



**Handbook  
for  
Special Education  
Paraprofessionals**

**PPS Department**  
**Revised September 2008**

## **Table of contents**

**Your Role and Responsibilities**

**Student specific responsibilities**

**BCSD Special Education Principles**

**PPS Staff List**

**Confidentiality**

**Fostering Student Independence**

**Helping the Teacher**

**Student Behavior**

- Classroom Management Plans
- Behavioral Intervention Plans
- Common Behavior Management Strategies
- Therapeutic Physical Restraint Procedures
- Procedure for Use of Time Out Rooms

**Chain of Command**

**Para Do's**

**Emergency Procedures**

**Helping with Test accommodations**

**Special Education Program Descriptions**

**Evaluations, Benefits, Etc.**

**Glossary of Acronyms and Terms**

## Your Role and Responsibilities

While your job title is Aide to Students with Disabilities, you are a paraprofessional member of the school team. Your position is to support and assist the teachers and administration in meeting the needs of students with disabilities and to provide direct support and assistance to students with disabilities. Your role is to communicate with, assist, implement and follow through with the classroom teacher in student instruction and management.

Your job responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Becoming familiar with student's behavior management needs and responding appropriately,
- Monitoring and/or charting behavior,
- Providing reinforcement of instruction,
- Facilitating small group practice and reinforcement,
- Modeling appropriate behavior and attitude,
- Refocusing and redirecting students,
- Implementing program accommodations of students' IEP under direction of teacher,
- Assisting the student with technology,
- Assisting students with personal hygiene,
- Assisting with the implementation of curricular modifications,
- Supervising students in transitions from class to class and in unstructured activities (lunch, recess),
- Assisting with implementing instructional plans under the direction of the teacher,
- Collecting student data,
- Preparing instructional materials and modifications under the direction of the teacher,
- Providing clerical assistance such as copying, collating, data collection and manipulation,
- Participating in planning meetings,
- Providing testing accommodations to students,
- Performing other various duties as assigned by supervising teachers and building administration.

Paraprofessionals may be asked to support the provision of a student's IEP program or classroom accommodations. Here is a list of common assistance provided by paraprofessionals:

- Prompt to attend to task (look, listen, read, write)
- Provide repetition of directions, instructions
- Paraphrase/simplify directions, questions
- Have student paraphrase directions, questions
- Provide additional examples
- Underline or highlight key words in text, worksheets, etc.
- Use questioning to provide cues to problem solving
- Use questioning to prompt organization skills (recording assignment, putting papers away, remembering materials)
- Prompt to slow down, recheck work
- Provide immediate feedback (positive for correct response, corrective for incorrect response)
- Provide positive feedback for appropriate behavior every \_\_\_ minutes
- Provide redirection for inappropriate behavior
- Record specified behaviors and time of occurrences
- Model social skills

- Encourage participation in group activities
- Encourage student to respond to teacher questions
- Take notes and provide to Resource Room teacher
- Prompt/encourage student to take notes
- Provide assistance with reading: decoding, comprehension
- Provide assistance with math: calculations
- Cue appropriate social interaction
- Preset for changes/transitions
- Assist with student pairing/grouping
- Prompt student to write assignment
- Check to ensure assignment is recorded completely and accurately
- Prompt to hand in homework
- Read materials for student that are above reading level
- Provide cues for spelling
- Cue student to check work
- Use questions to guide student in research
- Explain content area vocabulary
- Obtain note outline from teacher for student to use
- Provide visual cues and models
- Provide cues for role in team/group activities
- Encourage and praise social interactions
- Encourage use of writing strategies taught in RR
- Encourage student to use Alpha Smart, spell check, etc.
- Monitor for safety with equipment
- Read and explain worksheets
- Encourage student to ask teacher for clarification
- Have student restate directions in own words prior to starting activity
- Redirect and refocus to task
- Remove from room for break as indicated by teacher
- Make sure student is seated close to teacher, near "model" students
- Remind teacher of student's class accommodations/test accommodations
- Provide clear, concise statement of expectations
- At start of each class, remind student of classroom expectations for class participation/behavior
- Provide multi-step directions, one step at a time
- Monitor for task completion
- Follow behavior plan, remind teacher of behavior plan
- Assist with fine motor tasks

### **Student Specific Responsibilities**

Students receive the support of a paraprofessional because the student is in a program with built in paraprofessional support or because the student's IEP identifies the student's need for paraprofessional support. Most students receive support in a group, but some students require an individual paraprofessional. The student's IEP coordinator, with team input, completes a form that provides direction to the paraprofessional on the types of support the student will need, ideas on how to help the student be socially integrated in the class, and ideas on how to help the student develop

more independence. You should ask your students' IEP case managers for the students' *Teacher Aide Form* that defines the specific needs for paraprofessional support for the student. You will be asked to collect data on the student's use of aide service regularly throughout the year. The form is formatted for this data collection.

The student's IEP lists some accommodations that the student requires based on his/her disability (Program Modifications, Accommodations, Supplementary Aids and Services). The *Teacher Aide form* lists the same and other supports the student needs. The classroom teacher may determine other supports the student needs based on the teacher's differentiation of instruction in the class. You and the teacher share responsibility for providing this assistance and support.

You should read your students' IEPs. Ask the students' special education teacher for access to the students' IEPs so that you can review them. You should read the entire IEP, but pay particular attention to the Program Modifications, Assistive Technology Supports, and Test Accommodations. Most likely, you will have direct responsibility for providing some of these supports. You can also help the regular education teacher by reminding the teacher of the supports and instructional modifications needed for your students.

Although you may be assigned to support specific students with IEPs, you may help other students, as well. It is actually preferred that the paraprofessional not focus solely on students with disabilities as this may socially isolate these students. You should work with the classroom teacher to determine how you can assist the teacher in meeting the needs of all students.







## ***Bethlehem Central School District Special Education Program Principles***

The Bethlehem Central School District is committed to the following principles for special education services and programs. As a special education paraprofessional, you can help support these principles in your work with our students and staff.

- *We provide special education services that meet the individual needs of the child, are developmentally appropriate and strength-based. These services are planned in collaboration with all the child-serving systems involved in the child's life and are provided in a supportive learning environment.*
- *We recognize that the child's family is the primary support system for the child and participates in all stages of the decision-making and planning process.*
- *We recognize and respect the behavior, ideas, attitudes, values, beliefs, customs, language, rituals, ceremonies and practices characteristic of the child's and family's ethnic group.*
- *We will bring special education expertise to the student in the general education learning environment to the greatest extent possible.*
- *All special education instruction will be based on the New York State learning standards.*
- *Student data will be used to inform and improve instruction.*
- *Related services provided to special education students will be educationally relevant, evidence-based and will support the student's learning. These services will be provided to the student in a manner that is least disruptive to the child's learning.*
- *Special education services and supports will be based on peer-reviewed research and will be evaluated regularly to ensure that they continuously improve.*

*Revised December 4, 2004*

## Confidentiality

You have a duty to maintain confidentiality. This is not simply a matter of not using names, but rather of maintaining silence. As a paraprofessional you will be privy to information that affects the privacy of students and staff. You have a legal obligation to maintain the privacy of students and their families. As a general rule, you should never share information about a student with whom you work with anyone other than the student's team. This would include the student's special education teachers, regular education teachers, therapists, social worker, school counselor, school nurse, principal and assistant principal. Check with the teacher's IEP case manager before you share information with any other individuals. If you are uncomfortable when someone asks you about a student, you can direct the individual to the student's special education teacher or school counselor.

- C** Control information about the students.
- O** Only share information with those who have a need to know and who have proper authorization
- N** Never discuss school information regarding students.
- F** Forward inquiries regarding students to the student's IEP manager or administrators if you are approached about confidential information.
- I** Interact with those who inquire in a manner keeping with your responsibilities.
- D** Don't discuss student situations in the faculty room.
- E** Explanations for not discussing a student are easier than explanations for breaching confidential information.
- N** Not sharing is caring.
- T** Think about privacy and what you may lose if you breach a student or family's confidentiality.
- I** It's important that things that happen at school stay at school.
- A** Access to student information carries with it responsibility.
- L** Learn how to handle uncomfortable inquiries in positive and courteous but confidential ways.
- I** Identify acceptable ways that people who need to know can access information.
- T** Treat confidential information as if your job depended on it – it does.
- Y** You are part of professional community. Confidentiality is a cornerstone. Protect it.

Any breach of confidentiality is unacceptable.

## Sharing Information with Parents

You may be asked to write a log to the parents regarding their child's day in school. Make sure that the teacher reviews the log before it is sent home. Paraprofessionals may not communicate with parents regarding students' performance without the oversight of the teacher. The teacher has the ultimate responsibility for evaluating and documenting student performance. Paraprofessionals are often asked to assist with this task. Protect yourself by always having the teacher review any documentation before it is sent to parents. This includes what you may think is a quick, informal note.

If a parent asks to speak with you about his/her child, you should tell the parent you will refer his/her question or concern to the child's teacher. If the parent insists that he/she wants your perspective, you can tell the parent that you would be happy to meet with him or her with the teacher. Immediately refer the issue to the student's special education teacher.

