

Personal Influence and Responsibility

I Hold the Key

I've come to the frightening conclusion that I am
the decisive element in the classroom.

It is my personal approach that creates the climate.

It is my daily mood that makes the weather.

I possess a tremendous power to
make another person's life joyous or miserable.

I can be an instrument of inspiration or a tool of torture.

I can humiliate or honor; hurt or heal.

In all situations, it is my response
That decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated;
and another person humanized or de-humanized.

I hold the key!

Am I opening doors or locking them?

Haim Ginott

Basic Strategies For Clear Communication

- Actively work to create a climate of cooperation, trust, respect, and loyalty by meeting regularly; discuss procedures/techniques that will establish and maintain open channels of communication.
- Attitudes and feelings of all staff need to be known, respected, and understood.
 - Deal openly with: roles/duties; students; instructional styles; management issues; valuing others opinions, etc.
- An understanding of the similarities/differences among the team members.
 - Educational strategies; values; cultural differences; experience; expertise; etc.
- Actively seek to develop/share a common vocabulary and a system of non-verbal cues.
- Make sure directions and expectations are clearly stated and understood.
- Team members must be willing to ask for clarification and/or assistance, if a task is not understood.
- Determine what special interests, talents, and training each member has that will compliment and enhance his/her own skills and improve over-all programming.

Communication: Listening Skills

1. Want to listen
2. Act like a good listener
3. Listen to understand
4. React
5. Stop talking
6. Empathize with the other person
7. Ask questions
8. Concentrate on what the other person is saying
9. Look/smile appropriately at the person
10. Be respectful of the speaker
11. Leave your emotions behind
12. Get rid of distractions
13. Get the main points
14. Share responsibility for communication
15. Don't argue mentally
16. Avoid hasty judgments

LISTENING CAN BE FUN!

Essential Guidelines For a Team Approach

1. A comfortable working climate

Climate refers to the way team members feel about working together or the mood that prevails in the group. Members must be willing to listen to each other and have the freedom to speak frankly without feeling threatened.

2. Cooperation of team members

Cooperation is the key element in all team-building behavior. Each member must contribute and participate willingly. Allow and encourage other team members to contribute and participate.

3. Commitment to team goals

Each member must be committed to the team's purpose and goals, not to individual and/or personal goals.

4. Individuality of team members

Provision must be made for maintaining each team member's individuality without sacrificing the unity of the group. Individual differences and characteristics are valued. The strengths and weaknesses of each member are recognized.

5. Manage conflict

It is inevitable that conflict will arise. When a team can't cope with conflict, it will have a difficult time making decisions. Where differences are resolved constructively, new ideas can occur.

Recognizing and Addressing Competitive Behaviors

Students in special education have complex needs that are best assessed and addressed when parents, general educators and special educators work cooperatively, rather than competitively. Yet sometimes the interpersonal dynamics can become competitive.

If a team member's behavior becomes competitive (left column below), the team should:

- 1) Consider the CONTEXT. – What conditions (see below) might contribute to a feeling of competition? What can be done to address these conditions?

- 2) Refocus all team members on the COMMON GOAL - student well being, inclusion, and achievement.

Competitive	Cooperative
Pursues own goals	Pursues common goals
Secrecy	Openness
Misrepresentation of need	Accurate presentation of need
Unpredictable	Predictable
Threats and bluffs	Negotiations
Irrational	Logical and innovative
Forms bad stereotypes	Generates positive feelings

LOUELLEN ESSEX AND ASSOCIATES

Conditions Which Promote Conflict/Competition

1. Unclear rules/expectations
2. Policies and procedures
3. Turf protection
4. Managerial styles
5. Negative climate
6. Resource shortages
7. Philosophical differences

Heart Healthy Tips On Conflict Resolution

- It doesn't matter who "started it". Instead, work together to find a solution.
- Attack problems, not people. There should be no winners and no losers, just a solution.
- Listen to the other person and try to understand his/her concerns without judging. Listen with our heart.
- Tell the other person about our concerns. Start our sentences with "I" not "you". Especially avoid "you always _____", followed by a re-cap of past disputes. Focus on the here and now, and the future.
- When we state the problem, follow up with a positive, constructive suggestion on how to work through it.
- Know our objective. What do we want the other person to do? How do we want him/her to change behavior? How can I change my behavior? What are our own needs? Be specific. Be ready to listen, and to work on addressing and meeting those needs.
- Be respectful. Avoid name-calling and inflammatory words. Use language that will lead to a solution of the problem rather than escalate the level of anger/frustration.
- Do unto others, as I would have others do unto me!

