

Supervising Paraprofessionals

New Special Education Directors
March 29, 2017

Numbers

- 996,710 nationwide in elementary and secondary schools
- 30,270 in Virginia
 - (Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2015)
- Does not include day treatment counselors, contracted private agencies

ESSA

- Mirrors requirements in NCLB
- Requires state plans to provide assurance that all teachers and paraprofessionals working in programs supported by Title I-A funds meet state certification and licensure requirements
 - Complete two years of study at an institution of higher education; or
 - Obtain an associate's (or higher) degree; or
 - Meet a rigorous standard of quality and be able to demonstrate, through a formal state or local academic assessment, knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing, reading, writing, and mathematics (or, as appropriate, reading readiness, writing, readiness, and mathematics readiness)
 - [Superintendent's Memo #181-16](#)

Highly Qualified Instructional Paraprofessionals

- All paraprofessionals that provide instructional support in Title I schools were to be highly qualified no later than January 8, 2006.

[Public Law 107-110, Section 1119(d)]

Highly Qualified Instructional Paraprofessionals

- An instructional paraprofessional is an employee who provides instructional assistance in a program supported with Title I, Part A, funds.
 - In schools receiving Targeted Assistance, this would apply only to paraprofessionals working in classrooms designated as Title I.
 - In schools receiving school-wide assistance, this would apply to **all** instructional paraprofessionals **in the entire school**.

Title I Paraprofessionals Non-Regulatory Guidance, March 1, 2004, B3-4

Responsibilities

- Provide one-on-one tutoring for eligible students, if the tutoring is scheduled at a time when a student would not otherwise receive instruction from a teacher;
- Assist with classroom management, such as organizing instructional and other materials;
- Provide assistance in a computer laboratory;
- Conduct parental involvement activities;
- Provide support in a library or media center;
- Act as a translator; or
- Provide instructional services to students under the direct supervision of a highly qualified teacher.

Direct Supervision

- The teacher prepares the lessons and plans the instructional support activities the paraprofessional carries out, and evaluates the achievement of the students with whom the paraprofessional is working; and
- The paraprofessional works in close and frequent proximity with the teacher.
- Ultimately under the direction of the principal

Unacceptable Programs

- staffed entirely by paraprofessionals,
- where a paraprofessional provides instructional support and a teacher visits a site once or twice a week, or
- where a paraprofessional works with a group of students in another location while the teacher provides instruction to the rest of the class.

National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (1998)

- Recommendations for direct supervision of paraprofessionals:
- The first **10 hours** in which the paraprofessional has direct contact with a student should be observed and supervised by the teacher
- After the initial period, **at least 10 percent** of the supportive instructional sessions conducted by the paraprofessional should be supervised to ensure continuity of instruction and program.
 - at least a weekly basis between the teacher and the paraprofessional during which data pertaining to the student's progress are reviewed.

Teacher/Supervisor Responsibilities

- Orient the paraprofessional to the school
- Train the paraprofessional to use instructional and
- Provide skill development opportunities, and
- Provide feedback of the paraprofessional's job performance

Teacher prep programs often do not include a personnel management component

Barriers to Effective Supervision

- Inadequate feedback
- The paraprofessional's or teacher's lack of commitment
- Negative attitudes toward supervision
- Inter-role conflict
- Organizational structure of the school

Ethical Issues

- Records and information related to students and their families are considered confidential
- Respect the roles of others in the schools and demonstrate your understanding of how your position relates to theirs.
- Positive acknowledgment should be given to cultural diversity and the differences among individual children.
- You are responsible for following the directions given to you by your supervisor and other administrators
- Learn and follow the chain of command for administrative procedures.
- Professional behavior includes attendance, punctuality, appropriate dress, and being a good team member
- As a member of the school team, you should be committed to its programs

Paras and the IEP meeting

- Connecticut Law that allows parents to involve their child's paraprofessional in IEP meetings
- *Upon the formal identification of a child as a child requiring special education and at each planning and placement team meeting for such child, the responsible board of education shall inform parents and guardians of their right to have advisors and the school paraprofessional assigned to their child to be present at and participate in all portions of the PPT meeting at which an educational program for their child is developed, reviewed or revised.*
- Pros and cons

Recommendations

- Give paras "IEP Meetings 101"
- Clarify the paraprofessional's role
- Discuss Data
- Review confidentiality

