

Special Circumstances Paraprofessionals

**Guidelines for determining need, training,
supervision and fading.**

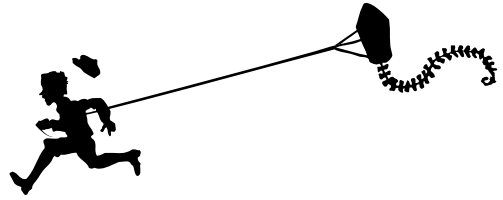
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Table of Contents

I.	Introduction	page 1
II.	Determination of Need	page 3
III.	Documentation	page 17
IV.	Training	page 21
V.	Roles and Responsibilities of the Special Circumstances Paraprofessional	page 25
VI.	Fading.....	page 28
VII.	Fiscal Issues	page 31
VIII.	Appendices.....	page 33
	Appendix A - Definitions.....	page 34
	Appendix B - Resources	page 36
IX.	Contributing Editors.....	page 38





Introduction



Every school district within the Ventura County SELPA is required to provide a full continuum of placement options for students with identified disabilities who are receiving special education services. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and California laws and regulations describe a continuum of placements such as instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions (CFR 300.551 (b) (1)).

The IDEA also defines related services as the utilization of aids, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes or other education-related settings to enable children with disabilities to be educated with non-disabled children to the maximum extent appropriate. This applies to any general education program or special education program in which the student may participate (34 CFR Part 300.550-300.556). There may be special circumstances when a student may need additional support in order to be successful in his/her educational placement.

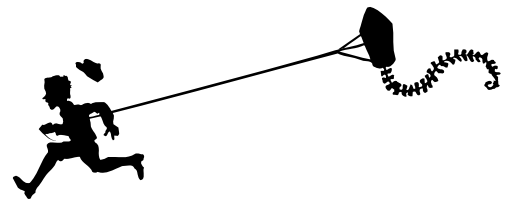
A goal for any student with special needs is to encourage, promote, and maximize independence. The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team is responsible for developing and implementing a program that promotes that independence. Natural supports and existing staff supports should be used whenever possible.

If the IEP team is considering a Special Circumstances Paraprofessional (SCP) as a support for the classroom staff, the team must determine:

- a. Natural supports and/or existing staff supports are not adequate for the student to participate and progress in the general education program;
- b. Additional support is necessary to assist classroom staff in facilitating the student in:
 - Advancing appropriately toward the annual goals and/or;
 - Involvement in and progress in the general curriculum and/or;
 - Participation in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities and/or;
 - Participation with other disabled and non-disabled students.
- c. How quickly it anticipates the support can be faded and develop a method for systematic evaluation toward independence and more natural supports.

If the IEP Team recommends a SCP, the team is also responsible for monitoring so that additional supports may be faded as soon as possible. If not carefully monitored and evaluated on a regular basis, additional paraprofessional support can unintentionally foster dependence.





Determination of Need



Initial

When the members of the IEP team are considering the need for a SCP, there are a variety of tools which can be used. (See pages 10-16) Using these tools, the team should be able to identify the specific activities and times for which additional assistance or supervision is required. (See flowchart page 7)

There are some instances in which the need for SCP support can be determined using existing data in the context of an IEP meeting. Most often, it is anticipated that an Assessment Plan will need to be developed in order to collect necessary data to bring to the IEP team. (See samples pages 8-9)

Review of need

At regular intervals, designated members of the IEP team should use the tools to collect data about whether the level of assistance continues to be needed. As the student's level of independence or ability to use natural supports increases, behavior improves or the make-up of the class changes, the assistance should be faded.

Areas 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 SCP with a particular activity and to estimate the amount of time that will be needed.

1. Health/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, etc., 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 Physical Health Care- Some intensive health supports may necessitate a SCP for an indefinite length of time.
- 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.

2. Behavior-

- a. Due to behavior challenges, some students may need intensive support from a SCP in order to assist classroom staff in implementing a Positive Behavior Support Plan.
- b. A SCP may be needed for a brief period to collect data while regular classroom staff are 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 1-1½ hours daily for curriculum adaptation. Curriculum adaptations do not need to be done in the classroom or in the physical presence of the teacher. Adult volunteers and parents may perform some of these activities.
- 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 supports are put into place.

4. Inclusion-

- a. Recess or other activities- Assistance may be necessary if there are safety concerns with the student. It 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 recess companion.