Minnesota Medical Association Alliance

Ten Commandments of Consultative Success

1. Be daring to ask questions of skilled consultants.
2. Acknowledge that communication is perception.
3. Know when to talk and when to stop.
4. Figure out what counts.
5. Covet responsibility.
6. Learn to negotiate and compromise.
7. Give many compliments and thanks.
8. Be willing to say, "I don't know".
9. Ask for other ideas and opinions.
10. Work person-to-person and face-to-face versus role-to-role, email-to-email, etc.

Agenda Builder and Action Minutes

1. Agenda Builder

The Agenda Builder is intended to facilitate the development of an agenda for the team. The intent is to post the page in a conspicuous (remember confidentiality!) spot so all team members can write down agenda items as they think of them/occur during the time between team meetings.

2. Action Minutes

Action Minutes can be used during team meetings. The format is especially useful for documenting action decisions and specifying who is to follow-up on those decisions. It makes the minutes uniform and provides structure for addressing agenda items in a consistent manner. It also provides a written, historical summary to refer back to, and for staff who were not able to attend a meeting, to be aware of what happened.

Agenda Builder

Recorder _____ **Facilitator** _____

Meeting Date _____

Agenda Item **Discuss** **Decide** **Inform**

Action Minutes

Meeting:
Membership:
Date of next meeting:

Date:
Page

Handouts: Metro

Agenda Item	Summary of Discussion/Task List	Action Decision	Follow-up Responsibilities	Target Date/Completion

Guidelines For Working Effectively With Families

Joan K. Blaska, PhD

1. Understand how your **VALUES** and **ATTITUDES** affect the way you interact and work with families. Work to understand other's values but don't set out to change everybody.
2. Develop your own **COMMUNICATION SKILLS** so that you are skillful and effective at listening, interviewing, conveying sensitive information and working with parents as team members and partners.
3. Demonstrate utmost **RESPECT** to the children and families with whom you work. "Respect begets respect".
4. **EMPOWER** the families with whom you work by providing them with information and helping them develop skills so they can act on their own behalf.
5. Be proactive. Help families see existing **STRENGTHS** and actions that can be taken. Avoid the deficit model mentality.
6. Remember that all families with children who have disabilities are not homogeneous, rather a heterogeneous group with individual strengths and needs. Remember to **INDIVIDUALIZE** not generalize.
7. When parents are willing to express how they feel, provide support by **VALIDATING** their feelings, but do not indicate that you know how they feel unless you have actually been there. Have you "...walked in their shoes?"
8. Be **NONJUDGEMENTAL** in your actions when working with families. Most things in life can be done in more than one acceptable and effective way. It may be different than your way, but is it wrong?
9. Be **SENSITIVE** to the needs of all individuals within the family system. Be knowledgeable and prepared to provide resources and make referrals.
10. Understand the cyclical nature of grieving so you are able to appropriately **SUPPORT** the families with whom you work.
11. When working with families from a **RACE** or **CULTURE** different than your own, educate yourself so you understand their beliefs including how cyclical grieving might apply.
12. Utilize **ANTICIPATORY GUIDANCE** as you help to prepare parents for future events always providing information in a positive way.
13. Understand the unique needs of each family, which will enable you to have **APPROPRIATE EXPECTATIONS** regarding the children and families with whom you are working.
14. Help families identify and utilize **EXISTING SUPPORT SYSTEMS** and help develop new ones when needed.
15. Support children with disabilities and their families by **ADVOCATING** on their behalf.

This list is **NOT** presented in order of priorities. All guidelines are **IMPORTANT** when working with families and should be happening **SIMULTANEOUSLY**.