## Fostering Student Independence

Paraprofessionals have a major role in defining what independence means for each student. You are assigned to a student or group of students because they require support or assistance in accomplishing common school tasks. Remember, your role is to facilitate the student's independence in accomplishing tasks by supporting the student not by doing for the student.

Ideas for promoting independence in students:

1. Ask questions in response to the student's question. For example, when a student asks what to do, ask "What do you think is the next step?" Other common questions you can use to help a student reflect or discover the answer to his/her question:
  - a. "Do you remember what the teacher said about this?"
  - b. "Can you see what the other students are doing?"
  - c. "How do you think it is spelled?"
2. Wait for a response. Become the champion of the waiting game. Do not feel that you have to fill a silence or that the student needs to answer immediately. Give the student time to reflect and time to realize that you expect him or her to respond.
3. Keep control. Keep responses on the topic and don't allow the student to engage you in an argument or off task discussion.
4. Give recognition and reinforcement. As frequently as you can, reinforce the student with discrete comments or signals. Let him or her know that you recognize and appreciate his or her appropriate behavior and work.
5. Help the student use peers. Help the student ask a friend. Help the student sit next to students who are good role models. Work with the teacher to facilitate the student's participation in groups with supportive students.

How do you and others know when you are doing a good job!

***The less you are doing, the better you are at your job!*** Your job is to help the student learn how to do his/her work without the help of a paraprofessional. This is very hard at times. Some students will want you to be their personal assistant. Some students are afraid to try it on their own. Some students have learned to become dependent on others. Some students are obstinate and just don't want to do it. Your job is to help them learn how to do more by themselves. This is very hard at times. Sometimes you will just want the student to be able to hand in the work with the other students or before the deadline has passed. Sometimes it feels awful to let the student "fail" to get the work done. Remember, it does not help the student in the long term if you have done it for him or her. Remember, if you are doing it for the student, no one know he/she cannot do it on his or her own and the student will not get the support he needs to learn how to do it on his/her own.

***The more you are moving away from the student, the better you are at your job!*** Research shows that the closer a paraprofessional is to a student in the class, in the halls, in the lunch room, the more dependent and socially isolated a student becomes. Close proximity of paraprofessionals to students contributes to:

- The less the teacher takes ownership for the student,
- The more separated the student becomes from his/her peers,
- The more dependent the student becomes on adults,
- The less the student initiates interactions with his/her peers,

- The less peers initiate interactions with the student,
- The less attention the student receives from the classroom teacher,
- The less the student feels in control of his learning,
- The less the student takes responsibility for his/herself,
- The less the student develops socially and emotionally.

***The lower level of prompts you are using, the better you are at your job!*** Students can become very dependent on prompts from adults. While your job is to prompt the student to do his/her best work, you should always be moving to lower levels of prompts. Here is a prompt hierarchy, always use the lowest level prompt the student needs to be successful.

- Level 0: Natural prompts: any ordinary clue for all the students. E.g., the teacher says, "take out your book," the bell rings to change classes, all the students start to move to the front of the room.
- Level 1: Gestural prompts: pointing to the schedule, pointing to the place on the page where everyone is reading, pointing to the rules posted in the classroom, pointing to the teacher who is giving directions to the class.
- Level 2: Indirect verbal prompts: a verbal statement that prompts the student to attend to a natural cue: "what are the other students doing?" "what did you forget?" "What is next on your schedule?"
- Level 3: Direct verbal prompts: giving specific verbal directions: "Write down your assignment." "Start your work." "Pay attention to the teacher."
- Level 4: Modeling prompts: demonstrating what the student is supposed to be doing: starting a graphic organizer by putting in the first item, spelling a word for the student, demonstrating how to do something.
- Level 5: Partial physical prompts: providing physical assistance for a portion of an activity: putting the pencil in the student's hand, putting the assignment binder on the desk for the student to open and write his assignment.
- Level 6: Full physical prompts: providing physical assistance throughout the task: hand over hand assistance with cutting.

Verbal prompts are easy for students and adults to become dependent on, and they are the hardest to fade. There are a couple of reasons for this. First, they are the easiest to give. It's hard for us to sit back and watch learners struggle to put it together. It's so easy for us to give them hints, guides, or outright tell them how to do it. The other reason is that some students have become very passive learners. They have learned to wait to be told how to do it and they have learned not to trust their own responses. Remember, you can wait. Wait and give the student plenty of time to respond. At first, provide the lowest level prompt you think will help the student. Gestural/visual prompts are easier to fade, so if you can get an appropriate response with using a gesture, picture, or sign, use it in preference to verbal prompting. Wait, give them time to respond.

It is important to monitor your use of prompts. You want to make sure that the student is learning the desired skill and not just learning to respond to prompts. Can the student complete the task without prompts? That is the goal.

***The more the student understands his/her strengths and limitations and can ask for help when needed, the better you are at your job.*** The most important area of development for children is that of self determination. Research has shown that students with disabilities who have

developed skills of self determination are more successful in college at in the working world, no matter how significant their disability and their limited skills in other areas. What do we mean by self determination? Children with skills of self determination:

- Understand that all individuals have certain strengths and limitations and they can describe their own strengths and limitations (self awareness),
- Know when they need help and can ask for help from adults or peers (self advocacy);
- Know that sometimes it is hard but when they focus and work hard they can accomplish much (self efficacy);
- Know that all choices have consequences, can think about the consequences of choices they might consider, and make choices in their best interest (choice and decision making);
- Have goals and know that it takes planning and follow through on plans to achieve goals (goal setting and attainment).

While actualization of full self determination is not usually achieved until adulthood, children actually start developing self determination as early as kindergarten. Sometimes you might be inclined to hide the student's limitations from others and even from the student to spare his/her feelings. This hinders the student's development of self determination. You can help the student develop self determination by helping him/her:

- Talk about his/her limitations and his/her strengths,
- Ask for help when needed (rather than waiting for help),
- Develop an 'I can do it' attitude,
- Think about choices and what the natural consequences are for choices made,
- Make plans on how to accomplish tasks and self monitor following through on those plans.

***The more of your students who graduate from needing paraprofessional support, the better job you are doing.*** Remember your job is to help your students develop the skills they need to become more independent.

## Helping the Teacher

Your role is to support the teacher in meeting the needs of the students. Here are some suggestions for working with the teacher to support the students' needs:

- Parallel the teacher's efforts. Ask the teacher about his/her classroom management plan, classroom routine, etc. Ask the teacher how you can support his/her philosophy, routine, instruction.
- Advocate your teacher's philosophy.
- Refer parent questions to the teacher.
- Attend to confidentiality.
- Ask the teacher to share what has been planned for the day/week so that you can follow the plans and support the teacher and students.
- Ask the teacher to provide you with copies of handouts a few days ahead of time so you can make any needed modifications with the teacher's oversight.
- Plan a time when you and the teacher can meet to discuss ideas and concerns. Never engage in power struggles or contradict a teacher in front of the students.
- Identify the materials the student will need in the class and cue the student to bring the necessary materials. Ask the student, "What do you need for class? Do you have all your materials?" If the student does not have the required materials, use questioning to help the student problem solve. "What do you need to do in order to get a pencil?" "What can you do if you don't have your notebook?"
- Observe the student when he/she is given instructions. Do not help too soon. Give the student time to respond. Use "wait time". For example, observe the student when it is time to write down the assignment. If the student does not write the assignment after sufficient wait time, cue him to write it down. (Use the hierarchy of prompts.) Do not write it for him. Check the assignment. Is it complete, accurate, legible? If not, remind the student to write it properly.
- Support the teacher's instruction. Do not talk while instructions are being given. It is important for the student to listen. Ask questions when the student does not seem to know what to do. "What do you need to be doing right now?" "What do you see the other students doing?" "What do you need to do first? Okay, go ahead." "What is the next step?"
- Support group work. When students are working in a group, you may need to help the student select an appropriate group. For example, select a group with positive role models. Avoid working with a student who may be distracting. Observe the group and "your student", but let the group problem solve before you jump in to help. Only assist when the group cannot solve the issue. You can help sometimes by helping the group break the task into smaller steps. "What do you need to do first?" "What would come next?" Etc.
- Support the student's development of organization skills. Do not do for the student, but cue the student to use the skills he/she is learning in class or resource room. "Where does this paper go?" "Don't forget to use your binder." Etc.

## Student Behavior

**Classroom Management Plan:** Each teacher develops a plan for managing classroom routines and student behavior. In most classrooms, the classroom "rules" are posted for all students to see. Discuss the classroom management plan with each teacher. Make sure you know not only the classroom routine and student rules, but also the consequences – how you should respond – for noncompliance.

**Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP):** Some students will have an individual Behavioral Intervention Plan, sometimes referred to as a behavioral contract. Ask your special education teachers or make note when you review the students' Individual Education Plans (IEP). The BIP identifies

- targeted behaviors – the student behaviors targeted to be reduced or eliminated
- prevention strategies – the actions staff will take to prevent the targeted behaviors
- consequence strategies – the actions staff will take when the behaviors occur
- reinforcement strategies – the actions staff will take to reinforce positive replacement behaviors or absence of targeted behaviors
- skill training – teaching or therapy that staff will provide to eliminate skill deficits that may be causing the behaviors.

