



# Navigating the DCD Maze: Tools and Resources for Special Education Professionals

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# **Navigating the DCD Maze: Introduction to the Manual**

## **Manual Content and Intended Audience**

Manual contents were selected by professionals who work with students with Developmental Cognitive Disabilities (DCD), primarily for DCD professionals. Content was chosen with a goal of providing practical tools and resources that would assist DCD professionals in navigating the sometimes-labyrinthine complexities of educational programming for students with DCD.

This manual is the direct product of an initiative to provide mentoring resources for teachers who are new to low-incidence special education. (The next section provides greater explanation of this initiative.) Initially the manual was conceived as a “mentor/mentee” manual for professionals who work with students with DCD.

As the manual has evolved, however, it became apparent that much of the content has relevance to experienced as well as novice teachers. Additionally, it became apparent that many of the resources and tools have relevance beyond just professionals who work with students with DCD. Many of the sections, like those on professional roles, due process, data collection and Individual Education Plans (IEPs), are relevant for any special educator regardless of disability specialization or position (e.g. teachers, therapists/consultants, psychologists). Others, like the reflection section, are as relevant for general educators as they are for DCD professionals.

## **Manual Availability/Distribution**

The electronic files and printed sections of the manual have been organized into sections based on both content and anticipated audience. Primarily, this manual will be distributed as an electronic file. Users are free to print copies for their own use or to distribute for use by others, as long as they do not sell or distribute copies for profit.

Electronic files are posted at:

<http://www.ecsu.k12.mn.us/programsServices/specialEducation/dcdresources.html>. The entire manual is posted in 7 PDF files divided by content sections. Additionally, forms and letters are posted in 6 MS Word files, to allow users to modify to accommodate individual preferences and/or school district identification.

## **Minnesota’s Mentoring Programs For Special Educators New To Low Incidence Disability Areas**

In an effort to strengthen Minnesota’s support for educators teaching in the low incidence disability areas – Autism Spectrum Disorders, Blind/Visually Impaired, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Deafblind, Developmental Adaptive Physical Education, Developmental Cognitive Disabilities, Other Health Impairments, Physical Impairments, and Traumatic Brain Injury – statewide mentoring programs for special educators new to these areas began in the 2004 – 2005 school year.

The loss of qualified special education teachers is a significant barrier to ensuring that the federal mandate of a free, appropriate public education is provided to all Minnesota students identified for special education. Teachers are particularly vulnerable early in their careers or when making major changes in their assignments. Research suggests that well-designed and well-implemented

programs to mentor teachers at such times can provide educators with the kinds of information, support, and connections to professional communities that might strengthen the start or continuation of their careers.

Schools and districts throughout the state currently run successful mentoring programs, providing educators with assistance of a typically generalized nature. Practitioners in the low incidence disability areas can benefit from such opportunities. They also have, however, very specific and unique needs that require the assistance of educators who are experts in their same fields. These might include, for instance, learning how to use highly specialized equipment or adjusting to the isolation of working in a low incidence field, particularly in the rural areas of the state. It is for these kinds of needs that Minnesota's mentoring programs for special educators new to low incidence disability areas were designed.

For further information on low incidence disabilities or on low incidence mentoring programs, please contact the following Statewide Specialists:

**Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)**

Phil Sievers 651-582-8607  
[phil.sievers@state.mn.us](mailto:phil.sievers@state.mn.us)

**Blind/Visually Impaired (B/VI)**

Jean Martin 800-657-3859  
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**Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH)**

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**Deafblind (D/B):**

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**Developmental Adaptive Physical Education: (DAPE)**

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# Acknowledgements

While compiling this manual, we pulled together the “best of the best” resources that we were aware of and have used over the years. If we knew the author(s) of the resource, we gave credit where credit was due. It was never the intention to share any resource without giving proper credit. We are asking for your help with any documents that have been included in this manual, as it will be an evolving document: a work in progress. We would anticipate that additional resources might be added and, if a document has been shared and not credited, that individuals will give us the opportunity to give him/her proper credit for their work. While the documents here provide invaluable information to those in the field, it should not be considered an exhaustive collection of the endless possibilities. Individuals are encouraged to make use of this manual, offering additional resources, improving upon the current documents to better meet your individual needs, and utilizing any other resources as they become available.

The following individuals are recognized for their outstanding professional work and contributions in developing this manual for professionals in the field of Developmental Cognitive Disabilities.

Elaine DeVries, Osseo School District  
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Lynn Klaber, Mankato School District  
Anna Smith, Bloomington School District  
Patti Wahl, Wayzata School District

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WEB SITES for accessing the *Promising Practices For The Identification Of Individuals With Developmental Cognitive Disabilities*:

[www.nesc.k12.mn.us/special\\_ed/manuals/documents/DCD.pdf](http://www.nesc.k12.mn.us/special_ed/manuals/documents/DCD.pdf)  
Region 3 - North East Service Cooperative

[www.ecsu.k12.mn.us](http://www.ecsu.k12.mn.us)  
Region 11 – Metro Educational Cooperative Service Unit

<http://children.state.mn.us/mde/static/001499.pdf>  
Minnesota Department of Education

# SPECIAL EDUCATION (IDEA) - A SHORT HISTORY

By Tim Weiss, <http://www.parentsinc.org/spedhist.html>

For most of our nation's history, schools were allowed to exclude, and often did exclude, certain children, especially those with disabilities. Since the 1960's, however, there has been a great deal of federal legislation that relates to individuals with disabilities, particularly children and youth.