Conference Tips

Pre-Conference

- Determine a mutually agreed upon day, time, and place for the conference by communicating with the parents. If you are having a difficult time contacting the parents or arriving at a mutually agreeable time, keep a record of your contacts on a communication log. When talking with the parent, you may want to ask if there is someone they would like you to send an invitation to - i.e. a social worker, advocate, etc. Parents are also allowed to bring anyone to meetings.
- Identify other Special Education team members. Look on the Related Service page to determine what services the student is currently receiving.
- Make sure that at least one general education teacher will be at the conference. If the student has more than one general education teacher, gather progress data from each teacher to present to the parents.
- Find a place to hold the conference- i.e. school conference room, a classroom, etc.
- Send out a Notice of a Team Meeting 7-10 working days in advance. Send out the Parental Rights with the notice.
- Collect your data as indicated in your objectives so that you are able to report on the student's progress and write your present levels of performance. A portfolio of student work is helpful and is one way of collecting data. You can also access data sheets on each page of the written IEP.
- Come to the conference prepared with suggested goal(s)/objective(s).
- DO NOT bring a completed IEP to the conference. The parents are an integral part of the team and need to be part of the planning process.
- A written agenda is a very helpful way to organize the meeting.
- If appropriate, try to figure out some way for the student to participate in some form or another: power point, switch access, introductions, etc.
- Essential team members must be present: the student, if appropriate, special education teacher, district representative, general education representative, and the parent, unless s/he/they choose not to come.

Conference

- Start on time. Hand out the agenda with a timeline included.
- Introductions should come first. If additional team members come in during the conference, pause to introduce them
- State the reason for the meeting.
- Do a time frame check to see how long the parents can stay and if anyone needs to leave early.
- Ask the parents for their input first: their perception on how their child is doing, what their priorities are, and if they have any concerns. During the conference, the team wants to be sure to include/discuss any parental issues.

- If possible, have the general education teacher go first. If s/he comes into the conference late, have him/her go after the person talking is finished.
- Next, have the related service staff report. They may have other conferences to attend or students to serve.
- Since you will need to write up your goals/objectives: take good notes, collaborate with related service staff, and make sure the IEP is a finished product before it is sent home to the parent.
- If the student is age 14 or in 9th grade, they need to be invited to the conference and be as active as possible. Before the conference, you should work with the student to gather his/her input and decide how active s/he is going to be during the meeting.
- Be cautious about suggesting/recommending specific doctors, psychologists, family counselors, etc.
- Do not write specific vendors/equipment/curriculum into the IEP, i.e. Edmark Reading Series (use sight word reading program) or Co-Writer (use word-predict program). Describe the need of the student in the IEP, not the brand/name of a specific program.
- You are the facilitator. Stay on topic. If the parent/staff digresses, it is your responsibility to get the conference/time line back on track.
- If the conference does not go smoothly and/or the time line expires, schedule another meeting with the parents. You may want to ask the principal or your supervisor to attend the second conference.
- If desired, the parent can bring an advocate/guest with him/her/them.
- If parents want to see school records, or add/delete information to the record, refer them to your special education supervisor.
- Try to see things from the parent's point of view.
- Be sure the parents know that you care and that you have a sincere interest in their child's personal and educational growth.
- Prior to concluding conference, summarize any team decisions.
- End the conference on a positive note.

Notes from a Cultural Liaison's Perspective

- When there is a cultural liaison and/or interpreter, present, speak, and look at the parent, not the liaison or interpreter.
- Have one of the team members meet the parents at the door and come into the meeting with them. It is more welcoming than having them come into the room with everyone already seated. Seat the interpreter and liaison next to the parents.
- Check for understanding of why the meeting is being held.
- Make sure that a dialogue takes place between the educational team and the parents.
- Remember, a liaison and an interpreter serve two different functions. The liaison is more of an advocate and not there to interpret the language. If the parents need an interpreter, you will need to invite both.
- Periodically check for parent understanding after sharing information.

Helpful Hints

- Listen. Be attentive and utilize both verbal and non-verbal communication skills to show that you are listening and are interested.
- Be a good observer. Be alert to what the parent says and does not say. Be aware of such things as body language, hesitation, excitability, etc.
- Be positive. Talk about the positive things you see in the student. Show that you are interested and want to build on the strengths and successes.
- Keep parents informed throughout the school year. When parents know what is happening at school, conferences can be more productive. Well-informed parents tend to feel more positive about the school.
- Maintain ethical standards. Your confidential talks with parents are CONFIDENTIAL. Be professional. Do not discuss your colleagues, other students, or families with any parents.
- Remember the conference is about the student's educational needs. It is not a place to discuss problems within the team, lack of resources, etc.

Futures Planning

What Is A Futures Planning Process?

A life-planning strategy for persons with impairments.

What is Futures Planning?