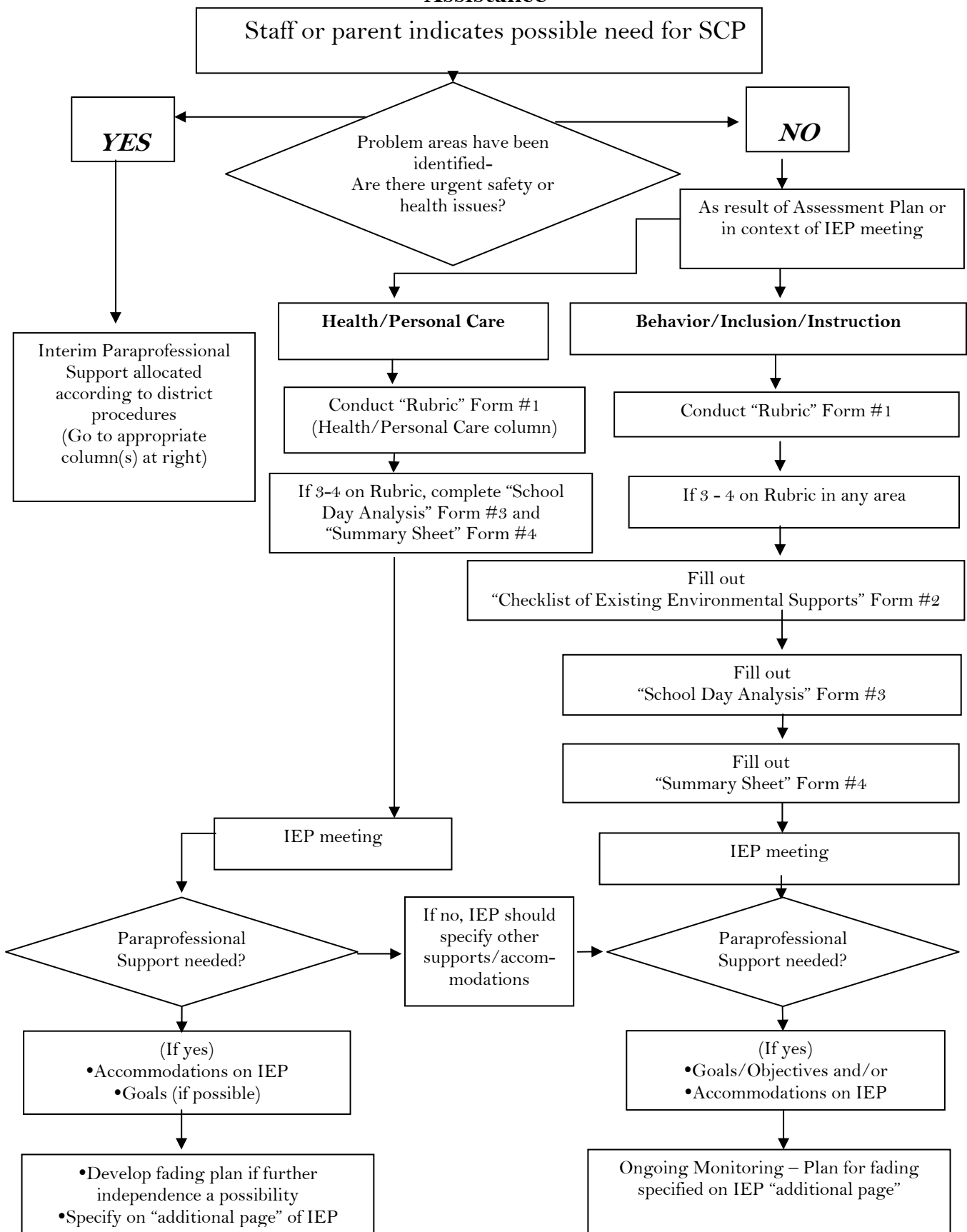
- b. Assistance with transitions- If a student has difficulty transitioning from classroom to playground, playground to classroom, or between activities, extra support may need to be available to help. When needed, the team should indicate type(s) of transition(s) as well as time of day and duration.

- 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.



Ventura County SELPA

Flowchart for Determining Need for Special Circumstances Paraprofessional Assistance



SAMPLE

**Ventura County SELPA
ASSESSMENT PLAN**

- Initial Referral
- Triennial
- _____

Student's Name: _____ Birthdate: _____ C.A. ____ Grade: ____ School: _____ Track:____ Date:_____

Address: _____ Phone: _____ Student's Primary Language: _____ EL FEP

This individual assessment plan is proposed to assist in determining your child's specific educational needs. All assessments will be given by appropriately qualified personnel. The assessment will be in the areas checked below and may include pupil observation in a group setting, classroom work samples, district or statewide group assessments, individualized testing, teacher interview(s) and an interview with you. It also may include a review of reports you have authorized us to request or that already exist in current records. Assessments will be non-discriminatory, and alternative means of assessment may be used in situations when standardized assessments are inappropriate. Within 50 days of receipt of this signed assessment plan, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting will be held. You will be invited to attend and review assessment results and participate in determining your child's educational needs and eligibility for special education services.

REASON FOR ASSESSMENT/AREAS OF CONCERN: Need for extra adult support- behavior and inclusion

PRE-ACADEMIC/ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT: Special Education Teacher Psychologist Other:_____
Purpose: To determine current reading, writing, and math skills or preacademic skills such as matching or sorting.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL BEHAVIOR: Psychologist Infant/Preschool Specialist Other:_____
Purpose: To evaluate how the student handles feelings and emotions and how he/she gets along with other people.

SELF HELP/ADAPTIVE SKILLS: Psychologist Other: Special education teacher _____
Purpose: To evaluate how the student functions in daily life activities.

PSYCHO-MOTOR DEVELOPMENT: Psychologist Infant/Preschool Specialist Other:_____
Purpose: To determine how well an individual coordinates body movements in both small and large muscle activities or to evaluate visual perceptual skills.