It is very important for all staff who come in contact with the student to know and follow the BIP. Review the plan and if you do not understand any aspect of the plan or are unsure of your role, speak to the special education teacher or behavioral specialist.

### Some Common Behavior Management Strategies:

- Be consistent with rules, directions, routines.
- Dispense encouragement and praise freely but fairly; help correct errors, reward corrections.
- Praising and Active Ignoring: Appropriate behavior is rewarded by praise and minor infractions (such as calling out, pencil tapping, failure to start work) is initially ignored. Planned ignoring means consciously ignoring the behavior – not showing any reaction to the behavior and ignoring other student responses to the behavior.
- Soft corrections: Quietly and discreetly telling the student the appropriate behavior he or she should be showing. After the correction, treat the issue as closed. Do not nag, harp, or repeat the correction multiple times.
- Modeling: Model the behaviors you expect from the student, such as
  - Listening to the teacher – actively show that you are listening to the teacher
  - Using a calm, neutral voice,
  - Showing respectful behavior toward others at all times,
  - Staying on task in class – show that you are working and not talking about unrelated topics, fidgeting, etc
- Giving students choices: Some students use behaviors to gain control. We can prevent this by giving students choices whenever possible. This also teaches students responsibility.
  - A common choice provided in behavior management plans is giving the student a choice between appropriate behavior and inappropriate behavior and reminding the student of the consequence of the inappropriate behavior. "Sue, you can sit down and start the worksheet or you can continue to bother the other students. It is your choice, but you know that if you don't start your work now, you will not earn your point. It's your choice."
  - They can sometimes choose what topic to write on.

- They can choose what book to read.
- They can choose what task to start with from a list of tasks.
- They can choose with whom they wish to work.
- They can choose where to sit.

Maintaining order is essential to accomplishing goals for students in any school setting. By order, we don't mean total control of every student, every minute of the day. We do mean that paraprofessionals play a role in ensuring a healthy and safe environment in which all students can learn. It is important for you to help maintain order when students engage in dangerous, unacceptable behaviors.

Be visible and positively engaged with students as a first line of prevention of unacceptable incidents. Students who may have demonstrated the potential for negative activities in unstructured situations such as lunch, hallway passing times, immediately before and after school, or while attending various school sponsored events and activities might best be approached before such behaviors occur. A friendly greeting lets the student know that you see him/her.

Even "difficult to manage" students can maintain acceptable social contacts, if engaged positively prior to involvement in potentially undesirable situations. Showing some personal interest in individuals goes a long way toward building respect for authority and control. Remaining in control of your own emotions helps a student maintain control.

When a student engages in undesirable and unacceptable behaviors, it is important to intervene immediately. Minor incidents can mushroom. Intervention at early levels needs to be done calmly and without embarrassing or humiliating students. It is important to be discreet and calm in your intervention. Physical or verbal interventions such as grabbing, finger pointing, raising your voice, using harsh or negative tone of voice will most often trigger a similar response from the student and heighten the tension. Sarcasm is never an appropriate response with students. Remaining calm and controlled yourself will have a calming effect on the students.

If at all possible, get the student to accompany you, without physical contact, to a nearby quiet or less congested location where you can help the student regain control of his or her behavior privately. Every effort should be made to avoid physical contact that may be perceived as threatening by the student. Calmly and quietly remind the student of the appropriate behavior he or she should be using. Give the student time and support in calming down.

If the student remains agitated, signal another adult to get support or get the student to accompany you to the office, classroom, guidance, or social work office where additional support is available.

### ***THERAPEUTIC PHYSICAL RESTRAINT PROCEDURES***

While all students, including those with disabilities, are expected to behave and conduct themselves appropriately, it may be necessary for a specifically designated staff member to provide a therapeutic physical restraint for students with disabilities who are in danger of harming themselves or others and staff have determined that less intrusive interventions are not likely to reduce the risk. Any restraint procedure must respect the student's dignity and personal integrity. Therapeutic physical restraint may only be used in emergency situations **or** after a behavior plan has been developed, reviewed and approved by the committee on special education, including the parent.

This restraint is defined as a physical hold that lasts for several minutes. The force of the hold shall be no greater than that which is absolutely necessary to prevent harm and should last no longer than is necessary to de-escalate the situation and allow the student to regain self-composure. All of

the physical intervention techniques used in therapeutic crisis intervention are based on the principles of a maximum amount of caring with a minimum amount of force; and the goal of de-escalating the situation by reducing stimulation/agitation so that the student can regain self-composure.

Therapeutic physical restraint is to be provided by a staff member who has completed a training program approved by the district. Except in those situations where a delay would heighten the risk of harm, a therapeutic physical restraint shall not be undertaken on a student unless another staff member is present. This staff person shall remain until the student is released from the restraint. If another adult is not present and a delay of restraint would likely result in harm to the student or others, the individual using such restraint must take immediate steps to ensure the presence of another staff member.

A therapeutic physical restraint may be used on a student only after it has been determined that other less intrusive interventions have been tried and failed to prevent the harm or a determination that the attempted use of these other less intrusive interventions and the delay in the use of a therapeutic physical restraint would, in all likelihood, increase the likelihood of harm to self or others.

Restrictive behavioral interventions (removal from the room, physical restraints) may be used only in emergencies or with an approved behavioral intervention plan. The CSE Chairperson should be notified immediately if a therapeutic physical restraint is used with any student with a disability and there is no behavioral intervention plan in place.

Unless authorized in a behavior management plan, restraints shall not be used more than twice in three months without a referral back to the CSE to consider whether the use of therapeutic physical restraints should be incorporated into the student's behavior intervention plan. If a therapeutic physical restraint is used more than twice in a school year, a behavioral intervention plan must be developed. The procedures for the restraint should be delineated in the student's Behavioral Intervention Plan, approved by the CSE and parents.

As soon as the student is released from the restraint, the nurse shall either be called to the site where the child is located or the child shall be escorted to the nurse's office. The nurse will conduct an examination of the child.

Following the therapeutic physical restraint:

- The principal or their designee must notify the parent immediately of the use of the therapeutic restraint.
- The staff member, nurse and principal must complete the *Incident Report* within 24 hours and forward it to the Director of Pupil Personnel and a copy of the *Incident Report* should be provided to parent.

January 18, 2005

### **Procedures on the Use of Time Out Rooms**

Behavior management practices for students sometimes include the use of time out rooms as part of a behavior management plan in conjunction with a therapeutic behavior management intervention. A time out room is only used in conjunction with a behavior management program that

teaches and reinforces acceptable behavior. The use of the time out room is designed to remove a student from a potentially dangerous environment, help the student to safely de-escalate, regain control and prepare to meet the expectations to return to the classroom or program.

A time out room is not the same as a time out area within a classroom. It is a room of an adequate size (width, length and height) to allow the student to move about and recline comfortably. The wall and floor coverings are designed to prevent injury and the room is free of objects and fixtures that could be potentially dangerous to a student. It also meets all local fire and safety codes.

Parents must be informed prior to the initiation of a behavioral intervention for their child that will incorporate the use of a time out room. Upon request, parents will be shown the physical space that will be used for time out and parents will be provided a copy of this policy on the use of time out rooms. When the behavior management plan for a student with a disability includes the use of a time out room, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) must reflect the location of the time out room, the factors that may precipitate the use of the time out room and time limitations for the use of the time out room.

The amount of time a student will need to be in a time out room will vary with the student's age, individual needs and behavior management plan. Staff will continuously monitor the student, both visually and aurally. The time out door must be unlocked and the door must be able to be opened at will from the inside at all times. Staff responsible for the student will monitor and document the amount of time a student is in the time out room and will monitor the effectiveness of the time out procedure to decrease specified behaviors using the time out log. Each time the time out room is used for a student must be documented and a copy of the time out log must be sent to the principal, CSE chairperson and the Director of PPS.

The effectiveness of this therapeutic intervention will be reviewed monthly by the case manager, teacher and other appropriate staff and the effectiveness of the behavior management plan will be reviewed at the same time. Copies of these monthly reviews will be sent to the principal, case manager and CSE chairperson.

January 18, 2005

## Chain of Command

When people work together in close confines, conflict will happen. Whether it is about interpreting the IEP or following classroom procedures, two people are not always going to agree. While some situations which deal with safety must be taken care of immediately, others can wait – ask yourself, “If this waits 24 hours, will it be a big deal?”

After 24 hours, if it is still a big deal, you need to follow these steps. If you let your concern wait too long, it will fester and possibly cause more problems.

1. Talk to the person(s) involved first – general education teacher and paraprofessional. After talking it out, you may need no further steps.

2. If there is still a problem, talk to the case manager/special education teacher. S/he may be able to provide more insight, understanding, and another perspective to the issue. Hopefully this will alleviate the need to go further.