After World War II, America turned its attention toward improvement of the conditions for people with disabilities. Grassroots parent groups were the driving force behind the legislature that later developed. One of the first parent organizations was the American Association on Mental Deficiency (AAMD), who held their first annual convention in 1947. By the early 1950s, a number of national parent groups had sprung up, including the United Cerebral Palsy Association, the Muscular Dystrophy Association, and the organization now known as The ARC. A major impact occurred when President John F. Kennedy, whose sister, Rosemary, had mental retardation, launched the President's Panel on Mental Retardation. Through this groundswell of parent support, increasing rights were won for children with disabilities. The most significant progress has been in national legislature that allows children with disabilities to be educated in their own schools, rather than being sent to institutions or ignored altogether.

IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, mandates that eligible children with disabilities have available to them special education and related services, designed to address their unique educational needs. IDEA, and most especially the provision of special education, has its roots in the past. The laws, from which the present day IDEA started in 1965, focused on educational grant programs that targeted student with disabilities. By 1968, federal funding was made available to schools for the education of student with disabilities as "discretionary programs."

In 1974, Congress enacted the first laws mentioning appropriate education for children with disabilities and giving parents the right to examine records kept in the student's personal file. This came close to being special education, as we know it today. However, it wasn't until 1975, that the real special education law later renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), was approved.

**P.L.\*94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975** mandated a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for all children with disabilities, ensured a due process right, an IEP (Individual Education Program/Plan), and LRE (Least Restrictive Environment). As such, it is the core of the federal funding for special education. This law was passed in 1975 and went into effect in October 1977, when the regulations were finalized. State parent training and information centers were authorized under the 1983 amendments (P.L. 98-199.) Services for preschoolers and early intervention services for infants were added as Part H in 1986 (P.L. 99-457). In 1990, the law was renamed the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** (P.L. 101-476). This amendment also mandated transition services, defined assistive technology, and adds autism and traumatic brain injury to the eligibility list. The most recent amendments are included in the 1997 reauthorization (P.L. 105-17). These amendments made significant changes to the discipline sections and calls for positive behavior intervention to be used when students with disabilities exhibit behavior problems.

*\* Note:*

P.L. stands for Public Law. The first set of numbers identifies the session of congress during which the law was passed. The second set of numbers identifies what number the law was in the sequence of passage during the session. Thus, P.L. 94-142 was the 142<sup>nd</sup> public law passed and signed by the president during the 94<sup>th</sup> session of Congress.

## Cognitive Impairment: A Historical Perspective

Year	AAMR Manual	Defining Terms	Criteria	Educational Placement
1800's		Feeble-minded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imbecile</li> <li>• Idiot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deficient or deviant behaviors</li> </ul>	
Early 1900's		Feeble-minded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imbecile</li> <li>• Moron</li> <li>• Idiot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deficient functioning</li> </ul>	
Mid 1900's		Mentally Retarded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educable</li> <li>• Trainable</li> <li>• Custodial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of deficit and dependence on others</li> <li>• Mental tests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State hospitals and separate/special schools</li> </ul>
1961	Herber	Mentally Retarded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borderline</li> <li>• Mild</li> <li>• Moderate</li> <li>• Severe</li> <li>• Profound</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delineation of standard deviations below the norm on IQ tests</li> <li>• Minimal focus on the concept of adaptive behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State hospitals and separate/special schools</li> </ul>
1973	Grossman	Mentally Retarded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild</li> <li>• Moderate</li> <li>• Severe</li> <li>• Profound</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delineation of standard deviations below the norm on IQ tests</li> <li>• Minimal focus on the concept of adaptive behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State hospitals, separate/special schools</li> <li>• Some self-contained classroom settings on regular school campuses</li> </ul>
1977	Grossman	Mentally Retarded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild</li> <li>• Moderate</li> <li>• Severe</li> <li>• Profound</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delineation of standard deviations below the norm on IQ tests</li> <li>• Minimal focus on the concept of adaptive behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State hospitals, separate/special schools</li> <li>• Some self-contained classroom settings on regular school campuses</li> </ul>
1983	Grossman	Mentally Retarded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mild</li> <li>• Moderate</li> <li>• Severe</li> <li>• Profound</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delineation of standard deviations below the norm on IQ tests</li> <li>• Minimal focus on the concept of adaptive behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Childhood Interventions</li> <li>• Separate/special schools phased out</li> <li>• Students moving into regular education</li> <li>• Para-professionals being used to facilitate inclusion</li> </ul>
1992	Luckasson	Mentally Retarded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intermittent Support</li> <li>• Limited Support</li> <li>• Extensive Support</li> <li>• Pervasive Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removes level of deficit from criteria</li> <li>• Focus is on the concept of levels of support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Least Restrictive Environment</li> <li>• Focus is on education in the general classroom, with age-appropriate peers</li> </ul>

