Topic Area: Collaboration

Module: Working Effectively with Paraeducators

Title: Effective Teachers Plan for and Supervise Paraeducators

Summary:

Jen, a special educator at an urban high school, is working collaboratively with paraeducators, itinerant staff, and regular educators to insure that the students on her case load are receiving quality educational services. In conjunction with these other staff, Jen is developing written lesson plan and schedules for the 4 paraeducators to follow. Jen understands that, as a special education teacher, she has a responsibility to manage and supervise the work of the paraeducators who are assigned to work in her classroom. Jen enlists the help of regular education teachers in planning for and supervising the paraeducators.

Characters and Roles

• Jen, Special Education Teacher
• Raymond, Physical Therapist
• Ken, Paraeducator
• Maria, Paraeducator
• Steven, Student Receiving Services from Special Education
• Don, Building Administrator
• Jack, an acquaintance of Ken
• Regular Education Teachers

Tools

• Planning for the Paraeducator
• Sharing Supervisory Responsibilities

Artifacts:

• Aram’s Daily Communication Sheet
• Goals for Aram
• Steven Sitting in a Regular Chair

Glossary Terms:

• Functional Activities
• Motor Challenges
• Lesson Plan
Web Sites:

- [http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/pek/training%20modules/latest/Module%202%20-%20Supervision%20of%20Paraeducators/Module%202,%20Unit%202,%20Trans.ppt](http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/pek/training%20modules/latest/Module%202%20-%20Supervision%20of%20Paraeducators/Module%202,%20Unit%202,%20Trans.ppt)
- [http://www.nwrac.org/para/guide/resources.html](http://www.nwrac.org/para/guide/resources.html)

Discussion Points:

- Whose responsibility is it to ensure that a student’s individual education plan (IEP) is fully implemented? Do the classroom teacher and the paraeducators have different responsibilities in this area?
- What types of systems or tools are needed to ensure that the IEPs are implemented? Can a teacher simply expect the paraeducators to know what to do?
- Paraeducators may spend their time in the special education classroom as well as several regular education classrooms. How does the teacher ensure that paraeducators are being given appropriate supervision? Is it okay for the teacher to tell the paraeducator, “just do what you think the student is capable of?”
- How might you deal with a performance problem with a paraeducator who knows how to do the work, but is unwilling to? How would this be different from a paraeducator who does not know how to do the work?

Activities:

- Role play what you might say to a regular education teacher to enlist the teacher’s help in supervising paraeducators. Think about what you might say so that the teacher understands your concerns and agrees to help.
- Role play a situation where you are discussing a performance problem with a paraeducator. Consider what you might say to the paraeducator that will keep the interaction positive, but at the same time convey the seriousness of the problem and the need for change.
- Make a list of common performance-related issues. Consider how you might deal with each of these.
- Develop a format that provides needed information for a paraeducator to implement an IEP objective (s). Include a method of data collection.

Reflective Question: Scene 4, Question 2 - Regular education teachers, like special educators, often don’t expect to be supervising adults in their classrooms. How might a special educator help a regular education teacher to enact more of a supervisory role? What might a special educator do if the regular educator refuses to take a more active role in working with paraeducators? *Teachers who feel accountable for students with disabilities are more likely to feel a responsibility for working with paraeducators. So as a first step, in your interactions with teachers use language that reinforces their*
responsibilities such as, “how have you decided to modify the work” or “what would you like to see Steven accomplish”. Then point out to the teacher how the paraeducator can assist in the process. “Once you decide on the test questions, Susan can type them for you.” Indicate to teachers helpful roles that the paraeducators can play in their classrooms such as taking attendance, grading papers, and helping students with seat work. Teachers who feel supported may be more likely to offer support and direction. Consider making staffing changes when necessary. Use other teachers to influence teacher practices with paraeducators. Ask administrators to discuss teachers’ work with paraeducators during teacher performance reviews.