Futures Planning is an interactive process that encourages a committed group of people to dream, plan, and act. This group works together to create a more desirable current situation and/or a quality future for a person with impairments. In this planning process, the group, forming a circle of support, focuses on the person's strengths, gifts, desires, and interests, rather than the person's needs and impairments. A Futures Planning facilitator guides this group to create a shared vision of a desirable future. With the guidance of the facilitator, the participants generate steps of action needed to move toward creating a quality future. This collaborative plan supports the individual in achieving his/her dreams and helps to maximize his/her contributions and participation in school, work, and the community.

Who is it for?

Futures Planning is appropriate for persons of all ages. It looks at all aspects of that person's life: home, school, work, neighborhood, and community.

Why do it?

Futures Planning processes are different from the Individual Educational Planning process (IEP). Futures Planning can compliment the development and enhance the commitment to the annual IEP. A quality Futures Planning process provides a long-term life plan that guides the involved members in identifying the areas of growth and yearly goals of the IEP.

When does Futures Planning happen?

Futures Planning can occur at anytime in a person's life when the individual, his/her family, and/or their circles of support want to create a more person-centered, "bigger picture" plan. Person-centered planning is based on the belief that services be designed for the individual. It supports the short- and long-term changes needed to move toward a productive and fulfilling life for the individual. Futures Planning happens:

- at any transition time.
- when there's a major change in family life.
- as part of a 3-year evaluation.
- to prioritize the focus of educational programming.
- to help in defining the purpose/outcome in regular education.
- when parents and the team want to look at a bigger picture of their child/the student.
- when parents want to be more involved.
- to enhance/expand the perspective of the IEP.
- to increase communication, cooperation, and coordination between family and school.

Futures Planning is an ongoing problem-solving process where the individual and his/her circle of support can come together again and again over time. This process can be used like a road map to guide the team as future plans are discussed/formulated.

Who is involved?

A wide variety of people can be involved in a Futures Planning process. In addition to the person who is the focus of the plan, members can include family, friends, relatives, neighbors, co-workers, community workers, school administrators, staff, and other human service providers.

How is it created?

Examples of questions that the facilitator uses to guide the group in the planning process are:

- Who is _____? (Gifts, skills, abilities, and/or challenges)
- What is the history/background?
- What are our/their dreams and desires?
- What are our/their fears or things to avoid?
- What strategies work/don't work?
- What does this individual need in order to succeed?
- What are the steps of action?

Optional questions to include:

- Network of people
- Places/Activities
- Choices made for/by
- Respect
- An ideal day
- Necessary assistance
- Social rules

Where does it take place?

Futures Planning takes place at a location selected by the focus person and his/her circle of support. It can happen in the home, at school, a community center; wherever the team feels comfortable and free to dialogue.

Where do we begin?

A skilled facilitator works with the group in the preparation phase, in the actual planning process, and in the follow-up phase.

Integrated Education: MAPS to get you there

By Terri Vandercook and Jennifer York

The McGill Action Planning System (MAPS – Forest, Snow, & Lusthaus) is a positive and affirming process that assists a team of adults and children to creatively dream and plan, producing results that will further the inclusion of individual children with labels into the activities, routines, and environments of their same age peers in their school/community. The principles underlying and guiding the process include: 1) integration; 2) individualization; 3) teamwork and collaboration; and 4) flexibility.

The MAPS planning typically occurs in one or two sessions. Participants are arranged in a half circle with the facilitator positioned at the open end of the circle. The information and ideas generated during the process are recorded on large sheets of paper which serves as a communication check during the sessions and as a permanent record when the planning is finished. The role of the facilitator is to elicit participation of all team members in the collective design of an integrated school and community life for the individual student.

Following are the seven questions that comprise the MAPS process:

1) What is the individual's history?

Aside from the individual for whom the planning is occurring, family members are the most important members of the circle because they typically know the individual better than anyone else. Because of this, family members and the individual are asked to spend a few minutes talking about the individual's life history, including some of the milestones.

2) What is your dream for the individual?

This question is intended to get people to develop a vision for the individual's future, to consider what they want for that person, and to look beyond the current reality. Those dreams can become reality if there is a common commitment to strive for them. The dream question forces team members to identify the direction they are heading with the individual: only then can specific plans be made for realizing the vision. This is not to say, however, that the vision plans and expectations are set in concrete. They will be challenged continually as more is learned about how to facilitate inclusion in the school/community, and as positive outcomes are realized. Depending upon the age of the individual, it may be difficult to dream for them as an adult. If that is a problem, team members can be encouraged to think just a few years ahead.