# Minnesota Eligibility Criteria For Developmental Cognitive Disability

Minnesota Rule

## 3525.1333 Developmental Cognitive Disability

Subpart 1. **Definition:** “Developmental Cognitive Disability (DCD)” means a condition resulting in significantly below average intellectual functioning and concurrent deficits in adaptive behavior that adversely affects education performance and requires special education and related services. DCD does not include conditions primarily due to a sensory or physical impairment, traumatic brain injury, autism spectrum disorders, severe multiple impairments, cultural influences or inconsistent educational programming.

Subpart 2. **Criteria.** The team shall determine that a pupil is eligible as having DCD and is in need of special education instruction and related services if the pupil meets the criteria in items A and B.

- A. The pupil demonstrates below average adaptive behavior in school and home, and, if appropriate, community environments. For the purpose of this item, “below average” means:
1. a composite score at or below the 15<sup>th</sup> percentile on a nationally normed, technically adequate measure of adaptive behavior; and
  2. documentation of needs and the level of support required in at least four of the seven adaptive behavior domains across multiple environments. Systematic observation and parent input must be included as sources to document need and level of support. All of the following adaptive behavior domains must be considered:
    - a) daily living and independent living skills;
    - b) social and interpersonal skills;
    - c) communication skills;
    - d) academic skills;
    - e) recreation and leisure skills;
    - f) community participation skills; and
    - g) work and work related skills.

Other sources of documentation may include checklists, classroom or work samples, interviews, criterion-referenced measures, educational history, medical history, or pupil self-report.

- B. The pupil demonstrates significantly below average general intellectual functioning that is measured by an individually administered, nationally normed test of intellectual ability. For the purposes of this sub item, “significantly below average intellectual functioning” means:
1. mild-moderate range: two standard deviations below the mean, plus or minus one standard error of measurement; and
  2. severe-profound range: three standard deviations below the mean, plus or minus one standard error of measurement.

Significantly below average general intellectual functioning must be verified through a written summary of results from at least two systematic observations with consideration for culturally relevant information, medical and educational histories, and one or more of the following: supplemental tests of specific abilities, criterion-referenced test, alternative methods of intellectual assessment, clinical interviews with parents, including family members, if appropriate, or observation and analysis of behavior across multiple environments.

Subpart 3. (Repealed, 26 SR 657)

STAT AUTH: MS s120.17; L 1999 c 123 s 19, 20

GIST: 16 SR 1543; L 1998 c 397 art 11 s 3; 26 SR 657

(Current as of 1/18/02)

<http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/arule/3525/1333.html>

## **Mentor/Mentee Roles And Responsibilities**

The following ten pages were adapted from materials developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Pharmacist Professional Advisory Committee. Original documents can be accessed online at: <http://www.hhs.gov/pharmacy/mentor/tools.html>

### **Guidelines For A Successful Mentoring Relationship**

- **BE PROACTIVE** - Don't wait for your mentor or mentee to contact you.
- **NEGOTIATE A COMMITMENT** - Agree to have regular contact at pre-defined intervals.
- **ESTABLISH A RAPPORT** - Learn as much as you can about one another.
- **BE CONFIDENT** - Each of you has something important to offer the other.
- **COMMUNICATE** - Share your knowledge and experience openly.
- **BE A GOOD LISTENER** - Hear what your mentor or mentee is saying to you.
- **BE RESPONSIVE** - Act upon what you've planned.
- **BE ACCESSIBLE** - Have an open door or open-phone policy.
- **TAKE RESPONSIBILITY**-It takes two to have a successful mentoring relationship

# Mentor Roles And Responsibilities

Each mentoring connection is unique, and therefore, each person comes to the connection with his/her own style, values and expectations. One of the most critical things to do as a mentor is to try to get the mentee to feel at ease and feel valued. Generally, you can do this by showing genuine interest, kindness, appreciation, flexibility, and openness, setting healthy boundaries and using good business and social manners.

The following are some guidelines and behaviors that help direct you to develop good leadership habits and foster an environment that brings out the best in others.

## Mentor Roles

The roles you assume as a mentor depend on the needs of your mentee and on the relationship you have established with your mentee. Sometimes you may be performing in one role, other times you may be performing all roles. There are at least ten roles a mentor might assume:

- Teacher
- Role Model
- Guide
- Counselor
- Motivator
- Sponsor
- Coach
- Advisor
- Door Opener

## Teacher

As a teacher, you may need to teach the mentee the skills and knowledge required to perform the job successfully. This role requires you to outline the "nuts and bolts" of the position and to share your experience as a seasoned professional. To teach the fundamentals of the position, you need to first determine what knowledge, skills and abilities are necessary to successfully perform the requirements of the position. Once you have identified the requirements required for the position, you then need to identify what skills the mentee already has and what needs further development. Your focus becomes helping the mentee develop needed knowledge and skills.