3. Bring to the Middle School CSE chair. If s/he is not available, bring it to a middle school administrator.

When issues arise, it often seems like the most important thing, and human nature causes us to spout at as many people as possible. Because of the professional setting we are working in, we must remember to maintain dignity and respect, talking only to the people the situation directly affects. If one pulls more people into the situation, it confuses the problem or concern, and may cause more problems.

If after 24 hours, you decide it is not a big deal, you need to let it go and move on. If you can not, then maybe you need to treat it as if it were a big deal, and follow the chain of communication.

## Para Do's

### *Do –*

- Facilitate learning.
- Encourage students to do their own work. They are not learning if we do it for them or turn the other cheek when they copy.
- Have high expectations of all students.
- Motivate student to do his/her *personal* best.
- Be pleasant.
- Use nonverbal cues.
- Arrive on time.
- Follow classroom routines.
- Enforce classroom and school rules.
- Observe confidentiality; please communicate your concerns to teachers and administrators, not to student's parents or friends.
- Refocus off task students.
- Write down assignments.
- Use the materials and activities along with the class; do not engage in personal activities of reading magazines, books, and text messages.
- Take notes.
- Relay information back to Case Manager/Resource Room Teacher.
- Treat all students with respect and dignity; sometimes students will "rub" us the wrong way – we need to keep our personal feelings out of it.
- Have a working knowledge of the assistive technology that your students have.
- Remember to use a lower volume when working with kids in small groups in the regular classroom setting.
- Support teacher decisions and instructions, even if you disagree. If you have a concern, please follow the Chain of Communication.

While you may feel you are not on stage in class, students are aware of all adults in the classroom. It is important that you model appropriate dress, language, and behavior. Students know when you are not doing what they are. Please, even if you are bored, if in the classroom, participate in the manner that is appropriate.

### **ONE MAJOR DON'T – DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY!**

If a student does not get an "A" or a "B" on a test or assignment, you can not own that. A "C" may be the best this student can do. Be supportive and turn it into a positive.

If a student does terrible, use it as a teaching experience. Help the student see what they could've done better to get ready for the next assignment. Your work is to support the student and his/her learning. You are not responsible for their grades. And remember, students with disabilities who have not done their work, have as much right to fail as students without disabilities.

## Emergency Procedures

It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the emergency procedures in your building and for any students assigned to you.

- Fire drills and emergency evacuation procedures. Your building principal will provide you with emergency evacuation and fire drill procedures.
- Universal precautions. Your building principal will provide you with training and information on universal precautions.
- School code of conduct and discipline. Make sure you read the school code of conduct and discipline procedures for your building. The principal can provide you with a copy.
- Medical emergencies. Again make sure you are aware of the building procedures for medical emergencies. Also be sure to make note of any medical alerts for the students for whom you are responsible. Medical alerts are noted on the front of the IEP. The school nurse and special education teacher can provide you with additional information about your students' medical needs and procedures.

## Helping with Testing Accommodations

### What are test accommodations?

The appropriate provision of test accommodations provides students with disabilities an equitable opportunity to demonstrate acquired knowledge and abilities during the administration of State and local tests. The provision of test accommodations is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### Who decides what accommodations a student will receive?

Test accommodations to be afforded to a student are determined by the Committee on Special Education for students with IEPs; the Section 504 Committee for students with 504 plans; and the Building Principal for students who become disabled immediately prior to administration of district or State examinations and for building level examinations.

### Who administers test accommodations?

Building principals must ensure that test accommodations are consistently administered to students with disabilities, as specified in the IEP or 504 Accommodation Plan.

Individuals administering or proctoring tests must implement the test accommodations **exactly as stated on the student's plan**. Teachers administering tests and proctors may not provide additional accommodations to a student, nor can they decide that an accommodation is not appropriate.

### How are specific accommodations implemented?

The following provides guidelines on the administration of specific test accommodations.

- **Directions read:** the proctor must read the directions for each section/item to the student. Only directions are read. Questions, passages, response choices may not be read.
- **Directions clarified:** the proctor must simplify the language in the directions. The proctor may answer the student's question about the directions without giving clues to the answer. The proctor should be sure that the student understands the instructions, but should not provide any additional information.
- **Test read:** the proctor must read the entire test, including directions, passages, questions, response choices, and words on graphs, tables, etc. Content must be read in a neutral manner, without intoning, emphasizing or otherwise drawing attention to key words and phrases. Except for directions, passages and items must be read word for word, without clarification or explanation. (For teacher developed tests, the teacher may determine the extent to which any clarification can be provided without compromising test validity.) Questions can be read, but cannot be clarified or simplified. Only directions can be clarified. The content can be read more than once.
- **Read isolated words or content specific words:** the proctor must read words that are isolated, i.e. single words that are response choices, single words in analogies or similar type questions. The proctor must also read difficult words that are specific to the test subject. The proctor may read words that the student asks him/her to read so long as the word is isolated or a word specific to the subject of the test (science, history, etc.).

- **Use of word processor:** the proctor must ensure that the student has access to a word processor. The spell check and grammar check must be disabled on the word processor, unless the student also has test accommodations deleting requirements for spelling/grammar.
- **Use of scribe (amanuensis):** the proctor (scribe) records the response exactly as dictated by the student. For essay items, the student must provide the spelling of more difficult words, punctuation, paragraphing, etc. The scribe may record the dictation of the student without any punctuation, paragraphing, capitalization, etc. and then have the student read the essay and indicate the punctuation, paragraphing, capitalization, etc. The scribe must record responses in a neutral manner without questioning the student or using body language that will provide the student with cues to errors, etc. (If a student also is exempt from spelling, the scribe need not have the student provided spelling of difficult words.)
- **Frequent breaks:** the proctor must notify the student when he/she is allowed to take a break as specified on the student's IEP. The proctor must ensure the integrity of the test by ensuring that the student is supervised during the break. The proctor must record the duration of all breaks and add this time to the total time allowed for the test. The student is not to lose test administration time due to the breaks taken.

### **What to do if a student refuses an accommodation?**

If a student refuses an accommodation that is listed on his/her IEP or 504 plan, the proctor must explain to the student that the accommodation is provided to him/her due to his/her disability and will provide the student an equal opportunity to demonstrate his/her knowledge. If the student continues to refuse the accommodation, the proctor should attempt to have the student's special education teacher or school counselor speak with the student and explain the reason for the test accommodation. If the student continues to refuse the accommodation, the proctor should document the refusal and notify the student's IEP case manager or the school counselor (for students with 504 plans) of the refusal. In the case of high stakes tests (State examinations, district-wide examinations) the special education teacher or school counselor should notify the building principal who may elect to contact the student's parent.

# Special Education Program Descriptions

## **Program: Related Services**

**Level:** K-12

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students who need educationally related therapies (speech, occupational, physical therapies, adapted physical education, or counseling) but do not need specialized instruction.

**Supports for Students:** Students may receive related services (speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, adapted physical education, and/or counseling) from 1-5 times per week.

**Supports for Staff:**

- The service provider communicates with the student's general education teacher(s) regarding instructional modifications, classroom accommodations, and testing accommodations relating to the student's disability and therapy goals and progress and seeks information regarding the student's performance in the general education class.
- The related service provider can also provide the general education teacher(s) with information on the student's disability and its impact on learning and the classroom.

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The service provider informs parents of the structure and routine of the therapeutic program at the start of the year.
- The therapist also provides the parent with suggestions of home activities for supporting attainment of IEP goals and objectives.
- The therapist provides the parents with a report of the student's progress on IEP goals and objectives with the same frequency as the general education teachers.

## **Program: Reading/Language Resource Room**

**Level:** Elementary, Middle, High School

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students with significant language and/or reading and writing deficits who require research-based language, reading, and writing instruction.

**Supports for Students:**

Resource Room

- Elementary: 5/45 minute sessions per week
- Middle School: 5/43 minute sessions per week
- High School: 4-5/43 minute sessions per week

Speech Language Therapy co-teaches in the resource room program

- Elementary: 3 times 30 per week
- Middle School: 2 times 43 per week
- High School: 2 times 43 per week

Paraprofessional support in ELA and Social Studies classes in elementary and middle school

**Supports for Staff:**

- The resource room teacher and speech pathologist communicate with the student's general education teacher(s) regarding instructional modifications, classroom accommodations, and testing accommodations relating to the student's disability and resource room goals and progress; and seek information regarding the student's performance in the general education class.

- The resource room teacher and speech pathologist can also provide the general education teacher(s) with information on the student's disability and its impact on learning and the classroom.
- At the MS and HS levels, the building administration and PPS department provide paraprofessional support to teachers in the provision of alternate locations and test proctoring for test accommodations that cannot be provided within the general education classes.

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The resource room teacher and speech pathologist inform parents of the purpose, structure, and routine of the Reading/Language resource room program at the start of the year.
- The resource room teacher and speech pathologist also provide the parent with suggestions of home activities for supporting attainment of IEP goals and objectives.
- The resource room teacher and speech pathologist provide the parents with a report of the student's progress on IEP goals and objectives with the same frequency as the general education teachers.
- The resource room teacher is available to assist parents in developing a home structure and routine for the student to complete homework and/or communicate school progress and performance.