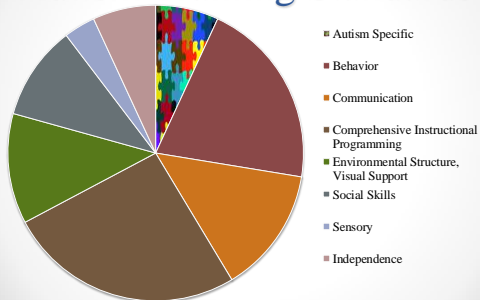
House Bill 325

- § 22.1-298.3. *Students with autism spectrum disorders; training required of personnel. By September 1, 2014, each school board shall ensure that aides assigned to work with a teacher who has primary oversight of students with autism spectrum disorders receive training in student behavior management within 60 days of assignment to such responsibility. School boards may provide such training to other employees, including transportation employees. The Board of Education shall provide training standards that school divisions may use to fulfill the requirements of this section.*

Training Standards

- January 2013 –
 - [Training Standards for Paraprofessionals Assigned to Work with a Teacher Who Has Primary Oversight of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders](#)

Autism Training Standards



Blackboard Modules

- History, Characteristics, Respect and Dignity
- Educational Team and IEP, Responsibilities of the Paraprofessional
- Environment Considerations, Visual Supports, Instructional Considerations, Prompting and R+
- Teaching social skills and specific strategies, Teaching communication and specific strategies
- Functional approach to behavior management, proactive measures, teaching approaches, behavior intervention

Additional Resources

- [Activity Book](#)
 - Questions and activities to share with the classroom teacher or supervisor as it relates to module content
 - Presuming Competence, person first language, IEP team roles and responsibilities, environmental and instructional considerations, task analyses, social skills and communication
- [Glossary of terms](#)

SLPA

- A. an associate's degree in an SLPA program or a bachelor's degree in a speech-language pathology or communication disorders program and
- B. successful completion of a minimum of one hundred (100) hours of supervised field work experience or its clinical experience equivalent and
- C. demonstration of competency in the skills required of an SLPA.

Expectations of SLPA

- Seek employment only in settings in which direct and indirect supervision are provided on a regular and systematic basis by an ASHA-certified and/or licensed SLP.
- Adhere to the responsibilities for SLPAs specified in this document and refrain from performing tasks or activities that are the sole responsibility of the SLP.
- Perform only those tasks prescribed by the supervising SLP.
- Adhere to all applicable state licensure laws and rules regulating the practice of speech-language pathology, such as those requiring licensure or registration of support personnel.
- Conduct oneself ethically within the scope of practice and responsibilities for an SLPA.
- Actively participate with the SLP in the supervisory process.
- Consider securing liability insurance.
- Actively pursue continuing education and professional development activities.

Responsibilities of SLPA

- Self-identify as SLPAs to families, students, patients, clients, staff, and others. This may be done verbally, in writing, and/or with titles on name badges.
- Assist the SLP with speech, language, and hearing screenings without clinical interpretation
- Follow documented treatment plans or protocols developed by the supervising SLP
- Program and provide instruction in the use of augmentative and alternative communication devices

The SLPA should not...

- represent himself or herself as an SLP
- perform standardized or nonstandardized diagnostic tests, formal or informal evaluations, or swallowing screenings/checklists
- perform procedures that require a high level of clinical acumen and technical skill (e.g., vocal tract prosthesis shaping or fitting, vocal tract imaging and oral pharyngeal swallow therapy with bolus material)
- participate in formal parent conferences, case conferences, or any interdisciplinary team without the presence of the supervising SLP or other designated SLP

SLPAs should not...

- provide interpretative information to the student/patient/client, family, or others regarding the patient/client status or service
- write, develop, or modify a student's, patient's, or client's treatment plan in any way
- select students, patients, or clients for service or discharge

Proposed Regulations Board of Audiology and Speech Language Pathology

- b. The frequency in which the speech-language pathologist personally delivers treatment or services to a client who is receiving some services from an assistant shall be up to the professional judgment of the speech-language pathologist and shall be determined by the treatment needs of the client, the type of services being provided, and the setting in which the client is being served, but shall occur at least every 30 days.

Selected Excerpts

- 2. A speech-language pathologist supervising an assistant shall be responsible for determining that the knowledge, skills and clinical experience of the assistant are sufficient to ensure competency to perform any tasks to which the assistant is assigned. The speech-language pathologist shall document competency after training and direct observation of the assistant's performance of such tasks, and a record of skills and competencies shall be maintained.