Provide examples, when possible, for your mentee to follow. It's important to answer questions raised by your mentee. Keep in mind that you are not required to be the expert on everything. A good mentor knows when to direct a mentee to a knowledgeable source. Share your wisdom and past mistakes. A mentee can learn from your past trials and can realize that no one is perfect. Sharing information is key. Sharing learning experiences, unique or special anecdotes and stories are effective, interesting ways to impart valuable learning.

## **Role Model**

As a role model, you are a living example of values, ethics, and professionalism. Most mentees, in time, imitate their mentors. As the proverb goes, "imitation is the sincerest flattery." Learning by example may be your most effective teaching tool. Your mentee will learn also about you while s/he observes how you handle situations or interact with others. Maintaining high standards of professionalism, solid work ethics, and a positive attitude will give your mentee an opportunity to learn the positive qualities of an experienced professional.

## **Guide**

As a guide, you help navigate through the inner workings of the organization and decipher the "unwritten office rules" for your mentee. This information is usually the nuggets of knowledge that one only acquires over time. The inner workings of the organization are simply the "behind the scenes" dynamics, or office politics, that are not always apparent, but are crucial to know. The "unwritten rules" can include the special procedures your school, classroom or district follow, the guidelines that are not always documented and policies under consideration.

As a mentor, it is important that you explain the inner workings and "unwritten rules" to your mentee. Brief your mentee on who does what, the critical responsibilities each perform, and the personalities involved. One way to do this is by having your mentee review policy and procedural manuals and then discussing the rules and regulations contained in the material.

## **Counselor**

The role of counselor requires you to establish a trusting and open relationship. In order to create a trusting relationship, you need to stress confidentiality and show respect for the mentee. This means not disclosing personal information that the mentee shares with you. Listen carefully and attentively to the mentee by not interrupting while the mentee is talking. In order to establish trust and openness, you need to make the mentee feel comfortable. If you mentor long distance, tone of voice is especially important. The following gestures are important to keep in mind for any face-to-face encounter.

- Eye contact: use appropriate eye contact. Be sensitive to cultural and communicative tendencies as to what is considered appropriate eye contact. For example, in some cultures, direct eye contact is considered appropriate during listening and speaking. Whereas in other cultures, dropping the eyes or averting the eyes during listening shows respect and direct eye contact during speaking is appropriate. If in doubt, ask your mentee directly about cultural issues, so you minimize misunderstanding.
- Gestures: Show approval and enthusiasm by nodding, smiling, or shaking hands.
- Open body posture: keep an open body posture (arms at sides) and lean slightly forward.
- Appropriate space: consider how space can relate to power. Remove furniture barriers. Be respectful of personal space. Many people prefer you stand at least one and one half feet from another person, however this varies by culture.

The counselor role also encourages a mentee to develop problem-solving skills. A mentee must be able to think through problems independently. You can develop a mentee's problem solving skills by advising the mentee to first attempt to solve the problem before seeking assistance. Ask questions like, "How would you solve the problem?" or "What do you think some solutions might be?"

### **Motivator**

As a motivator, you may at times need to help your mentee to find inspiration for motivation. Motivation is an inner drive that compels a person to succeed. It's not often you will find an unmotivated mentee. Generally most mentees are enthusiastic about their jobs. After all, mentees tend to be characterized as highly motivated individuals with a thirst for success. A word of note: Mentoring a less motivated person may be more of a challenge and equally necessary in the process of unleashing individual potential.

Through encouragement, support, and incentives, you can motivate your mentee to succeed. One of the most effective ways to encourage your mentee is to frequently provide positive feedback during an assigned task or while the mentee strives toward a goal. Positive feedback is a great morale booster and builds self-confidence and self-esteem. Focus your comments not only on positive outcomes, but also on the amount of effort, persistence and/or courage expended. You can also motivate your mentee by showing support. One Way to show support is by making yourself available, especially during stressful periods. Make provisions and find time to return calls, e-mails, etc. with consistency.

Creating incentives is another way to motivate your mentee. Explore what can be gained by completing a task or fine-tuning a skill.

### **Sponsor**

A sponsor creates opportunities for the mentee: opportunities that may not otherwise be made available. The opportunities can relate directly to the job or indirectly to the mentee's overall professional development. The goal of the mentor is to provide as much exposure for the mentee as possible with a minimum of risks. Opportunities should be instructing and should not be set up for failure. New opportunities increase the visibility of your mentee, but care must be taken in selecting these opportunities.

### **Coach**

At times you may need to perform the role of coach: help a mentee overcome performance difficulties. Before you begin a coaching process, ask yourself:

- Does the mentee have the capacity to do the job?
- Is coaching likely to upgrade the mentee's skills?
- Is there sufficient time to coach?