3) What is your nightmare?

This is a very difficult question to ask the parents of any child, yet an extremely important one. The nightmare presents the situation that the members of the individual's team and others who care for him/her must work very hard to keep from happening. Parents frequently relate the nightmare as a vision of their child being alone.

4) Who is the individual? Everyone in the circle participates in responding to this question. The participants are asked to think of words that describe the individual: e.g., what comes to mind when they think of the person? There are no right or wrong words.

Participants take turns going around the circle until all thoughts have been expressed. Participants can pass if nothing comes to mind when it is their turn to supply descriptor. When the list is completed, the facilitator asks certain people, usually family and peers, to identify the three words from the list that they feel best describe the individual.

5) What are the individual's strengths, gifts, and abilities?

So often when educational teams get together, they dwell upon the things that the individual cannot do as opposed to identifying and building upon the strengths and abilities of the individual. The facilitator asks the participants to review the list that describes the individual as a way to identify some of his/her strengths and unique gifts. In addition, they are instructed to think about what the individual can do, what s/he likes to do, and what s/he does well.

6) What are the individual's needs?

This question provides an opportunity for all the team members to identify needs from each of their unique perspectives. When the list of needs is complete, family, friends, and educators are asked to prioritize the identified needs. The list of assets and the identified needs are a primary basis for the design of the educational program.

7) What would the individual's ideal day at school look like and what must be done to make it happen?

Because MAPS is a process to assist teams to plan for the full integration of students with high needs into regular age appropriate classes, frequently attention to this question begins by outlining a school day for same age peers who do not have labels. Next, the team begins to strategize ways that the needs identified in the previous questions can be met in the context of the regular education day. Finally, initial planning occurs for the support needed to achieve successful integration. As learners reach middle and high school age, the ideal school day will include instruction in both regular education and a variety of community instruction sites: i.e. home, work sites, stores, and recreation places.

The MAPS process provides a common vision and road map for all team members which enables them to be supportive and effective in furthering the integration of learners with disabilities into regular school and community life.

Minnesota University Affiliated Program on Developmental Impairments at the University of Minnesota, Dr. Terri Vandercook and Dr. Jennifer York.

Personal Futures Planning

Jane Wells, Creative Community Options

Personal Futures Planning is a process that focuses on the sometimes unrecognized capabilities and strengths of an individual in order to create a vision of a desirable future. Personal Futures Planning differs from traditional team meetings or staffings in a number of ways. Traditional planning meetings tend to focus on deficits and/or problems; environmental issues usually have not been given equal consideration. Although traditional team meetings are useful in identifying skills that may be important for the individual to acquire or master, it has not typically been the function of these meetings to create a “vision” of the future that encompasses the person’s whole life. Personal Futures Planning is a process that enables the “stakeholders” in a person’s life to describe a personal future that is based on the individual’s strengths, interests, and capabilities.

Personal Futures Planning is usually accomplished in two meetings that last from two to three hours each. The first meeting is used to develop the Personal Profile. Part of the Personal Profile involves thinking about patterns of activity and situations that are likely to “work” or predict success, as well as those that do “not work” or are likely to result in frustration or failure. For example, going for walks, lots of exercise, having established routines, helping people, wearing jewelry and makeup – these are all patterns of experience that may be known to “work” for an individual. Examples of situations that “don’t work” might include working on activities that require sitting quietly in one place, being asked to do something by an unfamiliar person, or spending time in a place with people who are disruptive.

Other areas that are included in the Personal Profile are places where the person spends time, people who are a part of his/her life, choices that the person makes on his/her own behalf and those that are made for the person- i.e. health considerations, the person’s living situation, and a chronological review of significant events in the person’s life. Because the information recorded in the Personal Profile is based on personal knowledge of the individual, it is important for those who spend the most time with the person to participate in the first meeting. This would include the person with a disability, his or her family members, and any service providers who have daily or frequent involvement.

