
3	Specialized health care procedure and medication. Limited mobility. Physical limitations requiring assistance (stander, walker, gait trainer or wheel chair). Special food prep or feeding. Health or sensory interventions 15-45 min. daily. Frequent physical prompts and direction assistance for personal care. Requires toilet schedule, training, direct help, diapering.	Serious behavior problems almost daily. Defiant and/or prone to physical aggression which may be harmful to self or others. Requires a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) and behavior goals and objectives on the IEP. Requires close visual supervision to implement BIP.	Difficulty participating in a large group. Requires low student staff/ratio, close adult proximity, and prompts with physical assist to stay on task. Primarily complies only with 1:1 directions and monitoring. Requires strategies/adaptations not typical for class as a whole (Discrete Trial, Structure teaching, PECS, Assistive Technology).	Does not participate without staff in close proximity for direct instruction, safety, mobility, or behavior monitoring. Requires adult to facilitate social interaction with peers and remain in close proximity at all times. Difficulty following school routines & schedules. Needs direct support to get to and from class.
4	Very specialized health care procedure requiring care by specially trained employee (G-tube, tracheotomy, catheterization). Takes medication, requires positioning or bracing multiple times daily. Health or sensory related interventions 4-5 min. or more daily. Direct assistance with most personal care. Requires two-person lift. Direct 1:1 assistance 4-5 or more minutes daily.	Serious behavior problems with potential for injury to self and others, runs away or aggressive on a daily basis. FBA has been completed and the student has a well-developed BIP that must be implemented to allow the student to safely attend school. Staff has been trained in the management of assaultive behaviors.	Does not participate in a group without constant 1:1 support. Requires constant verbal and physical prompting to stay on task and follow directions. Regularly requires 1:1 instructional strategies to benefit from IEP. Requires significant accommodation and modification not typical for the class group.	Participation may require additional staff for direct instructional and behavioral support. Requires direct supervision going to and from class. Always requires modification and accommodations for class work. Rarely interacts with or is interested in peers.

Berrien RESA (Appendix B)
School Day Analysis

Student:_____ DOB:_____ Eligibility:_____ Date:_____

Teacher:_____ Program/School:_____

Completed by:_____ Title:_____

Time	Activity	What student can do without assistance?	What student needs accommodation/assistance to complete?	What adult support is currently available? (Specify & include ratio)	Can peer support be provided? (Specify)	Is there or can there be, an IEP goal for independence? (Specify)

Use as many copies of this page as necessary to describe all areas of concern throughout the student's typical school day.

Berrien RESA (Appendix C)
Student Aide – Plan for Assistance

Student: _____ Disability: _____

Teacher: _____ Program/School: _____

Completed by: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____

Check the areas of intensive need that might require additional paraprofessional support:

Health/Personal Care	Behavior	Instruction	Inclusion
□ G-Tube feeding* □ Medication* □ Suctioning* □ Food preparation □ Diaper Changing □ Feeding full-support □ Seizures* □ Lifting/Transfers □ Other: *Specialized physical health care plan or emergency plan developed	□ Behavior plan with documentation □ Physically aggressive □ Non-compliant □ Runs away □ Self-injurious □ Other:	□ Unique strategies □ Visual communication □ Structure teaching □ High level physical prompts □ High level verbal prompts □ Assistive technology □ Sign Language □ Other:	□ Instructional support □ Physical support □ Physical positioning □ Safety supervision □ Social Support □ Transitions □ Recess/Lunch □ Other:

Area of Need	Time/Days
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	

For each area of need in which further independence is possible, develop an IEP goal, a plan for frequent monitoring, and a plan for fading the use of paraprofessional support.