**Program: Social Communication Resource Room**

**Level:** Elementary, Middle, High School

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students who may have average to above average cognitive abilities and significant deficits in social skills and pragmatic language skills. Students have an Autism spectrum diagnosis and have difficulty navigating social situations and the school environment.

**Supports for Students:**

Special homeroom to prepare for the day:

- 6<sup>th</sup> grade separate with special education teacher
- 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade special education teacher or paraprofessional integrated in homeroom
- HS special ed teacher available for support during homeroom

Resource Room

- Elementary:
  - Primary Grades: 3X30 minute sessions per week plus consultant teacher 150 minutes/week
  - Intermediate Grades: 2X30 minute sessions per week plus consultant teacher 150 minutes/week
- Middle School: 5/43 minute sessions per week
- High School: 4 or more 43 minute sessions per week

Speech Language Therapy co-teaches in the resource room program

- Elementary: 1 time per week in resource room and 1 time per week in classroom
- Middle School: 1 times per week
- High School: 1 times per week

Counseling and Social Skills Training

- Elementary: 1 time per week in resource room and 1 time per week in classroom
- Middle School: 1 time per week co-taught with resource room teacher
- High School: 1 time per month co-taught with resource room teacher, individual counseling as needed.
- OT consultation available for students with sensory needs.

Paraprofessional support is available in general education classes

**Supports for Staff:**

- The resource room teacher and speech pathologist communicate with the student's general education teacher(s) regarding instructional modifications, classroom accommodations, and testing accommodations relating to the student's disability and resource room goals and progress and seeks information regarding the student's performance in the general education setting.
- The resource room teacher and speech pathologist also provide the general education teacher(s) with information on the student's disability and its impact on learning and the classroom.
- At the high school level the IEP case manager supports the student in meetings with the administration.
- At the MS and HS levels, the building administration and PPS department provide paraprofessional support to teachers in the provision of alternate locations and test proctoring for test accommodations that cannot be provided within the general education classes.

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The resource room teacher and speech pathologist inform parents of the structure and routine of the resource room program at the start of the year.
- The resource room teacher and speech pathologist also provide the parent with suggestions of home activities for supporting attainment of IEP goals and objectives.
- The resource room teacher and speech pathologist provide the parents with a report of the student's progress on IEP goals and objectives with the same frequency as the general education teachers.
- The resource room teacher is available to assist parents in developing a home structure and routine for the student to complete homework and/or communicate school progress and performance.
- Training for parents on the needs of students (for example: homework, social integration in the community, college application process) is provided 4 times per year.

**Program: Learning Support Resource Room**

**Level:** Elementary, Middle, and High School

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students with average or above average cognitive skills who have discrepant math, reading, or writing skills and/or deficits in metacognitive skills, self-determination, or advocacy. Students may also require minimal related services.

**Supports for Students:**

Resource Room

- Elementary: 5/45 minute sessions per week
- Middle School
  - 5/43 minute sessions per week (for students with reading, writing, and/or math goals)
  - 2-5/30 minutes sessions per week (for students without reading, writing, and/or math goals)
- High School
  - 4 or 5/43 minute sessions per week (for students with reading, writing, and/or math goals)
  - 1-5/43 minute sessions per week (for students without reading, writing, and/or math goals)

**Supports for Staff:**

- The resource room teacher communicates with the student's general education teacher(s) regarding instructional modifications, classroom accommodations, and testing

accommodations relating to the student's disability and resource room goals and progress and seeks information regarding the student's performance in the general education class.

- The resource room teacher can also provide the general education teacher(s) with information on the student's disability and its impact on learning and the classroom.

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The resource room teacher informs parents of the structure and routine of the resource room program at the start of the year.
- The resource room teacher and related services staff also provide the parent with suggestions of home activities for supporting attainment of IEP goals and objectives.
- The resource room teacher provides the parents with a report of the student's progress on IEP goals and objectives with the same frequency as the general education teachers.
- The resource room teacher is available to assist parents in developing a home structure and routine for the student to complete homework and/or communicate school progress and performance.

**Program: Organization & Writing Resource Room**

**Level:** Elementary, Middle, High School

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students who may have low average to above average cognitive abilities and significant deficits in organization skills and grapho-motor skills. Students may have a diagnosis of Nonverbal Learning Disability or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Students may also have some difficulties with social skills and self regulation.

**Supports for Students:**

Resource Room

- Elementary:
  - Primary Grades: 3x30 minutes per week plus consultant teacher 150minutes/week
  - Intermediate Grades: 5x45 minutes per week
- Middle School: 5/43 minute sessions per week
- High School: 5/43 minute sessions per week

Assistive Technology service: 1 time per week in resource room

Assistive Technology devices: Alpha Smart or other word processing device with organization software available in resource room and ELA class

Social Work

- Elementary: 1 time per week group
- Middle School: as needed
- High School: as needed

Occupational Therapy: consultation quarterly

Paraprofessional support is available in general education classes

- Elementary: in all classes
- Middle School: as needed
- High School: as needed

**Supports for Staff:**

- The resource room teacher communicates with the student's general education teacher(s) regarding instructional modifications, classroom accommodations, and testing accommodations relating to the student's disability and resource room goals and progress.
- The resource room teacher can also provide the general education teacher(s) with information on the student's disability and its impact on learning, communication and social skills in the classroom.

- The Assistive Technology specialist provides the resource teacher with consultation and training on assistive technology and devices for organization and writing.
- At the MS and HS levels, the building administration and PPS department provide paraprofessional support to teachers in the provision of alternate locations and test proctoring for test accommodations that cannot be provided within the general education classes.

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The resource room teacher informs parents of the structure and routine of the resource room program at the start of the year.
- The resource room teacher and related services staff provide the parents with suggestions of home activities for supporting attainment of IEP goals and objectives.
- The resource room teacher provides the parents with a report of the student's progress on IEP goals and objectives with the same frequency as the general education teachers.
- The resource room teacher is available to assist parents in developing a home structure and routine for the student to complete homework, organization, and/or communicate school progress and performance.

**Program: Academic Support Integrated Class**

**Level:** Kindergarten

**Program Description:** This class is designed for students who have low average to above average cognitive abilities who demonstrate basic school readiness skills. They require differentiated instruction and curricular modifications in all academic areas. Students in this class demonstrate poor organization and attention and may require behavioral supports for behaviors that affect learning. They benefit from presets and supports for transitions and may have some difficulty with social skills. The instructional program is based on the New York State learning standards and the district's grade level expectations.

**Supports for Students:**

- Paraprofessional support through an access aide
- 1:1 aide, if appropriate
- Related services as stated on the IEP
- OT consultation for sensory needs
- Counseling pushed into special class for social skills training
- Behavior management plans and FBAs, if appropriate

**Supports for Staff:**

- Designated team for program.
- The related service providers communicate with the student's teacher regarding instructional modifications, classroom accommodations, relating to the student's disability and goals and progress.
- The teachers, aides and related service providers are provided training on behavior management.
- The social worker and/or behavioral specialist conduct Functional Behavioral Assessments and develop behavior management plans, as needed, to assist teachers in improving these students' abilities to transition and in navigating the school environment.

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The teacher and the related service providers inform parents of the structure and routine of the Co-Taught Program at the start of the year. The teacher also provides the parents with suggestions of home activities for supporting attainment of IEP goals and objectives.

- The teachers and related service staff provide the parents with a report of the student's progress on IEP goals and objectives with the same frequency as the general education teachers.
- The teacher and related service staff are available to assist parents in developing a home structure and routine for the student to complete homework, organization, and/or communicate school progress and performance.
- The social worker informs parents of the behavior management plan and provides assistance to the family in supporting the plan.

**Program: Social Communication Integrated Class**

**Level:** Kindergarten

**Program Description:** Students in this class demonstrate average to above average intelligence and are usually at or above grade level for academics. They demonstrate social skills deficits due to characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder or mental health disorder. These students have varying levels of adaptive behaviors such as poor self-regulation and poor coping skills for changes or transitions and may need 'breaks' throughout the day. The instructional program is based on the New York State learning standards and the district's grade level expectations.

**Supports for Students:**

- Paraprofessional support through an access aide
- 1:1 aide, if appropriate
- Related services integrated within the classroom, whenever possible
- Behavior management plans and FBAs, if appropriate
- Social skills training and counseling
- OT Consultation for sensory needs.

**Supports for Staff:**

- Designated team for program.
- The related service providers communicate with the student's teacher regarding instructional modifications, classroom accommodations, relating to the student's disability and resource room goals and progress.
- The teachers, aides and related service providers are provided consultation and training on behavior management.
- The social worker and/or behavioral specialist conduct Functional Behavioral Assessments and develop behavior management plans to assist teachers in improving these students' abilities to transition and to navigate the school environment.
- The social worker assists the teacher in implementing social skills training daily.
- OT consultation is available for students with sensory needs (weekly until December and then quarterly).

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The teacher and related service providers inform parents of the structure and routine of the program at the start of the year. The teacher also provides the parents with suggestions of home activities for supporting attainment of IEP goals and objectives.
- The teachers and related services staff provide the parents with a report of the student's progress on IEP goals and objectives with the same frequency as the general education teachers.
- The teacher is available to assist parents in developing a home structure and routine for the student to complete homework, organization, and/or communicate school progress and performance.