LANGUAGE/SPEECH/COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT: Speech & Language Specialist Infant/Preschool Specialist Other:_____
Purpose: To determine an individual's ability to understand, relate to, and use language and speech clearly and appropriately.

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT: Psychologist Infant/Preschool Specialist Other:_____
Purpose: To determine how well individuals remember what they have seen and heard, how well they can use that information to solve problems, and to assist in predicting the student's learning rate. Verbal and performance instruments may be used as appropriate.

HEALTH ASSESSMENT: School Nurse Infant/Preschool Specialist Other:_____
Purpose: To evaluate developmental patterns and current health status as they relate to school functioning.

VOCATIONAL/PREVOCAIONAL: Special Education Teacher Psychologist Other:_____
Purpose: To determine the individual's interest and or aptitude as it relates to future job and life skill areas.

OTHER/ALTERNATIVE: _____
Responsible Personnel: _____

RECENT ASSESSMENTS (Including independent assessments): _____

PARENTAL CONSENT FOR PUPIL ASSESSMENT

I understand the purpose of the proposed Assessment Plan and have received a copy of my Parent Rights. I authorize the use of a suitable interpreter or prerecorded tests in the child's primary language as appropriate. I further understand that no individualized education program will result from this assessment without my consent. The box checked below indicates my decision.

Yes, I give my permission to conduct the assessment as described above and will make my child available for the assessment. I understand that assessment cannot begin until a copy of this form has been signed and returned.

No, permission is denied.

My signature below indicates approval for release of the independent assessment report.

Please sign and return, keeping the pink copy for your records.

Parent/Legal Guardian/Adult Pupil/Person Acting as Parent (Specify) _____ Date _____

If you have any questions contact: _____
Authorized Personnel Title Date

Phone: (_____) _____

SAMPLE

**Ventura County SELPA
ASSESSMENT PLAN**

- Initial Referral
- Triennial
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REASON FOR ASSESSMENT/AREAS OF CONCERN: Need for extra adult support- health (feeding and toileting)

PRE-ACADEMIC/ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT: Special Education Teacher Psychologist Other: _____
Purpose: To determine current reading, writing, and math skills or preacademic skills such as matching or sorting.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL BEHAVIOR: Psychologist Infant/Preschool Specialist Other: _____
Purpose: To evaluate how the student handles feelings and emotions and how he/she gets along with other people.

SELF HELP/ADAPTIVE SKILLS: Psychologist Other: Special education teacher
Purpose: To evaluate how the student functions in daily life activities.

PSYCHO-MOTOR DEVELOPMENT: Psychologist Infant/Preschool Specialist Other: _____
Purpose: To determine how well an individual coordinates body movements in both small and large muscle activities or to evaluate visual perceptual skills.

LANGUAGE/SPEECH/COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT: Speech & Language Specialist Infant/Preschool Specialist
 Other: _____
Purpose: To determine an individual's ability to understand, relate to, and use language and speech clearly and appropriately.

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT: Psychologist Infant/Preschool Specialist Other: _____
Purpose: To determine how well individuals remember what they have seen and heard, how well they can use that information to solve problems, and to assist in predicting the student's learning rate. Verbal and performance instruments may be used as appropriate.

HEALTH ASSESSMENT: School Nurse Infant/Preschool Specialist Other: _____
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VOCATIONAL/PREVOCATIONAL: Special Education Teacher Psychologist Other: _____
Purpose: To determine the individual's interest and or aptitude as it relates to future job and life skill areas.

OTHER/ALTERNATIVE: _____
 Responsible Personnel: _____

RECENT ASSESSMENTS (Including independent assessments): _____

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Please sign and return, keeping the pink copy for your records.

 Parent/Legal Guardian/Adult Pupil/Person Acting as Parent (Specify) Date

If you have any questions contact: _____
Authorized Personnel Title Date

Phone: (_____) _____

Ventura County SELPA

Rubric to Determine Need for Special Circumstances Paraprofessional Support

SCPS Form One

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

Teacher: _____ Program/School: _____

Completed by: _____ Title: _____

Mark the box that includes factors that best describes the student in each rubric category that is appropriate.

	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. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>	Follows adult directions without frequent prompts or class supervision. Handles change and redirection. Usually gets along with peers and adults. Seeks out friends. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>	Participates fully in whole class instruction. Stays on task during typical instruction activity. Follows directions with few to no additional prompts. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>	Participates in some core curriculum within general education class and requires few modifications. Can find classroom. Usually socializes well with peers. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>
1	Mild or occasional health concerns. Allergies or other chronic health conditions. No specialized health care procedure. Medication administration takes less than 10 minutes time. Needs reminders to complete "age appropriate" personal care activities. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>	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. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>	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 in learning. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>	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. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>
2	Chronic health issues, generic health care procedure. Takes medication. Health care intervention for 10-15 minutes daily (diet, blood sugar, medication). Requires reminders and additional prompts or limited hands on assistance for washing hands, using bathroom, wiping mouth, shoes, buttons, zippers, etc. Occasional toileting accidents. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>	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. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>	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. Requires signing 50-79% of the time. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>	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. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>
3	Specialized health care procedure and medication. Limited mobility. Physical limitations requiring assistance (stander, walker, gait trainer or wheelchair). 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. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>	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. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty participating in a large group. Requires low student staff/ratio, close adult proximity, and prompts including physical assistance to stay on task. Primarily complies only with 1:1 directions and monitoring. Abilities and skills require strategies/adaptations not typical for class as a whole, such as: Discrete Trial, ABA, Structured Teaching, PECS or Assistive Technology. Requires signing over 80% of time. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>	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 & from class. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>
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 45 min. or more daily. Direct assistance with most personal care. Requires two-person lift. Direct 1:1 assistance 45 or more minutes daily. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>	Serious behavior problems with potential for injury to self and others, runs away or aggressive on a daily basis. FAA or 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. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>	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 specific 1:1 instructional strategies to benefit from the IEP. Cognitive abilities and skills require significant accommodation and modification not typical for the class group. Requires signing 100% of time. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>	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. <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/>