Coaching is not an easy skill to perform. Specifically, coaching involves feedback. Mentors need to give different kinds of feedback, as the situation demands.

- Behavior that you want to reinforce requires positive feedback.

- Behavior you wish to change requires constructive feedback.

Both types of feedback are critical to your mentee's professional growth.

If you know how to provide feedback to your mentee, you can perform the role of coach more easily. There are four factors to consider when providing feedback:

- **Frequency:** by giving feedback often, your mentee will have a clear understanding of his/her progress.
- **Quality over quantity:** by offering quality feedback, your mentee will appreciate the feedback more.
- **Specificity:** focus the feedback on how, when and why.
- **Direct Observation:** limit feedback to what you have read or observed. Do not discuss matters you have heard secondhand.

Factors to consider when giving constructive feedback are:

- Be descriptive about the behavior.
- Don't use labels such as "immature" or "unprofessional".
- Don't exaggerate.
- Don't be judgmental.
- Phrase the issue as a statement, not a question.

When giving feedback to your mentee, concentrate on the behavior that you would like your mentee to do more of, do less of, or continue performing. Avoid giving feedback when:

- You don't know much about the circumstances of the behavior
- The time, place, or circumstances are inappropriate (e.g., in the presence of others).

### **Advisor**

This role requires you to help the mentee develop professional interests and set realistic career goals. It is the mentee's responsibility to set goals, however, setting realistic goals as a process together is important.

As the old saying goes, "If you don't know where you're going, you won't know how to get there." This saying couldn't be truer for a mentee's professional development. In the role of advisor, help the mentee to consider where s/he wants to go professionally. Without his/her own internal sense of professional direction, chances are s/he will end up where you think s/he needs to go. Consider the following factors when setting career goals.

- **Specificity.** Goals need to be clearly explained, using details about what the mentee wants to achieve.
- **Identified time frame.** Together plan an overall time frame for goals with interim deadlines to ensure that your mentee is moving toward these goals. It's important not to make goals too future oriented. Most goals should be within a three – five year range.
- **Results-oriented.** Concentrate on the results of your efforts, not so much on the activities that are required to accomplish them. An activity provides a way of reaching the goal, but the end result (goal) should not be neglected.
- **Relevance.** The goals must be appropriate and in tune with the district/school mission while moving the mentee closer to the type of work that s/he finds challenging and enjoyable.
- **Achievable.** The goals must be within the mentee's reach. The mentee needs to feel challenged, but not incapable of reaching the goals. Consider the special talents of your

mentee and weigh these talents with the requirements of the position for which the mentee strives. Strive to discover and foster the right career "fit" for your mentee.

Consider creating several career goals to eliminate the possibility of the mentee feeling trapped. However, goals should be limited in number. Avoid setting too many goals at once. Concentrate first on setting goals that will help your mentee accomplish what needs to be done.

Keep in mind that set goals need to be flexible enough to accommodate changes in the workplace and changes in your mentee's interests. Goals should not be set so rigid that adjustments cannot be made.

Think of how your mentee will reach his or her goals. There are several career-building alternatives you can offer or suggest as a strategy for your mentee.

- Enrichment: enhancing the skills and responsibilities of the current job.
- Reassignment: moving to another position with the same or new duties, and how to position oneself.
- Promotion: positioning for a position at a higher level.

### **Door Opener**

A mentor can play an important role in opening doors of opportunity. This role primarily involves helping the mentee establish a network of contacts within the school, district, and/or professional organizations. A mentee needs a chance to meet other people to spur professional, as well as, social development. As a door opener, you can introduce your mentee to many of your own contacts to help build the mentee's own network structure.

To increase your mentee's awareness of personal contacts, ask your mentee to consider the number of people who s/he knows within the school, district or professional organizations. Your mentee may want to consider:

- With whom do I talk frequently among educators who serve students with DCD?
- With whom do I socialize?
- With whom do I discuss my professional problems or concerns?

As a door opener, you also open doors of information for your mentee by steering the mentee to resources that s/he needs to be even more successful.

## What Mentors Do:

**Take the first step to make the mentoring connection.** Take the initiative to invite your mentee to meet or discuss topics.

**Be clear about your own needs and limits.** (i.e., time constraints, preferred method of communication, best times of the day to be reached, etc.). Set a healthy tone and boundaries from the beginning.

**Respect your mentee's time as much as your own.**

**Ask if you can give feedback.** Don't assume the mentee is ready and willing to hear it. Feedback, both positive and negative, is critical to helping others get beyond their "blind spots" and move toward their potential.

**Know your own limitations.** No one can possibly fulfill all expectations and know everything. Knowing key references, people, and operations helps you to show your mentee how s/he can get more information or navigate a situation. A good mentor teaches the mentee "how to fish", s/he does not fish for them.