- The social worker informs parents of the behavior management plan and provides assistance to the family in supporting the plan.
- Parent training on issues related to Autism Spectrum Disorders 4x/year.

**Program: Special Class Integrated (Co-taught Program)**

**Level:** Elementary

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students who may have low average to above average cognitive abilities (not severe to profound cognitive deficits) and are significantly below grade level in reading and/or math (at or below the 25%ile). These students require differentiated instruction and instructional modifications. They may have difficulties with language skills, motor skills, self-regulation, transitions, and may need a behavior management plan. They may need redirection and support from a classroom aide, presets and supports with classroom transitions. The program is designed to prepare students to benefit from instruction and assisting them in achieving the district's grade level expectations in core academics and State learning standards. This class is limited to 6 students with disabilities in a classroom co-taught by a special education teacher and a general education teacher. Speech therapy is often provided within the instructional program and ELA can be co-taught with the speech therapist and the teachers. The student's related services needs can be met within the co-teach model (OT, PT, SL, SW) without disrupting the student's instruction or the co-teaching program.

**Supports for Students:**

- Direct consultant teacher daily
- Tutorial special education class daily
- Paraprofessional support through an access aide
- 1:1 aide, if appropriate
- Related services individually, in small groups
- Behavior management plans and FBAs, if appropriate

**Supports for Staff:**

- The teachers, aides and related service providers are provided training on behavior management.
- The social worker and/or behavioral specialist conduct Functional Behavioral Assessments and develop behavior management plans to assist teachers in improving these students' abilities to transition and in navigating the school environment.
- The social worker assists the teacher in implementing social skills training daily.
- Consultation will be provided to staff of this program on the development, implementation and assessment of research-based reading instruction, including model lessons and specific strategies for students struggling with reading.

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The teachers and providers inform parents of the structure and routine of the Co-Taught Program at the start of the year. The teacher also provides the parents with suggestions of home activities for supporting attainment of IEP goals and objectives.
- The teachers and related service staff provide the parents with a report of the student's progress on IEP goals and objectives with the same frequency as the general education teachers.
- The teachers are available to assist parents in developing a home structure and routine for the student to complete homework, organization, and/or communicate school progress and performance.
- The social worker or behavioral specialists informs parents of the behavior management plan and provides assistance to the family in supporting the plan.

**Program: Special Class Integrated (Co-taught program)**

**Level:** Middle, High School

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students who have below average to low average cognitive abilities and significant deficits in core academics. Students have below average ELA and math skills and well below grade level reading skills. Students may also have broad language deficits, difficulty with organization and study skills, and difficulty with self-determination and self-advocacy.

**Services and Supports:** Students in this program need

- Co-teaching support:
  - Middle School: Co-teaching support in the ELA, math, science, and social studies general education classes from either the special education teacher or paraprofessional. Students may require modified grading.
  - High School: Special education teacher co-teaches in English, math, science, and social studies courses required for graduation. Students may require modified grading.
- Speech language therapy:
  - Middle School: language class 2/ 30 minute sessions per week
  - High School: Speech language therapist co-teaches in English class
- Special Education
  - Middle School: 5/43 minute sessions per week of special education tutorial for preteaching and reteaching of concepts and direct instruction in reading and math
  - High School: 4-5/43 minute sessions of Resource room support
- Middle School: Homework club after school for support with starting homework assignments

**Supports for School Personnel:**

- The special education teacher co-plans instruction with the general education teacher(s) and supports differentiation of instruction and curricular accommodations. The special education teacher also communicates with the student's general education teacher(s) regarding testing accommodations relating to the student's disability and the IEP goals and progress.
- The special education teacher provides the general education teacher(s) with information on the student's disability and its impact on learning and the classroom.
- The special education teacher and behavior specialist conduct functional behavioral assessments, as needed, and develop and monitor behavior plans to assist teachers in increasing student's independent work, classroom focus, etc.

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The special education teacher provides information to parents on the purpose and structure of the academic support program at the start of the school year
- The special education teacher is available to assist the parents in developing a structure and routine for the student to complete homework and/or communicate school progress and performance to parents on a regular basis

The special education teacher and speech language therapist provide the parents with a report of the student's progress on IEP goals and objectives with the same frequency as the general education teachers.

**Program: Inclusion Class with Modified Curriculum**

**Level:** Elementary, Middle, High School

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students with moderate to profound cognitive deficits who may be eligible for NYS alternate assessment. Their curriculum and grading are modified. These students are included in general education classes with the assistance of a consultant teacher and supported by specialized instruction in reading, math and pro-social skills in a special class

(12:1:3). The consultant teacher collaborates with the general education teacher on modifying the instruction and grading. These students also require direct language instruction and/or therapy, pre-teaching and re-teaching of general education curricular concepts and vocabulary. These students are included in a general education classroom as much as possible.

**Supports for Students:**

Elementary

Special Class (Direct instruction in reading and math and pre-teaching and re-teaching of general education curricular concepts): 5x75 minute sessions per week

Consultant Teacher 120 minutes/week

Speech therapy 3x30 in therapy room and 2x30 in classroom

Social Worker co teaching social skills 2x30 in special class

Middle School and High School

Special class ELA 5x43

Special class math 5x43

Special class tutorial 5x43 per week (pre-teaching and re-teaching of general education curricular concepts)

Social Studies: Consultant Teacher 90 minutes/week or special class 5x43 per week

Science: Consultant Teacher 90 minutes/week or special class 5x43 per week

Elective: Consultant Teacher 90 minutes/week or special class 5x43 per week

Adapted PE available as needed

PT and OT available as needed

**Supports for Staff:**

- The special class teacher and consultant teacher and speech pathologist communicate with the student's general education teacher(s) regarding instructional modifications, classroom accommodations, and testing accommodations relating to the student's disability and resource room goals and progress; and seek information regarding the student's performance in the general education class.
- The special education teacher and speech pathologist can also provide the general education teacher(s) with information on the student's disability and its impact on learning and the classroom.
- At the MS and HS levels, the building administration and PPS department provide paraprofessional support to teachers in the provision of alternate locations and test proctoring for test accommodations that cannot be provided within the general education classes.
- Special Education teacher/providers communicate regularly with general education teachers providing information on student's needed accommodations, instructional modifications, progress on IEP objectives and seeking information on student's class performance and needs.
- Behavior specialist coordinates FBA and BIP development, implementation and evaluation, as needed

**Program: Primary Skills Special Class**

**Level:** Elementary

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students who may have below average to above average cognitive abilities with significant developmental delays, management needs and below average social skills. Students have significant difficulties with language skills, motor skills, self-regulation, transitions, and may need a behavior management plan. Students benefit from frequent pre-sets and changes in activities. They require an intensive staff ratio of 12:1:2 in a structured classroom environment. The students need intensive speech therapy, OT, and counseling services

that are integrated for a period of time each day into the classroom. These students may struggle with reading and/or writing and require research-based language, reading, and writing instruction.

**Supports for Students:**

- 2 Paraprofessionals and 1:1 aides, if appropriate
- Related services integrated into the classroom
- Behavior management plans and FBAs, if appropriate
- Social skills training and counseling

**Supports for Staff:**

- The behavioral specialist will support the special education teacher in the development of the classroom management plan, coordinate complete individual functional behavioral assessments and behavior management plans to assist teachers in improving these students' abilities to benefit from instruction and in navigating the school environment. These plans will be based on a positive behavioral approach.
- All staff (teachers, aides, providers) will be trained on behavior management.
- A consultant will provide monthly consultation to the staff of this program on program design, research-based approaches to instruction and specific student issues. Additional training for staff will be provided, if needed.
- Speech therapy, OT and counseling that are integrated for a period of time daily as components of this program.
- For students who are receiving reading instruction a reading specialist will provide monthly consultation to staff on the development, implementation and assessment of research-based reading instruction, including model lessons and specific strategies for students.
- The social worker assists the teacher in implementing social skills training daily.

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The teacher and providers will inform parents of the structure and routine of the program at the start of the year. The teacher also provides the parents with suggestions of home activities for supporting attainment of IEP goals and objectives.
- The teachers and related services staff provide the parents with a report of the student's progress on IEP goals and objectives with the same frequency as the general education teachers.
- The teacher is available to assist parents in developing a home structure and routine for the student to complete homework, organization, and/or communicate school progress and performance.
- The social worker and/or behavioral specialist inform parents of the behavior management plan and provide assistance to the family in supporting the plan.
- The consultant provides training for parents quarterly to help parents assist their children in attaining IEP goals and in helping parents understand their child's disability.

**Program: Intermediate Skills Special Class**

**Level:** Elementary

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students who may have below average to above average cognitive abilities with significant academic and management needs. These students have significant language and/or reading and writing deficits and require research-based language, reading, and writing instruction. Students have significant difficulties with academics, language skills, motor skills, self-regulation, transitions, and may need a behavior management plan. The students need intensive speech therapy, OT, and counseling services that are integrated for a period of time each day into the classroom. Students are integrated into general education classrooms as appropriate.