C. Curriculum and instruction:

1. Are materials and activities differentiated for student's:

- Chronological age? (*describe*)-

- Ability level? (*describe*)-

- Interest level? (*describe*)-

2. Check the curricular domains included in the student's program:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> communication | <input type="checkbox"/> pre-vocational/vocational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> domestic skills | <input type="checkbox"/> recreation/leisure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> self-care | <input type="checkbox"/> motor skills/mobility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> academics | <input type="checkbox"/> other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> social skills | |

3. List equipment or devices used/available that may relate to the need for assistance (*may be low incidence equipment or assistive technology device*).

4. Describe an activity which is challenging for the student.
If appropriate, attach a sample task analysis form used for a challenging activity with the student (*see page 20 for sample form*).

Suggestions/
Next Steps

D. Behavior Support:

Are there problem behavior(s) interfering with learning of self or others?

Yes (*answer questions below*) **No**

- Brief description of problem behavior(s)-

- Where behavior(s) typically occur-

- When behavior(s) typically occur-

F. Planning team meetings:

Are team meetings held? (*formal or informal meetings to problem solve.*)

Yes (*answer questions below*)

No

1. Meetings are held:

daily

weekly

monthly

bi-weekly

not applicable

needed

2. Meetings include:

parent(s)

general education teacher

specialists

special education teacher

yard duty

others _____

Suggestions/
Next Steps

★Attach team meeting format.

G. Layout of setting where supports may be needed:

Diagram or describe the arrangement of furniture, small group instruction areas, and/or equipment of the classroom or other setting:

H. Check and describe other supports currently provided:

training for instructional staff _____

consultation for the classroom staff _____

in-classroom coaching _____

other _____

Please summarize from this form components that need to be developed/implemented and/or where further training/consultation/coaching may be needed before considering need for additional adult support (*see notes in "suggestions/next steps" column.*)

Ventura County SELPA
School Day Analysis

SCPS Form Three

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Disability: _____

Teacher: _____ Program/School: _____

Completed by: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____

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.

Special Circumstances Paraprofessional Support - Summary Sheet -

SCPS Form Four

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Disability: _____

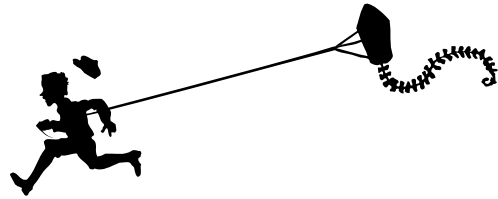
Teacher: _____ Program/School: _____

Completed by: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____

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

Health/Personal Care	Behavior	Instruction	Inclusion
<input type="checkbox"/> G-tube feeding* <input type="checkbox"/> Medication * <input type="checkbox"/> Suctioning * <input type="checkbox"/> Food preparation <input type="checkbox"/> Diaper changing <input type="checkbox"/> Feeding-full support <input type="checkbox"/> Seizures * <input type="checkbox"/> Lifting/Transfers <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ * Specialized physical health care plan or emergency plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Behavior plan implementation or documentation <input type="checkbox"/> Physically aggressive <input type="checkbox"/> Non-compliant in class <input type="checkbox"/> Non-compliant on campus <input type="checkbox"/> Runs away <input type="checkbox"/> Self-injurious <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Unique strategies not typical for class <input type="checkbox"/> Visual communication system <input type="checkbox"/> Structured teaching <input type="checkbox"/> High level of physical prompts <input type="checkbox"/> High level of verbal prompts <input type="checkbox"/> Assistive technology support <input type="checkbox"/> Sign language <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructional support <input type="checkbox"/> Physical support/positioning <input type="checkbox"/> Safety supervision <input type="checkbox"/> Social support <input type="checkbox"/> Transitions <input type="checkbox"/> Recess/lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<i>Areas of Need</i>			<i>Time/Days</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			

For each area of need in which further independence is possible, develop an IEP goal & a plan for frequent monitoring for the purpose of fading the paraprofessional support. Other ongoing supports should be noted on the Accommodations Page of the IEP.



Documentation



IEP

1. If the IEP team agrees that SCP support is needed for a particular student, it will be noted on the IEP on the “Least Restrictive Environment” page as “additional supports for **student**.” Specify areas of need. If more detail is needed, describe on the “Additional page.”