Selected Excerpts

- E. Supervision of an assistant in speech-language pathology.
 - 1. The practice of an assistant shall only be supervised by a speech-language pathologist who retains full legal and ethical responsibility for the client. A speech-language pathologist shall only supervise the equivalent of two full-time assistants.

Selected Excerpts

- E. Supervision of an assistant in speech-language pathology.
 - 2. The speech-language pathologist shall provide the level of supervision to the speech-language pathologist assistant necessary to ensure quality of care to include on-site supervision of at least two client sessions for each assistant being supervised every 30 days to directly observe and evaluate the performance of the assistant. The speech-language pathologist shall document such on-site observation and evaluation in the client record for each session.

Students with Significant Support Needs

•••

Characteristics

- Lack of functional communication system (choice making, self-advocacy)
- Due to a physical disability, requires assistance to complete daily routines and activities
- Due to a cognitive disability, requires assistance to complete daily routines and activities
- Requires explicit instruction to learn new skills or generalize skills to new environments
- Lacks basic learner competencies (attending to instruction, lack of effective motivators, lack of basic response repertoire)
- High rate and/or high intensity disruptive or dangerous behavior

Implications

- Sensitivity to variations/inconsistencies
- Sensitive progress measurement procedures
- Prompting and reinforcement schedules
- Need for carefully designed and implemented instruction in areas of communication, academics, learning readiness, adaptive behavior, etc

Systematic Instruction

- The same procedures/ teaching techniques are used repeatedly
- The SAME procedure EACH time
- Hierarchy of prompts, prompt fading, latency, R+, data analysis, error correction

Behavior Intervention Plans

- Function Based
- Proactive and Reactive procedures
- Identifying appropriate responses to reinforce
- Withholding reinforcement for inappropriate behavior
- Teaching techniques
- Alignment with school-wide policy and procedures

Students cannot
benefit from
interventions they do not
experience

(Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman, Wallace, 2005)

Fidelity of Implementation

- clear communication of expectations and procedures
- level of specificity varies depending on the student, but for students with high support needs the level of support may require specific documentation.
- sensitive to variability in treatments, which leads to delayed progress and in some cases problem behavior and prompt dependency.
- fidelity checks provide paraprofessionals with clear and objective feedback and helps prevent procedural drift (maintaining high expectations)

Importance

- Importance of fidelity increases as child's needs increase
- A focus placed on independence, learning readiness behaviors, appropriate social/emotional behaviors
- Sets the stage for effective fading of support
 - Increasing student buy-in and ownership

Lack of Fidelity

- Intermittent reinforcement (strengthened inappropriate behavior)
- Unpredictable expectations
- Treatment Drift
- Delayed progress
- Uninformed decision making
 - Discontinuing potentially effective interventions
 - Continuing with ineffective (as written) interventions
- Addition of unnecessary supports

Example

Classwide Procedures

- **Signaling Procedures**- classroom will be designed in way that sets clear expectations for students and staff, all students should be visible in any area of the classroom. Supports such as daily schedules, visual supports, timers etc. will be in place to signal transitions and scheduled activities.
- **Reinforcement of other appropriate behavior** – Students will receive social praise frequently (varies by student) for engaging in behaviors that are appropriate to the environment. These behaviors may include, walking quietly in the hall, returning to the work area independently, playing appropriately with toys, sitting quietly while waiting, and other behaviors that indicate cooperation with classroom routines and demands.
- **Non-contingent breaks from work** – Breaks will be built into the child’s schedule at regular intervals. Breaks and preferred activities are not provided based on problem behavior or agitation.
- **Reinforcement of appropriate communication** - Student requests to take breaks or gain access to preferred items are honored if they are reasonable to the environment and current learning situation. If the request is not appropriate to one or the other the teacher will either a) provide a time that it would be appropriate or b) state that ____ is not available. A limit may be placed on how often and when a student may access certain items or activities.
- **Reinforcement for compliance with instructional demands** – each student will have a schedule of reinforcement for responding correctly to instructional demands and completing classroom routines independently. Staff will acknowledge students’ efforts in informal (social praise) and formal ways (stickers, rewards, notes home).

Classwide Procedures

Reactive Measures

- **Ignore minor problem behavior**- Behavior that does not interfere with ongoing instruction, does not pose a danger to the student or staff, is not socially unacceptable, is not disruptive to other students and is not destructive will be ignored and programming will continue
- **Redirect off task behavior** – Off task behavior that interferes with the ongoing schedule in the classroom will be blocked from occurring and the student will be redirected to task. The behavior should not be specifically addressed verbally.
- **Physically block potentially dangerous or socially unacceptable behavior** – Behaviors that present a danger to the student or others, are disruptive to other students, or are destructive will be physically blocked with minimal attention from staff. Removing eye contact, and minimizing reactions to the behavior are included. Staff should notify the classroom teacher if new or dangerous behaviors emerge at their earliest opportunity.