**Supports for Students:**

- Paraprofessional and 1:1 aides, if appropriate
- Related services integrated into the classroom
- Behavior management plans and FBAs, if appropriate
- Social skills training and counseling

**Supports for Staff:**

- The behavioral specialist will support the special education teacher in the development of the classroom management plan, coordinate complete individual functional behavioral assessments and behavior management plans to assist teachers in improving these students' abilities to benefit from instruction and in navigating the school environment. These plans will be based on a positive behavioral approach.
- All staff (teachers, aides, providers) will be trained on behavior management.
- A consultant will provide monthly consultation to the staff of this program on program design, research-based approaches to instruction and specific student issues. Additional training for staff will be provided, if needed.
- Related services are integrated for a period of time each day into the classroom.
- A reading specialist will provide monthly consultation to staff of this program on the development, implementation and assessment of research-based reading instruction, including model lessons and specific strategies for students struggling with reading.
- The teacher communicates with the student's general education teacher(s) regarding instructional modifications, classroom accommodations, and testing accommodations relating to the student's disability, IEP goals and progress.
- The social worker assists the teacher in implementing social skills training daily.

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The teacher and providers will inform parents of the structure and routine of the Intermediate Skills Program at the start of the year. The teacher also provides the parents with suggestions of home activities for supporting attainment of IEP goals and objectives.
- The teacher and related service staff provide the parents with a report of the student's progress on IEP goals and objectives with the same frequency as the general education teachers.
- The teacher is available to assist parents in developing a home structure and routine for the student to complete homework, organization, and/or communicate school progress and performance.
- The social worker and/or behavioral specialist inform parents of the behavior management plan and provide assistance to the family in supporting the plan.
- The consultant provides training for parents quarterly to help parents assist their children in attaining IEP goals and in helping parents understand their child's disability.

**Program: Primary Intensive Skills Special Class**

**Level:** Elementary

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students with below to average cognitive deficits. These students have varying learning abilities, adaptive behaviors and limited processing ability. They demonstrate behaviors that interfere with learning, significant sensory needs that may require environmental adaptations, difficulty in executive functioning and organization. They need direct instruction in social skills and friendship development. They require a supportive learning environment that has constant and consistent adult direction and support. They require enhanced supports in accessing general education, peer networking and opportunities for peer interaction to practice pro-social skills.

**Supports for Students:**

- 4 Paraprofessionals and 1:1 aides, if appropriate
- Related services integrated into the classroom
- Behavior management plans and FBAs, if appropriate
- Social skills training
- Consulting psychiatrist, as needed
- Classroom consultant, as needed

**Supports for Staff:**

- The behavioral specialist will support the special education teacher in the development of the classroom management plan, coordinate complete individual functional behavioral assessments and behavior management plans to assist teachers in improving these students' abilities to benefit from instruction and in navigating the school environment. These plans will be based on a positive behavioral approach.
- All staff (teachers, aides, providers) will be trained on discrete trial, data collection, program design, social skills training and positive behavior management
- A consultant will provide consultation to the staff on program design, research-based approaches to instruction and specific student issues.
- Additional training and planning time for staff will be provided.
- Speech therapy, OT and counseling that are integrated for a period of time daily as components of this program.
- The social worker assists the teacher in implementing social skills training daily.

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The team (special education and general education teachers, behavior specialist, providers and the CSE Chairperson) will provide information to parents on the structure and design of the student's program at the start of the year.
- Develop a plan on family coaching that is student and family specific.
- Behavior specialist is available to help parents support educational and behavioral plans at home.
- Training is available throughout the year to parents on the needs of students (minimum of four times a year).
- The team will develop and implement a communication plan for each family.

**Program: Intermediate Intensive Skills Special Class**

**Level:** Intermediate

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students with below to average cognitive deficits. These students have varying learning abilities, adaptive behaviors and limited processing ability. They demonstrate behaviors that interfere with learning, significant sensory needs that may require environmental adaptations, difficulty in executive functioning and organization. They need direct instruction in social skills and friendship development. They require a supportive learning environment that has constant and consistent adult direction and support. They require enhanced supports in accessing general education, peer networking and opportunities for peer interaction to practice pro-social skills.

**Supports for Students:**

- 4 Paraprofessionals
- Related services integrated into the classroom
- Behavior management plans and FBAs, if appropriate
- Social skills training
- Speech therapy is provided daily

**Supports for Staff:**

- The behavioral specialist will support the special education teacher in the development of the classroom management plan, coordinate complete individual functional behavioral assessments and behavior management plans to assist teachers in improving these students' abilities to benefit from instruction and in navigating the school environment. These plans will be based on a positive behavioral approach.
- All staff (teachers, aides, providers) will be trained on discrete trial, data collection, program design, social skills training and positive behavior management.
- The CSE Chairperson will provide coaching to staff on program implementation.
- A consultant will provide consultation to the staff and CSE Chairperson on program design, research-based approaches to instruction and specific student issues.
- Speech therapy is provided daily.
- Psychiatric consultation for students, as needed

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The team (special education and general education teachers, behavior specialist, providers and the CSE Chairperson) will provide information to parents on the structure and design of the student's program at the start of the year.
- Develop a plan on family coaching that is student and family specific.
- Behavior specialist is available to help parents support educational and behavioral plans at home.
- Training is available throughout the year to parents on the needs of students (minimum of four times a year).
- The team will develop and implement a communication plan for each family.

**Program: Social Communication Class**

**Level:** Middle School

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students who may have average to above average cognitive abilities and significant deficits in social skills and pragmatic language skills. Students have a social and communication disorder and have difficulty navigating social situations and the school environment.

**Student Supports:** Students in this program need

- Special Class with a special education teacher and three special education paraprofessionals available throughout the day
- Counseling and behavioral support service available daily within the classroom
- Counseling group and individual
- Paraprofessional support in general education classes

**Supports for Staff:**

- The special education teacher and behavioral psychologist communicate with the student's general education teacher(s) regarding instructional modifications, classroom accommodations, and testing accommodations relating to the student's disability and seeks information regarding the student's performance in the general education setting.
- The special education teacher and behavioral psychologist provide the general education teacher(s) with information on the student's disability and its impact on learning and the classroom.
- Psychiatrist provides consultation and training to the student's team as needed.
- Crisis team is available to the students and staff as needed.
- The behavioral psychologist conduct Functional Behavioral Assessments, as needed, and develop behavior management plans to assist teachers in improving these students' abilities to transition and in navigating the school environment.

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The special education teacher and behavioral psychologist inform parents of the structure and routine of the Social Communication program at the start of the year. The special education teacher and behavioral psychologist also provide the parent with suggestions of home activities for supporting attainment of IEP goals and objectives.
- The special education teacher provides the parents with a report of the student's progress on IEP goals and objectives with the same frequency as the general education teachers.
- The special education teacher and psychologist are available to assist parents in developing a home structure and routine for the student to complete homework, organization, and/or communicate school progress and performance.
- The psychologist informs parents of the behavior management plan and provides assistance to the family in supporting the plan.
- The social worker communicates regularly with the family and the student's community-based mental health providers and assists the family in accessing community services.

**Program: Social Development Program**

**Level:** Elementary, Middle School, High School

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students with average or above cognitive abilities and grade level academic skills who have significant social and emotional needs. Students have a mental health diagnosis. Students do not have significant disruptive or aggressive behavior.

**Services and Supports:** Students in this program need

- Special class support available throughout the day
- Counseling service available daily
- Counseling group and individual, as needed
- Paraprofessional support in general education classes as needed

**Supports for Staff:**

- The special education teacher and behavior specialist communicate with the student's general education teacher(s) regarding instructional modifications, classroom accommodations, and testing accommodations relating to the student's disability and seeks information regarding the student's performance in the general education setting.
- The special education teacher and behavior specialist provide the general education teacher(s) with information on the student's disability and its impact on learning and the classroom.
- The special education teacher and behavior specialist support the student in meetings with administration at the high school level.
- Psychiatrist provides consultation and training to the student's team as needed.
- Crisis team is available to the students and staff as needed.
- The behavioral specialist conduct Functional Behavioral Assessments, as needed, and develop behavior management plans to assist teachers in improving these students' abilities to transition and in navigating the school environment.

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The special education teacher informs parents of the structure and routine of the Social Development program at the start of the year. The special education teacher also provides the parent with suggestions of home activities for supporting attainment of IEP goals and objectives.
- The special education teacher provides the parents with a report of the student's progress on IEP goals and objectives with the same frequency as the general education teachers.

- The special education teacher and behavior specialist are available to assist parents in developing a home structure and routine for the student to complete homework, organization, and/or communicate school progress and performance.
- The behavior specialist informs parents of the behavior management plan and provides assistance to the family in supporting the plan.
- The social worker communicates regularly with the family and the student's community-based mental health providers

**Program: Functional and Life Skills Development Program**

**Level:** Middle School

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students with developmental delays who are pursuing an IEP diploma. Students in this program have limited cognitive abilities. Most students have appropriate social skills that are delayed and delayed adaptive behavior. Students may also have communication and motor delays.