**Encourage goal autonomy.** Your mentee needs to move toward his/her own goals, not your goals.

**Recognize and appreciate effort.** Acknowledge steps taken toward goals or in assistance provided to you.

**Invite discussion about differences.** Recognize and work through conflicts with care and respect.

**Maintain a professional role** in the mentoring connection, especially in the beginning. Give careful consideration before encouraging a close friendship.

**Respect the confidence and trust of your mentee.** Your mentee will probably share many personal ideas and feelings because of your established trust. Breaking this trust can be very damaging to your mentee and to your working relationship. Make only positive or neutral comments about your mentee to others. If you disagree with your mentee's values, attitudes, or behaviors, discuss your perceptions directly with the mentee. Get help from a neutral party if necessary. If a troubling situation does not change, discuss options to end the connection.

**Monitor and adjust.** Continually evaluate how well you are meeting the goals and purpose of the connection.

**Prepare to end the connection once it has served its purpose.** Discuss openly how and when you will be ready to end the connection and how you might, if mutually desired, continue your professional relationship outside of the mentor connection. Put positive closure on your work together as mentor/mentee. Keep the door open for your mentee to return in the future.

# Mentee Roles And Responsibilities

A successful mentoring connection is the responsibility of both the mentor and the mentee. Mentoring creates a partnership between two individuals, the mentor and the mentee. Relationship complexities result from shifts in the varied roles that each plays.

An ideal mentee is:

1. Eager to learn
2. Able and willing to work as a team player
3. Patient
4. Willing to take risks
5. Has a positive attitude

## Mentee Roles

### Regulator

A mentee is the "gauge" to measure how interactive a mentoring connection will be. This means that the mentee determines the capacity of the mentoring connection. The mentee decides upon the amount of help and guidance s/he needs.

### Apprentice

The mentee is the student who is willing to learn from the mentor's knowledge and experience. S/he is ambitious to "master the craft." As a student, the mentee is willing to risk making mistakes, recognizing the need to practice and apply what has been learned.

### Emerging Professional

A mentee is also an emerging professional who should blend mentoring with other professional development opportunities, i.e., professional organizations or networks, professional journals, conferences, etc.

## What Mentees Do

**Follow.** Generally, allow your mentor to take the lead in the connection, at least initially. Listen and respect the opportunities, limitations, and format of the connection s/he is able to provide for you.

**Use active listening skills.** Be careful not to interrupt, unless you need to clarify a point and you see no opportunity or pause. Take notes when appropriate. Have a purpose for your questions.

**Share your career goals and objectives.** Be prepared to ask for specific guidance and advice on your goals, plans and strategic ideas. The more specific you can be, the easier it will be for your mentor to help you.

**Take the initiative to ask for feedback.** Feedback, although difficult to hear at times, is critical to your personal and professional growth and development. Demonstrate that you are open to hear ideas and suggestions to bring out your best and overcome any blind spots. Ask for specific details to ensure you understand specific behaviors, etc.

**Tell your mentor how you prefer to get feedback.** Thank your mentor for taking the risk to be honest with you. Let him/her know whether you prefer feedback to be delivered directly or indirectly, with or without humor, soft or hard, detailed or general. Avoid defensiveness. Remember, if your mentor were not invested in you, he/she would probably not take this risk.

**Consider and respect your mentor's time as you do your own.** Be thorough, and succinct in your explanations, experiences, and comments. Watch for clues that you may be going on too long. Return phone calls promptly and be on time with commitments or meetings. If your mentor offers a specific time frame of availability, respect his/her wishes. Only extend the time of your contact if mutually agreed upon.

**Demonstrate how you have followed advice or commitments for action,** even if you have modified your plan, pointing out that you used your mentor's help and sharing the outcome is important.

**Express appreciation.** Provide positive feedback, thanks as well as positive comments to him/her in front of others.

**Respect your mentor's confidence and trust.** Make only positive or neutral comments about your mentor to others. If you disagree with your mentor's values, behaviors, or attitudes, discuss it with him/her directly. If concerns persist, seek guidance from a neutral party, accept the situation, or act to end the connection.

**Assume the mentoring connection will be strictly professional.** This does not mean you cannot be yourself, or you cannot be friendly. Let your mentor take the lead in establishing a more friendship based connection. Ensure the mentoring connection does not give the appearance of favoritism or inappropriate/romantic.

**Prepare to move beyond your mentoring connection,** once it has served its purpose. End on a positive ground. Keep the door open to return to your mentor for assistance or advice at a future time. Follow up with your mentor after termination to keep in touch, to share your progress, and to continue to express your gratitude.

# School Mentoring Program (Example)

## Mentors Roles and Responsibilities

### **Mentor:**

Mentors are excellent classroom teachers who, in addition to teaching, agree to support, encourage and advise mentees in their day-to-day teaching responsibilities. They serve as teachers, counselors, and advocates for their mentees.