Rating Scale: X = Implemented Incorrectly, ✓ = Implemented Correctly, N/A=No Opportunity to Observe

Component	Rating	Comments
Signaling Procedures -		
Reinforcement of other behaviors		
Non-contingent breaks from work		
Reinforcement of Appropriate communication		
Reinforcement for compliance with instruction		
Ignore minor Problem behavior		
Redirect off-task behavior		
Percentage Correct		




CAPS

Goal/Objective/Targeted Skill	Primary Teaching Activity/ Scheduled Activity	Teaching Strategy	Structure/ Modifications/ Accommodation	Reinforcers	Communication and Social Supports	Data Collection	Generalization Plan	ASOLs Addressed
Reads and comprehends all employment related documents including supervisor and job coach feedback, email correspondence, paper	Arrival routine - each day a different task will be included in his arrival routine, this could include wiping desks, setting up computers, distributing notebooks. Each activity will have its own written list of directions.	Task analysis Least to most prompting Self monitoring	First/ Then board Visual Daily schedule with additional "misschedule"	Access to choice board following activity	"Help" cards to request assistance Augmentative communication device loaded with appropriate vocabulary	1x week, task analysis	Change order of directions if they are not critical to task completion Complete with different staff Introduce novel situations (on the job) Create situations in which he must request help	ESE, REI's demonstrate understanding of words and pass by using assistive techs (e.g., resurveys, job descriptions, task instructions)

Fidelity Check Sheet

- Read through Charles's plan
- Identify critical components to include on your fidelity check
- Identify preventative and reactive strategies
- Compare with your table

Charles's Board

	First	Next	Then
Safe Hands 			
Listening 			
Finish your work 			

What did you choose?

Providing Feedback

- Set expectations
- Specific
- Objective
- Allows the supervisor and supervisee to identify learning opportunities and goals for the next observation

Structuring the Feedback

Paraprofessional: _____ Date: _____
 Teacher: _____

Check all that apply: observing Demonstration Lesson Videotaping Reflecting Problem Solving
 Providing resources Dev of IEP goals

What's working/needs used: _____ Current Focus: Challenges- Concerns _____

Paraprofessional's Next Steps/Date: _____ Teacher's Next Steps/Date: _____

Next Meeting/Observation Date: _____
 Focus: _____

1:1 Support

Staff	% time engaged
Classroom Teacher	98%
Classroom Paraprofessional	91%
1:1	57%

- Engagement with students or the environment
- 46 K-2 Autism support classrooms

Azad, Locke, Downey, Xie, & Mandell, 2015

Why so low?

1. Poor training – teachers spend less than 2% of their time in individual supervision with 1:1
2. Special Education teachers get very little to no training on how to supervise classroom staff
3. Fragmented service system- 1:1s employed either by school division or the behavioral health system
 - Competing accountability, sense of mission, role ambiguity

Detrimental Effects

- isolation within the classroom,
- insular relationships between students with their 1:1,
- unnecessary dependence,
- interference with peer interaction,
- stigmatization,
- limited access to competent instruction,
- interference with teacher engagement,
- loss of personal control or choices available to same-aged peers,
- loss of gender identity,
- provocation of problem behaviors

Additionally

- There is no strong basis for assigning the least qualified, lowest paid school staff to provide the bulk of instruction to students with the most complex learning characteristics (Giangreco, M.F., 2009)

Prevention... How?

- isolation within the classroom,
- insular relationships between students with their 1:1,
- unnecessary dependence,
- interference with peer interaction,
- stigmatization,
- limited access to competent instruction,
- interference with teacher engagement,
- loss of personal control or choices available to same-aged peers,
- loss of gender identity,
- provocation of problem behaviors

Considerations

- Training paraprofessionals to facilitate peer interactions and other natural supports,
- Involving students with disabilities in the decision making process regarding their own supports,
- Exploring less restrictive alternatives to 1:1s,
- Exploring the process and criteria for fading 1:1 support (on an individual basis,
- Utilizing a decision making process for starting 1:1 supports, and
- Considering systems-level alternatives to reliance on paraprofessionals