Following the Personal Profile, the Futures Planning meeting is held, usually within a week. Participants at this meeting should include those individuals who will have a part in making the future happen. At the Futures Planning meeting, the individual describes his/her “picture” of a desirable future, thinking about the next three to five years. For example, if the individual was a child with severe disabilities living at home and attending a special education program, a vision of a desirable future might include interactions with non-disabled friends, participating in some typical after-school activities, and helping at home with family chores.

For an adult who is currently living in a residential program and attending a day program, a desirable future might include living in an apartment with a non-disabled roommate, working full time with the support of a job coach, and/or being an active member in a church singles’ group.

Once a vision of the future has been described, the participants identify both obstacles and opportunities in the person’s current situation that will need to be addressed. Specific strategies are identified for moving towards the desired future. By the end of the meeting, members of the group have agreed to take specific actions that will be positive steps toward the desired future. In addition, members of the planning group agree to become a “circle of support” for the individual. This circle exists to provide the ongoing commitment to make the vision real.

Welcome Back!

School Supply List

Dear Parents:

Every year parents ask “Do I really need to provide my child with all of the items on the school supply list?” I always answer ‘no’ but decided to change things this year and let you know what your child needs for his/her time with us in our classroom.

- 1 – 3 ring notebook (This will be used for daily exchange of information)
- 2 boxes of facial tissue
- 2 boxes of wet wipes
- Diapers (if used by child)
- A change of clothing (to be kept here at school in case of emergencies)
- Any special utensils needed for feeding. (We have many items at school. Please send those which we might not have, but are needed for your child. These will be kept at school.)
- Snack items – we have both an AM and PM snack. Please send a variety of food items as well as something to drink. These snack items will be kept here at school. We will notify you when your child is running low of supplies.

Please label everything clearly. This is necessary for items sent at the beginning of the year, as well as clothing, such as outerwear, used during the winter season.

We look forward to another year full of growth and learning! If you want/need to contact me, please email me at_____. Or call at_____. It would be most convenient to call me Before/after School, when possible. Thank you!

Snack News - Letter

Dear Parents:

This is just a quick update for this school year concerning snacks in our room.

We will be having a morning and afternoon snack. Our morning snack time will be at approximately 10:00 and our afternoon snack will be at 2:30.

I would like to have each of you send in snacks for your own child to eat. Snacks, which do not need to be refrigerated, can be sent in large quantities. We will keep them in our storage room. Those that need refrigeration can be stored in our little refrigerator. (Please remember we have limited space in this fridge!) Juice boxes or other drinks, which can be stored on shelves, would also be good to send.

We will send home a “replenish” note at least 2 days before your child runs out of snacks. Please label your child’s snack when you send it.

Thanks for your help with this.

Thanks,

Beginning of Year Parent Questionnaire

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

FEEDING INFORMATION

HOT LUNCH _____

BAG LUNCH _____

LUNCH FROM HOME _____

COMBINATION _____

TIME _____

MEDS _____

TOILETING _____

BEHAVIORS _____

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS _____

ANY CHANGES SINCE LAST SCHOOL YEAR _____

Beginning Of The Year - Teacher Checklist

GENERAL

- Make contact with regular education classroom teachers. Explain who you are and what you will be doing during the year.
- Make contact with the case manager(s) and other team members.
- Introduce yourself to the building principal
- Access student schedules and related services schedules
- Review the IEP – present levels, needs, goals, objectives, adaptations section
- Review the fire evacuation plan. Be sure staff are aware of this plan, schedule training if needed, and attach the plan to the IEP.
- Set up time for observation of student
- Familiarize yourself with the building: phone, supplies, computer access, storage for personal items, set up a mailbox, email account, and voicemail if needed
- Let staff know how to reach you (voice mail, email, mailbox location)

STUDENT

- Check on accessibility of entrances/exits and interior doorways in building, e.g. are there automatic door openers where needed?
- Check on desks/tables location in classroom, correct size for student's wheelchair, accessibility to room, height, etc.
- Check on access to library, student center, labs, art/music, computer lab, etc.
- Check on bathrooms. Make sure they are accessible and meet the personal needs of the student
- Check the lunchroom. Devise a plan for the student to function as independently as possible during this time, (e.g., getting his/her own tray, depositing own tray when finished, sitting with class peers without staff if possible – maybe having a short social time after being fed, etc.)
- Check for accessible and easy to “get to” lockers. (e.g., Is the student able to independently open the locker? Are the hooks/shelves at an appropriate height?)
- Check all technology needs. Make sure there is access to computers and that they are functioning appropriately. Make sure each student has necessary software as documented on his or her IEP (word processing, word prediction, adapted assignments, drawing/graphics, etc.)
- Consult with the classroom staff regarding curriculum modifications and any adaptations the student may need such as:
 - enlarged materials
 - taped texts, leisure materials
 - adapted maps
 - use of computer for written work
 - shortened or alternative assignments/tests (e.g., may be given orally, read to, objective vs. essay, may be completed in less distracting areas, etc.)
 - check on visual presentation of materials
 - allow for processing time for responses (e.g., using augmentative communication systems.)