### **Mentors should:**

- Model excellent teaching.
- Demonstrate commitment to their own professional development.
- Have their own positive collegial relationships.
- Be sensitive to the history/culture of the school/district.
- Demonstrate awareness of the benefit of mentorship.
- Exhibit qualities of leadership at the school level.
- Demonstrate respect for children, colleagues, parents, and district leadership.
- Understand the context of the new teacher's professional transition.
- Serve as a role model, promoting effective instruction and professionalism.
- Establish a relationship based on mutual trust, respect, and collegiality.
- Be a listener and encourager.
- Share resources, materials, and expertise.

### **Mentors' responsibilities:**

- Participate in mentor training as offered.
- Familiarize the new teacher with the unique characteristics, policies, and procedures of the school district, schools, and programs.
- Help familiarize the mentee with the current curriculum.
- Serve as a resource to the new teacher regarding individual student concerns by referring them to appropriate personnel.
- Advise the mentee about effective parent communication.
- Meet periodically with the mentee to discuss successes, concerns, and problems.
- Encourage participation in district and building activities.
- Maintain a log of interactions with mentee.
- Assist in the evaluation of various aspects of the centering program.
- Attend meetings with mentors/mentees when offered.

## **Mentee's Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Mentee:**

A mentee may be a teacher new to the district, new to the profession, or a teacher with prior teaching experience. They have successfully met District hiring standards and are qualified professionals.

### **Mentees will:**

- Participate in three days of preschool orientation.
- Attend an additional sixteen hours of professional training provided by the district.
- Develop, review, and revise professional goals.
- Work closely with mentors, peers, and/or principals in accomplishing their professional development plans. This may include team planning, observing effective teaching strategies, observing exemplary teachers, researching exemplary programs, attending staff development opportunities, or other support.
- Assist in the evaluation of various aspects of the mentor program.

### **The Mentee program has two tiers:**

Teachers with less than three years of teaching experience will:

- Give input as to a choice of a coaching mentor as defined earlier.
- Establish a relationship with the mentor based on mutual trust, respect and collegiality.
- Communicate needs to respective mentor.
- Meet with the mentor teacher on a regular basis.
- Make an effort to implement suggestions or recommendations made by the mentor.

Teachers with three or more years of teaching experience will:

- Choose whether they want a coaching mentor or whether they want to implement their own professional development plan with input from the principal/supervisor and building mentor.
- Follow the above guidelines if they choose the coaching mentor plan. Work with their building supervisor, as the district teacher evaluation policy dictates.

# Mentoring Activity Log

Mentor \_\_\_\_\_ Mentee \_\_\_\_\_  
Building/Program \_\_\_\_\_ School Year \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Activity	Comments

## **Itinerant DCD Teacher Responsibilities**

Job functions potentially include, but are not limited to, the following duties:

- Participate in child study and other due process procedures.
- Complete and report findings of the Evaluation Report (ER) to parents.
- Develop and implement IEPs, including transition IEPs for pupils with cognitive disabilities.
- Facilitate team meetings and other management duties if duties include case management.
- Collaborate with staff in developing program components, including transition components, to meet student needs.
- Collaborate with staff in implementing intervention programs for students with challenging and interfering behavior.
- Ensure appropriate structure to meet educational needs of learners.
- When appropriate, assist administration in arranging and coordinating assignments of paraprofessional staff and give direction to the paraprofessional.
- Serve as liaison between community and school.
- As appropriate, attend meetings and conferences to increase knowledge of curriculum.
- Complete and submit required reports as requested by administration.
- Other duties as assigned.

## **Classroom Teacher Responsibilities Re: Paraprofessional's Role**

- Provide a general schedule for the paraprofessional to follow.
- Provide a “detailed” schedule as often as required by the student’s needs.
- Require a paraprofessional substitute folder.
- Discuss the professional working style of the teacher.
- Discuss the professional working style of the paraprofessional.
- Schedule regular daily, weekly, or monthly meeting times, based on the student’s unique needs. Document the discussions of the meetings and write down required action plans.
- Identify the professional development needs of the paraprofessional. Encourage on-going professional development.
- Continuously monitor the professional relationship by reviewing the following:
  - The student’s needs based on their Individual Education Plan, English Language Learner plan, etc.
  - Make certain the paraprofessional understands the duties they are required to perform. The licensed staff member is responsible for activities they delegate to paraprofessionals.
  - The appropriateness of the educational plan/schedule. Revise when needed.
  - Responsiveness to professional working styles. Address conflict respectfully.
  - Follow-through on action plans.
  - Implementation of strategies learned through professional development opportunities.
  - Communication: Discuss who communicates what (and how) with other staff/parents.
  - Remind each other of confidentiality issues.
  - Participate to level of comfort in the performance appraisal process.

# Teacher Working With Paraprofessionals Development Of Competencies

Recent changes in IDEA focusing on the role of paraprofessionals in providing special education services have placed a renewed emphasis on understanding the role of paraprofessionals and the development of systems for preparing and supporting paraprofessionals in their emerging roles. While the role of the paraprofessional is clearly important, it must be defined within the context of the changing role of teachers, both in special and regular education.