Extra paraprofessional support provided to a teacher to assist in managing a whole class not specific to any one child’s needs may be also noted on the “Least Restrictive Environment” page as “additional supports for the **teacher**.”

2. For each area in which SCP support is being provided due to lack of skill or independence, the IEP team should write a goal. Some areas, such as health/personal care needs may not be appropriate for goals. These supports should be noted on the “Accommodations page.”
3. If additional SCP support is required as a result of a child’s behavioral difficulties, the child’s IEP should include a Positive Behavioral Support Plan or Behavior Intervention Plan.
4. For areas in which increased independence is possible, note the means for evaluating whether the SCP support continues to be needed on the “Additional page.” In these cases, write a systematic plan to address how the support will be monitored and faded as independence increases.
5. When a SCP is provided to assist a child on a short-term basis (i.e., transition to a new program), the written plan should specify the level of independence to be achieved before the SCP is faded/removed, or a date when the SCP will be discontinued.

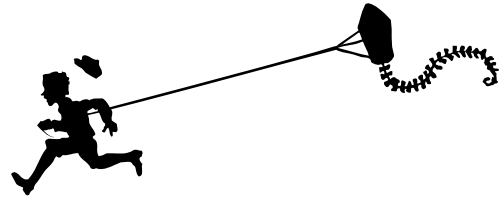
Evaluation

The student’s Case Manager is responsible for monitoring the written plan, supervising the SCP and developing a system for data collection. The Case Manager will review the data and advise the SCP with strategies for fading and promoting increased student independence and goal attainment. The Case Manager should meet at periods specified in the plan with selected members of the IEP team to review the data, make adjustments to the plan, if needed, and determine when criteria for fading have been met. Major changes to the plan would require an IEP Review or Addendum.

If there is a goal which reflects the area in which SCP support is being provided, then data collection on progress toward that goal will be sufficient.

(Attached are sample forms for monitoring increased student independence.)





Training



General Workshops for Special Circumstances Paraprofessionals:

The following workshops are designed for paraprofessionals. They are offered periodically throughout the year or as needed, by SELPA or district. Some may be available to districts upon request. Not all workshops are appropriate for all paraprofessional assignments.

New Special Education Instructional Aide Training – This workshop covers these elements:

- Special Education disabilities
- The IEP
- Learning styles
- The Paraprofessional’s role
- Supporting positive behavior

The Paraprofessional’s Role in Full Inclusion – Uses a video and workbook and covers these elements:

- “People first” language
- Collaboration
- Philosophy of inclusive education
- The role of the paraprofessional in supporting the student
- Facilitating academic and social growth
- Assisting the teacher and documenting progress

It also includes:

- Strategies for “fading” support
- Working as a part of a team
- Positive behavior support
- Adaptation of instructional material

This is a very thorough training when conducted in person during a 3-hour session showing the video and stopping to discuss and enter information into the workbook. It is much less effective if the video is shown straight through (takes about 30 minutes). The videotape and workbook may be checked out from the Ventura County SELPA Library.

Accommodations and Modifications for Special Education Students in the Mainstream – This workshop offers ideas and strategies for paraprofessionals for modifying curriculum and instruction to meet student’s needs.



Why Won't This Kid Behave? – A brief overview for paraprofessionals of the Positive Behavior Support Plan process and how to assist the teacher in implementing the plans.

The Paraprofessional's Role in Teaching Reading – Covers basic components of reading instruction and how to assist the teacher.

Children with Autism-Expectations for the Paraprofessional – Covers general characteristics and strategies for supporting children with autism.

TEACCH – The Paraprofessional's Role – A workshop on the Structured Teaching Approach, rationale and strategies.

Intensive Behavior Intervention – Covers four basic approaches for individual interventions with students with autism.

Specific training for various areas of intensive need:

Most are provided at the district level by a trained professional and are specific to a student's need.

General Health and Personal Care – Training to be provided by school nurse and/or other health care provider on district procedures and policies (i.e., Blood-borne pathogens, use of gloves, medications, diapering, etc.). It is recommended that SCPs have CPR and First Aid certificates.

Specialized Health Care Procedures – These are developed to cover procedures for a specific child such as skin care with diapering, lifting techniques, feeding, food preparation, changing positions, etc. Training will be provided by a school nurse or other health care professional. It may also be done by the parent in some cases. In most cases, the person who conducts the training would supervise the paraprofessional (except parents). The level and frequency of supervision will vary depending upon the needs of the student, but clearly articulated with the paraprofessional. The SCP should be trained regarding what concerns need to be reported and to whom.

Specialized Physical Health Care Services – These are written plans, included in the IEP for each procedure ordered by a doctor, and containing child-specific notes (e.g. gastrostomy-tube feeding [“g-tube”], catheterization, and suctioning). The SCP needs training to a level of competency to safely perform the procedure as determined by the nurse. The school nurse also will determine the level of supervision required, i.e. immediate, direct or indirect.