PARAPROFESSIONAL

- Get acquainted. It is important to make paraprofessionals feel that you value their position and establish mutual respect in your respective roles.
- Provide in-service and written information on the student's disability
- Review the paraprofessional's role in the classroom. Emphasize that optimizing **INDEPENDENCE FOR THE STUDENT IS THE GOAL.**
- Inform them of your schedule. Provide your phone number, email, etc.
- Make sure they know who their contact person is in the building (case manager) and the role of other service providers.
- Spend time in the classroom demonstrating and modeling strategies and techniques. Explain **WHY** the student requires specific strategies or adaptations.
- Provide in-service on technology used by the student.
- Make sure the paraprofessional knows that he/she is accountable to the classroom teacher and that the teaching staff makes educational decisions.
- Clarify with the classroom teacher the expectations of the paraprofessional's role.
- Provide the paraprofessional with specific goals and objectives for the student.

Itinerant Services First Day Checklist

Orientation to Itinerant Services

- Preview student caseload list/school building assignments
- File review
- Service summary from previous provider
- Equipment/material resources
 - Office supplies/equipment
 - Evaluation tools
 - Policies for providing external resources, including locations and procedures
- Team framework
- Unique procedures in local districts
- Due process procedures
- Knowledge of educational/consulting roles and responsibilities
- Reliable systems of organization/information management
- Calendars
- Union contract/Human Resources information/training
- Knowledge of referral process and service time to student
- Record keeping/confidentiality
- Student safety, reporting child abuse, transporting students, etc.
- Professional updates relevant to student service/programming

Orientation to Your Job Assignment

- Introduce yourself to new staff
 - Secretary
 - Principal
 - Nurse/Health Specialist
 - Case Managers
 - Paraprofessional(s)
 - Classroom teachers (A letter is good!)
 - Custodians and Technology Specialists (These folks can become your best friends when you need something.)
- Travel directions and site addresses
- Phone directories of sites and local district stuff (general and special ed)
- General equipment/material resources on site
- Special education specific equipment/materials stored at site
- Each student's team members
- Student's daily schedule
- Building hours
- School calendar
- Teacher schedules
- Establish communication preferences/links
- Introductions/sign-in procedures
- Building geography
- Planning your personal schedule (e.g. lunch, prep time)

Itinerant Services First Day Checklist (cont'd)

- Establish a work space
- Knowledge of district due process systems (e.g. child study team, web-based IEP)
- Set up your service time with classroom teachers
- Share your schedule

Other

- Knowledge of other programs/sites within your individual districts, intermediate district, or cooperative
- Communication hierarchy
- Provide an explanation/discussion of your role to the staff with whom you will be working.
- Provide information on the student's disability to the classroom teacher, case manager, and other team members. (A letter is good!)

Preparing for the student

- Observe student in learning environment
- Probe/discuss with team members any changes in performance and any needs for adjustment in intervention strategies
- Provide feedback regarding successful strategies
- Identify/document changes in student performance related to IEP goals/objectives and/or adaptations

Intake Questionnaire

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Diagnosis: _____

Food Allergies: _____

Seizures: () Yes () No Hearing: () Yes () No

Vision: _____

- () No issues
- () Wears glasses
- () Educational needs
- Describe _____
- _____
- _____

Communication:

- () Verbal
- () Non-Verbal
- () Picture
- () Sign
- () Other

Mobility:

- () Ambulatory
- Independent Assistance
- () Walker
- () Wheelchair
- Independent Assistance

Eating:

- () Independent
- () Total guidance
- () Tube fed
- () Ground food/pureed food
- () Chokes easily
- () Need adaptive equipment – Describe:
- _____
- _____

Drinking:

- () Can drink from a cup independently
- () Needs guidance
- () Need adaptive equipment – Describe:
- _____
- _____