**Supports for Students:**

- FLSI class is co-taught by Special Ed teacher and Speech-Language Pathologist
- FLSI reading/writing class is co-taught by Special Ed teacher, Speech-Language Pathologist, and Reading teacher to provide individualized and small group ELA instruction.
- Paraprofessional support is available to students, especially in the general education settings
- Students receive direct instruction in functional and life skills reading and math in the FSLI class.
- Students are included in general education homerooms, lunch, and home base with support
- Students have options for inclusion with modified grading or special class participation in science and social studies class
- Students may be included in an additional general education class with modified grading based on student interest
- Students may participate in general education PE or adapted PE
- Students receive speech and language support in the FLSI class and in general education settings
- Students receive counseling services within the FSLI class and in counseling groups
- Students have access to a wide variety of assistive technology and the assistive technology specialist provides weekly consultation in the program
- Additional related services of OT, PT are provided as needed

**Supports for Staff:**

- The special education teacher and speech pathologist work with the general education teacher(s) to determine instructional plans based on the NYS alternate performance standards for the general education class.
- The special education teacher also provides the general education teacher(s) with information on the student's disability and its impact on learning and the classroom.
- The speech therapist provides consultation and support to the special education and general education team on the student's language needs and strengths and carryover of speech and language goals in other settings.
- The reading teacher coordinates the reading instruction program for each student and provides reading consultation to the special education teacher and speech language pathologist. Individualized reading programs are developed for each student to foster reading across all environments.
- The Assistive Technology Specialist provides consultation and training to staff on hardware and software.

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The special education teacher and speech pathologist provide information to parents on the purpose and structure of the FLSI program at the start of the school year.
- The special education teacher is available to assist the parents in developing a structure and routine for the student to complete homework and/or communicate school progress and performance to parents on a regular basis.
- The special education teacher and other service providers provide the parents with a report of the student's progress on IEP goals and objectives with the same frequency as the general education teachers.

**Program: Life Skills Program**

**Level:** High School

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students with below average to low average cognitive abilities who are pursuing an IEP diploma. Students have below average academic skills and require a curriculum that focuses on life skill development for post high school transition. Students may have broad language deficits, difficulty with organization and study skills, and difficulty with self-determination and self-advocacy.

**Student Supports:**

- HS courses:
  - Junior year
    - Life Skills special classes (12:1:1) in Math and English
    - Career & Technical Education course through CR BOCES or BCCHS
    - PE
    - At least one elective course with modified grading.
  - Senior year
    - Life Skills special classes (12:1:1) in Math and English
    - Career & Technical Education course through CR BOCES or BCCHS
    - PE
    - At least one elective course with modified grading.
- Speech Language therapy co-taught in English class 2x/week
- Job coach available as needed for work experiences in junior and senior year.
- Transition support services (quarterly) push into English class in junior and senior year.

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The IEP case manager provides information to parents on the purpose and structure of the Life Skills program at the start of the school year
- The IEP case manager is available to assist the parents in developing a structure and routine for the student to complete homework and/or communicate school progress and performance to parents on a regular basis
- The Life Skills teachers provide the parents with a report of the student's progress on IEP goals and objectives with the same frequency as the general education teachers.
- The Transition Specialist supports the family in making decisions and accessing supports and services for post high school transition

**Program: Functional Skills Instruction Program**

**Level:** High School

**Program Description:** This program is designed for students with significant developmental delays who are eligible for the New York State Alternate Assessment and are pursuing an IEP diploma. Students in this class have limited cognitive abilities. Most students have appropriate social skills that

are delayed and delayed adaptive behavior. Students may also have communication and motor delays.

**Supports for Students:**

- Special Class with a special education teacher and two special education paraprofessionals that focuses on functional skills instruction and community-based skill development
- Speech Language Therapy: group session in the class with individual sessions as needed
- Counseling: group session in the class with individual sessions as needed
- The Assistive Technology Specialist provides weekly support to students on using assistive technology hardware and software.
- In early High School years, in-school jobs develop foundation work and life skills.
- In junior year and beyond:
  - Job coaching for community based work experiences in junior year and later
  - Transition support: A Transition Support Specialist works with the students and/or classroom team weekly to evaluate and support the student's needs for post high school transition
- Paraprofessional support in general education classes
- Students participate in limited general education classes that offer participation opportunities for active engagement in learning with skill development in communication, socialization, self-management, independence and self-determination.

**Supports for Staff:**

- The special education teacher works with the general education teacher(s) to determine instructional plans based on the NYS alternate performance standards for the general education class.
- The special education teacher also provides the general education teacher(s) with information on the student's disability and its impact on learning and the classroom.
- The speech therapist provides consultation and support to the special education and general education team on the student's language needs and strengths and carryover of speech and language goals in other settings.
- The Assistive Technology Specialist provides consultation and training to staff on hardware and software.
- The Transition Support Specialist works with the classroom team weekly to evaluate and support the student's needs for post high school transition

**Supports for Parents/Families:**

- The special education teacher provides information to parents on the purpose and structure of the FSI program at the start of the school year
- The special education teacher is available to assist the parents in developing a structure and routine for the student to complete homework and/or communicate school progress and performance to parents on a regular basis
- The special education teacher and other service providers provide the parents with a report of the student's progress on IEP goals and objectives with the same frequency as the general education teachers.
- The Transition Specialist supports the family in making decisions and accessing supports and services for post high school transition

## **Evaluation System for Paraprofessionals**

You will be evaluated by the principal in your building using the *Support Staff Evaluation Form*. The teachers you work with and the Supervisor of Special Education will provide input to the principal for your evaluation. The principal will complete the form in June prior to the end of the school year.

### **Substitutes**

You should check with the school secretary in your building regarding arrangements for a substitute. Some schools want you to notify the teacher you are working with first, while other schools will have you contact the person making the substitute arrangements. In the elementary buildings, the Principal does the calling for substitutes needed for the day. At the middle and high schools, a designated secretary makes the arrangements for substitutes. It is your responsibility to notify the building as soon as you know you will be absent from work for all or part of a day.

### **Benefits and Pay**

If you work more than half time (over 3.5 hours per day), you are entitled to benefits. All questions regarding benefits should be directed to the Business Office.

Paraprofessionals are paid on an hourly basis, according to the contract salary schedule. If you are entitled to a lunch break, this time is unpaid. Any questions regarding pay can be directed to the Payroll clerk in the Business Office.

The start date for paraprofessionals each school year is the first of student attendance. Paraprofessionals may be asked to work on one of the two teacher preparation days. A time sheet must be completed for this time worked.

Paraprofessionals are expected to work on each day of student attendance. Paraprofessionals are expected to work their standard work hours on each day of student attendance. At times, you may be asked to work additional hours for meetings, required training, or support of students in after or before school activities. A time sheet must be completed for these additional hours worked.

If you work more than half time (more than 3.5 hours per day), you are paid for all student days (180 days) plus 11 holidays.

### **Supervision**

While your supervisor is the building principal, your immediate direction, supervision, and support is provided by the classroom teacher and/or the special education teachers to whom you are assigned. In each classroom, you are responsible to the classroom teacher for direction within the classroom. The CSE Chairperson also provides direction and support through monthly meetings and professional development and training.

## Glossary of Acronyms and Terms

**Accommodations:** Techniques and materials for classrooms or testing that allow individuals with disabilities to complete school or work tasks without being limited or unfairly restricted due to the effects of the disability.

**Assistive Technology:** Equipment that enhances the ability of students to be more efficient and successful and not unfairly limited by the disability, such as spell checker, communication device, laptop computer.

**Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):** A severe difficulty in focusing and maintaining attention. The attention deficit may be characterized as hyperactive, impulsive, or mixed.

**504:** Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-112, Section 504)

**BCSD:** Bethlehem Central School District

**BIP:** Behavior Intervention Plan

**BOE:** Board of Education

**CPSE:** Committee on Preschool Special Education; A committee similar to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) dealing with preschool-age children with disabilities.

**CSE:** Committee on Special Education; A committee mandated by P.L. 94-142 whose purpose is to identify, evaluate, and recommend special education programs and services for students with disabilities.

**CST:** Child Study Team

**FAPE:** Free and Appropriate Public Education

**FBA:** Functional Behavior Assessment

**IDEA:** Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

**IEP:** Individual Education Program; A written plan that includes a statement of a child's present level of functioning, specific areas needing special services, annual goals, related services, educational adaptations and modifications, dates for implementation, and methods of evaluation.

**LD:** Learning Disabled; Children who exhibit a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using spoken or written language which manifests itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do arithmetic.

**LRE:** Least Restrictive Environment; Refers to the principle that students with disabilities should be educated with peers in a regular education setting to the greatest extent possible.

**PPS:** Pupil Personnel Services

**PST:** Pupil Services Team

**SLP:** Speech-language pathologist

**SWD:** Student with Disabilities

**VESID:** Vocational Education Services for Individuals with Disabilities is the NYS Office that oversees school programs for students with disabilities and also refers to the NYS and regional offices that support adults with disabilities in finding and maintaining jobs.