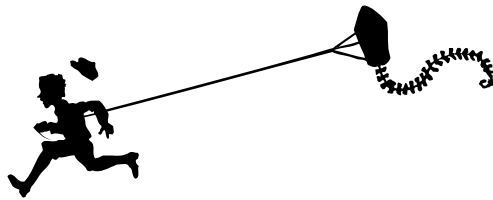


Emergency Plan – These plans are also included in the IEP and describe procedures to follow under certain specific conditions, i.e. seizures, asthma attack, anaphylactic shock and cardiac emergencies. Training for the paraprofessional would include specific steps to be followed in an emergency (e.g. signs and symptoms of an emergency, how to deal with the immediate problem, when to call 911, who to inform, etc.).

Behavior –The SCP needs to be very familiar with the student’s behavior plan and specific strategies to use with the student in various circumstances. Supervision of the SCP would normally be provided by the classroom teacher or other person who developed the plan. If there is a potential for physical contact to be necessary in order to insure safety, the SCP should be trained in Non-Violent Crisis Prevention (NCPI).

Specific Instructional Strategies - In general, training would be provided by a district staff person with expertise in the particular program or strategy to be used with the student, or the student’s Case Manager. For sign language, the individual should already be certified but might need training on the specific needs of the student.





**Roles and
Responsibilities
of the
Special Circumstances
Paraprofessional**



Support to Teacher

The majority of special education students do not require “extra” paraprofessional support. When the IEP team determines that a paraprofessional is needed to assist a student for special circumstances, the SCP is assigned to the teacher, not to the student. The primary role of the SCP 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 SCP 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 SCP may need to check for understanding, and if necessary, repeat, rephrase or clarify the directions. The SCP should step in to assist only when needed. The SCP may pre-teach or re-teach concepts as needed.

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 SCP 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 SCP works directly with the student, the goal is to assist the student and then fade back, rather than “hover” over the student.

Legal Issues and Confidentiality

A SCP must always be working under the supervision of a credentialed staff member. The SCP is protected by the district’s liability insurance, as long as the SCP is carrying out duties as assigned. The classroom teacher is responsible for ensuring that the SCP receives all breaks required by contract.

SCPs must be well aware of the important requirements for confidentiality when dealing with special education students. They need to be careful not to share any personal information about the student with anyone other than “employees of the district with a legitimate educational interest.”

The Case Manager and/or classroom teacher should clearly instruct the SCP as to preferences regarding communication with the student’s parent(s). Many Case Managers and teachers prefer that a SCP communicate only daily routine information to parents and that all other communication about progress, behavior, health and other concerns be kept between teacher and parent(s) only.



SCPs need to be trained about appropriate physical contact with students. Light physical prompting may only be used when necessary to keep the student engaged with learning or assist with self-care activities, (e.g., putting hands down, helping a student move through a line, assisting a student in staying seated.) Any other physical contact may only be used to ensure the safety of the student or others. If there is a potential for emergency intervention, the SCP may only use Non-Violent Crisis Prevention Intervention (NCPI) techniques, with appropriate training.

If SCPs are providing health or medical supports, they will always be trained and supervised by an appropriately qualified professional. District liability insurance applies as long as the SCP is performing duties according to training.

It is important that the SCP, general education teacher, and Case Manager have regular, ongoing communication to ensure that all have the same expectations as to the role of the SCP.

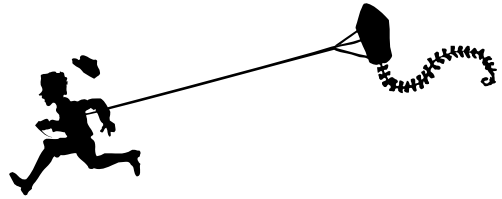
General Tips for SCPs on How to Communicate With the Teacher:

- Be honest with the teacher at all times. It is okay to say, “I don’t understand.”
- When working one-on-one with a student, make sure that the instructions from the teacher are followed. If the teacher gives you no instructions, ask!
- Ask the teacher how a student learns best. Remember that not all students learn the same way – what might work for one student might not work for another student.
- When you are working with students in groups, check with the teacher to know what is expected of you.

Peer Assistance

The teacher and the paraprofessional should encourage peers to assist the identified student during the day when appropriate. Most activities will be more enjoyable for the student if he/she is assisted by peers rather than by an adult.





Fading



Techniques to Promote Independence and Fading of Support

1. Watch before assisting. Can the student ask for help from teacher or peer?
Can the student problem solve on his/her own?
2. Give the student extra time to process and respond before assisting.
3. Have high expectations as to what the student understands or can do independently.
4. Provide consistent classroom schedule (posted, visual, at desk if needed, reinforcement periods included). Teach student how to use it.
5. Start with the least intrusive prompts to get student to respond:
 - a. gestural, hand or facial signals
 - b. timer
 - c. verbal
 - d. light physical
 - e. hand over hand
6. Prompt, then back away to allow independent time.
7. Use strengths and weakness, likes and dislikes to motivate student participation and interest.
8. Model; guide (watch and assist); check (leave and check back).
9. Teach independence skills (raising hand, asking for help, modeling other students).
10. Praise for independent attempts.
11. Direct the student to answer to the teacher.
12. Prompt the student to listen to the teacher's instructions. Repeat only when necessary.
13. Encourage age appropriate work habits. See what other students are doing.
14. Be aware of proximity. Sit with the student only when necessary.
15. Encourage peer assistance and partnering. Teach peers how to help, not enable.
16. Utilize self-monitoring checklists for student.
17. Color code materials to assist with organization.
18. Use transition objects to help student anticipate/complete transition (i.e., head phones for listening center).
19. Break big tasks into steps.
20. Use backward chaining (i.e., leave the last portion of a cutting task for the student, then gradually lengthen the task).
21. Assist in encouraging a means for independent communication (i.e., PECS).
22. Provide positive feedback (be specific to the situation).
23. Ask facilitative questions ("What comes next?" "What are other students doing?" "What does the schedule say?" "What did the teacher say?").
24. Give choices.