Dressing:

- () Independent
- () Semi-independent
- () Total Guidance

Toileting:

- () Independent
- () Needs some assistance
- () Schedule trained: times: _____
- () Diapers/briefs

Behaviors:

List Do's and Don'ts:

Preferred Activities:

Known Dislikes:

Comments:

Special Education Related Services /Times

Student: _____

Special Services:

DCD	_____
DAPE	_____
OT	_____
PT	_____
CDS/SP	_____
AT	_____
VISION	_____
BEH. SP.	_____
DH/H	_____
NURSE	_____
ASD	_____
PI	_____
HEARING	_____
SLD	_____
EBD	_____
OTHERS	_____

Inclusion Opportunities/Times:

Music	_____
Art	_____
Media	_____
PE	_____
Homeroom	_____
Snack	_____
Recess	_____
Lunch	_____
Others	_____

IEP Contact Log

Student : _____

Parent Name: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: (M) _____



Date: _____ Time: _____ Talked to : _____

- Left Message No Answer Busy Signal
 on answering machine

Comments: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____ Talked to : _____

- Left Message No Answer Busy Signal
 on answering machine

Comments: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____ Talked to : _____

- Left Message No Answer Busy Signal
 on answering machine

Comments: _____

Sample: Introduction to the School Year and Job Description

Date: _____

Hello! I hope you are having a good start to the new school year!

My name is _____ and I am a consulting teacher in the area of _____.

A student in your class, _____ has met criteria in the special education category of _____ and has an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

The following is information that I thought might be beneficial.

I am available to help you, the team, and/or the student in the following ways:

- Provide consultation to staff regarding the student's special education needs, equipment, and materials
- Assist in the provision of technology and adaptation
- Provide information about the educational implications of the student's disability
- Help the student learn how to organize his/her time and materials
- Help the student learn to advocate for his/her needs and increase independence
- Make suggestions for adaptations/modifications to curriculum and class assignments
- Observe the student in the classroom to assess the student's needs and give suggestions to help the student be successful in the school environment
- Assist the classroom teacher in providing alternate methods of task completion and setting realistic expectations for the student
- Provide an in-service to the class to explain the student's disability
- Communicate the needs of the student to other team members

I will be in your building on _____. If you would like me to stop in please call me at _____ or email me at _____.

Thank you for your help and support in making this a great year for this student.

Sample: Site Visit Verification

Some itinerant consultants choose to leave a card with the building secretary as they enter a building so that they can easily forward messages if necessary. It is a good idea to attach the information to durable cardstock and to laminate the card. The following is an example of a card used for this purpose.

<p>Your Photo Here</p>	<p>Hello! My name is _____.</p> <p>I am an itinerant teacher for students who have <u>(disability area)</u> and I work for <u>(name of district.)</u> I will be in your building today talking with some staff. I would like to leave this with you as a visual reminder that I am here in the building. If you happen to be away from your desk when I leave I will just pick this card up. If you see this card is gone you will know that I have left the building. On occasion I will receive phone calls while in the schools. You can either attempt to locate me by noting below those staff members that I am here to see, or feel free to take a message and attach it to the card.</p>
<p>Thank you for your assistance today and the many other ways you help me do my job!</p>	
<p>Today I will be seeing: (attach a post-it with names(s) on it).</p>	

Orientation Checklist

Please meet:

- _____ Program manager
- _____ School Secretary
- _____ Due process specialist
- _____ Paraprofessionals
- _____ Mental health staff
- _____ Food service personnel
- _____
- _____

Review:

- _____ Teacher Handbook
- _____ Student Handbook
- _____ Schedules
- _____ Dismissal procedures
- _____ Phone procedures
- _____ Plans for first week
- _____ Program and district meetings
- _____ Inter-district and U.S. mail
- _____ Duplicating procedures
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Visit:

- _____ Teacher's lounge
- _____ Faculty restroom
- _____ Manager's office
- _____ Staff mailboxes
- _____ Mentor's classroom
- _____ Cafeteria
- _____ Health office
- _____

Find out about:

- _____ Computer programs
- _____ Policy and procedure book
- _____ Curriculum / materials
- _____ FAX machine
- _____ Email
- _____ District forms
- _____ Classroom responsibilities
- * Attendance
- * Student rules
- * Support service
- * Grading policies
- _____
- _____