25. Maintain a log to track independence and need for assistance. Ask Case Manager for data collection sheets to record increasing independence.
26. Establish teacher/aide signal for when the aide should intervene. General rule of thumb: Teacher should prompt up to 3 times before SCP steps in.
27. Make sure the class perceives you are there to help all of them, not just one student.
28. Find alternate tasks as you are faded.

Team Meetings (to facilitate/support the fading process):

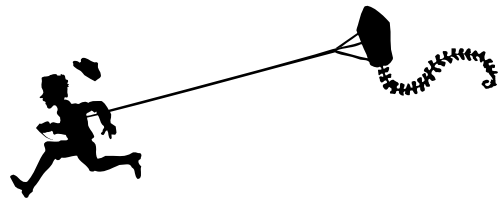
The Case Manager, teacher, parent(s) and others involved with the student should meet on a regular basis to evaluate student progress and need for a SCP. The SCP should be given encouragement, strategies and support for encouraging student independence and stepping back as possible.

If a SCP is having difficulty “letting go,” it may be necessary to rotate the SCP to another classroom.

Guidelines for planning for fading in the IEP

- Develop goals and objectives that contain reduced levels of support and prompting to be used as measures of need for SCP.
- Include specific plan for reinforcement of Positive Behavior Support Plan.
- Specify accommodations/modifications to be provided as needed or as requested by student.
- Indicate specific activities and/or time for SCP under “Support for Student” on LRE page.
- Specify criteria for fading measures to be used, who will review and how often in written plan for fading on “Additional Page” of IEP.





Fiscal Issues



The Ventura County Special Education Local Plan has several policies in respect to fiscal issues regarding special circumstances paraprofessionals.

A. Section 9 (Budget), section IIIC refers to the need for extra aide support when provided by the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools Office Special Education programs. It reads: “In the event of the need for a 1:1 aide, approved by the district of residence, the cost will be charged to the district of residence.”

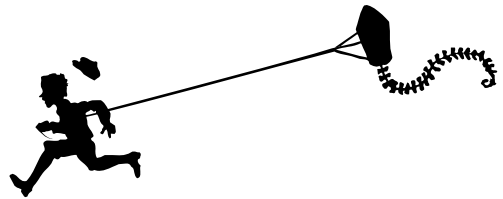
B. Section 9 (Budget) section XI “District to District Excess Cost” reads: “After the serving district and the district of residence communicate, the district providing services is responsible for providing the agreed upon services. Those services will be included in the excess cost billing formula. Exceptional services beyond those typically provided in the program shall be stated in writing and signed off by both the serving district and district of residence. The agreed upon exceptional service will be excluded from excess cost calculations and shall be paid by the district of residence.”

“The SELPA Superintendents’ Executive Committee shall hear disputes that arise over exceptional services that are not resolved by the districts involved. The districts involved shall have the opportunity to present the rationale for each position. The SELPA Superintendents’ Executive Committee shall determine the final resolution.”

Medi-Cal Reimbursement

When a SCP provides certain medically necessary procedures to Medi-Cal eligible children under the supervision of a licensed school nurse or other health practitioner, the district may be reimbursed for the cost. The SCP should be provided with the appropriate forms and trained how to document time spent on the procedures, to be turned into the district on a regular (usually monthly) basis. Each district develops their own policy regarding use of Medi-Cal revenues.





Appendices



Appendix A DEFINITIONS

- **Accommodation-** An alteration or support to the course or test which does NOT substantially alter the basic construct of the course or test.
- **Case Manager-** The special education staff person responsible for monitoring implementation of all portions of the IEP, reporting on progress toward goals, and contact person for parent.
- **CFR-** Code of Federal Regulations. The IDEA appears in the CFR Vol. 64 # 48.
- **DIS-** Designated Instruction and Services (Known as “Related Services” in the federal law.) Specialized services provided a special education student to assist him/her to benefit from the educational program.
- **FAA-** Functional Analysis Assessment- Required under California law to address serious behaviors. (Behaviors which are self-injurious, assaultive or causing serious property damage.) It has required elements.
- **Fading-** The process of systematically reducing the level of support a student needs.
- **FBA-** Functional Behavior Analysis- An analysis of maladaptive behavior which looks at the “situational, environmental and behavioral factors” which may contribute to the behavior. Does NOT have required elements.
- **IDEA-** The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act- (PL 105-17).
- **IEP-** Individualized Education Program- The document which outlines a student’s special education program.
- **Inclusion-** Placement of a student with disabilities in the general education classroom with modifications provided more than 50% of the day.
- **Instructional Aide-** Same as “paraeducator”.
- **Mainstreaming-** The process of placing special education students in general education for one or more classes.



- **Modification-** A change to the course or test which substantially alters the basic construct of the course or test.
- **Paraeducator-** Same as “paraprofessional”.
- **Paraprofessional-** A non-credentialed special education professional, who always works under the supervision and guidance of a credentialed or licensed professional.
- **PBSP-** Positive Behavior Support Plan- A plan which addresses the underlying causes of non-desired behaviors and teaches students appropriate strategies for addressing them.
- **RSP-** Resource Specialist Program- A special education program in which students receive special education services for less than 50% of the day. The Resource Specialist is a credentialed special education teacher who may work with students in general education classrooms, consulting, co-teaching, or collaborating with general education staff, and/or in the resource room with small groups or individualized instruction.
- **Rubric-** A system of points used for evaluation. Points are assigned for essential components.
- **Special Circumstances Paraprofessional-** A paraprofessional who is assigned, via the IEP, as an additional adult classroom support for one or more special education students with intensive needs, for all or specific parts of the school day.



Appendix B RESOURCES

“Analysis of State Standards for Paraprofessionals,” by Elizabeth W. Beale, Journal of Instructional Psychology, December 2001.

“Considering Paraeducator Training, Roles, and Responsibilities,” by Diane Carroll, Council for Exceptional Children, Vol. 34, No. 2, pp. 60-64, 2001.

“Cooperative Learning and Strategies for Inclusion: Celebrating Diversity in the Classroom, Second Edition (Putnam), Brookes Publishing.com.

Council for Exceptional Children Professional Standards for Special Education Paraeducators, 1999. Web site: cecprof@cec.sped.org.

“Determining When a Student Requires Paraeducator Support,” by Patricia Mueller and Francis V. Murphy, The Council for Exceptional Children, 2001, Vol. 33 No. 6, pp 22-27.

“Enhancing Skills of Paraeducators: A Video-assisted Program,” TRI-SPED Projects, Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation, Utah State University, Logan UT, 84321-9981 or email: www.trisped.org.

“Guidelines for Working with One-To-One Aides”, by David F. Freschi, The Council for Exceptional Children, April 1999.

“Guide for Effective Paraeducator Practices in Iowa,” Iowa Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education, January 1998.

“Helping or Hovering? Effects of Instructional Assistant Proximity on Students with Disabilities,” Michael F. Giangreco, Susan W. Edelman, Tracy Evans Luiselli and Stephanie Z. MacFarland, The Council for Exceptional Children, Fall 1999, Vol. 64, Issue 1, pp. 7-17.

How to Be a Paraprofessional PRO: A Comprehensive Training Manual for Paraprofessionals, by Diane Twachtman-Cullen, Ph.D. Starfish Specialty Press, 2000. P.O. Box 799, Higganum, CT 06441-0799 or email: www.starfishpress.com.

“Identifying Paraprofessional Competencies for Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education,” by John Killoran, Torry Piazza Templeman, Joyce Peters, Tom Udell, Council for Exceptional Children, Vol. 67, No. 4, pp. 520-533.



National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals: A Paraeducator Training Program and Mentoring System, web site: <http://www.nrcpara.org/articles/Article1.htm>.

“Paraeducator Experiences in Inclusive Settings: Helping, Hovering, or Holding Their Own?” by Susan Unok Marks, Carl Schrader, and Mark Levine, The Council for Exceptional Children, 1999, Vol. 63, No. 3, pp. 315-328.

Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies: Strategies for Successful Learning, web site: PALS@vanderbilt.edu or contact PALS Outreach, Box 328 Peabody, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN 37203-5701, 615-343-4782.

“Respect, Appreciation, and Acknowledgement of Paraprofessionals Who Support Students with Disabilities,” by Michael F. Giangreco, Susan W. Edelman, Stephen M. Broer, University of Vermont, Exceptional Children, Vol. 67, No. 4 pp. 485-498, 2001.

“Restructuring Schools for all the Kids,” California Department of Education (free video shows special education students receiving natural peer supports and interacting in inclusive settings without individual paraprofessional assistance), dmeid@wested.org or request from LRE Resources Project at (FAX) 916-492-4008.

Social Relationships and Peer Support: Teachers’ Guides to Inclusive Practices Social Relationships and Peer Support: Teachers’ Guides to Inclusive Practices, by Martha E. Snell and Rachel Janney, BrookesPublishing.com.

“Supervising Paraprofessionals: A Survey of Teacher Practices,” by Nancy K. French, Journal of Special Education, Spring, 2001.

“The Paraprofessional’s Role in Inclusive Classrooms: Support Manual, accompanies Video by California Department of Education, e-mail: ceitan@wested.org or call Dona Meinders at 916-492-9999 for free Video and support manual.

“Training Basic Teaching Skills to Paraeducators of Students with Severe Disabilities, by Marsha B. Parson and Dennis H. Reid, The Council for Exceptional Children, March 1999.



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