The following list of competencies are based on data from a focus group study including administrators, paraprofessionals and teachers (Wallace, Shin, Bartholomay, & Stahl, 2001) A PowerPoint presentation based on these study results, “Competencies for Teachers who Direct the Work of Paraprofessionals” is posted online at:

<http://ici2.umn.edu/para/teachers/Supervision/Supdefault.htm>.

Directing the work of paraprofessionals includes instructional supervision, guidance, collaboration, training support, advocacy, and teamwork and providing feedback. Study data suggested that administrators, paraprofessionals and teachers all consider the following competency statements to be important in directing the work of paraprofessionals. The competencies have been divided into the following areas: communication, instructional support, modeling, planning and scheduling, public relations, administration and management, and training. The purpose of these competencies is to provide a list of skills needed to successfully direct the work of paraprofessionals. These can be used to develop training programs for individuals who direct paraprofessionals.

## Competency Statements

### Communication

The professional directing the work of paraprofessionals

- Communicates with paraprofessionals in a clear, receptive and responsive manner.
- Provides clear daily direction in coordinating plans, schedules, and tasks.
- Informs and updates paraprofessionals regarding student information, such as assessment results, behavioral changes, medications, and other factors that may influence the work of the paraprofessional.
- Provides regular opportunities for staff communication, group discussion, and collaboration.
- Assists paraprofessionals in clarifying their roles and responsibilities to other staff, parents, and volunteers.

### Instructional Support

The professional directing the work of paraprofessionals

- Provides regular, constructive feedback regarding each paraprofessional's work performance.
- Encourages the involvement of paraprofessionals in setting goals, and on planning, implementing, and evaluating programs and instructional activities.
- Coordinates collaboration among paraprofessionals and other staff.
- Efficiently manages resources related to student instruction, such as instructional materials, physical space, and personnel.
- Supports paraprofessionals in using modified instructional plans and materials to accommodate the exceptional learning needs of various students.
- Provides assistance and direction for paraprofessionals who work independently in the classroom, and in areas such as job mentoring, community transition support, work-study, and transportation.

### **Modeling**

The professional directing the work of paraprofessionals

- Models a caring and respectful manner when interacting with students.
- Models behavior that is trustworthy, cooperative, and active in school-wide programs.
- Models respect, patience, and persistence in carrying out educational objectives.

### **Planning and Scheduling**

The professional directing the work of paraprofessionals

- Establishes goals and detailed plans around which activities of paraprofessionals are coordinated.
- Organizes and manages schedules that allow for cooperation, planning, and information sharing.
- Considers the strengths, interests, and needs of paraprofessionals when managing schedules.
- Manages smooth transitions brought on by changes to the daily schedules of paraprofessionals.
- Organizes and provides materials and resources that are necessary to carry out the objectives of each paraprofessional activity.

### **Public Relations**

The professional directing the work of paraprofessionals

- Informs administrators, teachers, and parents of the responsibilities and roles paraprofessionals have in the educational program.
- Advocates for the paraprofessional regarding training and leave time, modifications in responsibility, involvement in decision groups, and other issues.

## **Administration and Management**

The professional directing the work of paraprofessionals

- Clearly describes the roles and responsibilities of individual paraprofessionals.
- Maintains regular positive and supportive interaction with paraprofessionals.
- Contributes to the evaluation of paraprofessional performance with the intent of assisting paraprofessional skill improvement.
- Maintains professionalism through respect, confidentiality, and honoring boundaries.
- Provides beginning and substitute paraprofessionals with an orientation that results in sufficient understanding of the setting, staff, students, and staff roles and responsibilities.

## **Training**

The professional directing the work of paraprofessionals

- Provides on-the-job training opportunities for paraprofessional skill development.
- Educates paraprofessionals on the legal rights and responsibilities regarding student interaction, services, and instructional programming.
- Advocates for the school and district to offer paraprofessionals basic training in current issues and strategies related to teaching students with disabilities.

## **Hiring and Orienting New Paraprofessionals**

- Participate in interviews and provide input into hiring decisions.
- If present, participate in building orientation process.
- Develop and implement team and student orientation processes that may include:
  - Sharing general background information (e.g., explanations of disabilities or intervention techniques).
  - Summarizing information on individual students.
  - Identifying another paraprofessional to act as a school guide.
  - Shadowing the special education teacher and paraprofessionals.
  - Coaching new paraprofessionals about individual responsibilities.
- Provide information to principal about the quality of work during the probationary period.

## **Managing Schedules**

- Create a master schedule for all paraprofessionals for the entire school day.
- Collaborate with other special education teachers to schedule and effectively use paraprofessional time to support a variety of students.
- Provide for paraprofessional breaks and lunch times.
- As needed, re-adjust the master schedule to provide student coverage when staff is absent or positions remain unfilled.

### **Directing the Implementation of Student Programs**

- Clearly convey the learning priorities and intended outcomes for individual students.
- Share relevant and timely student information on a “need to know” basis.
- Provide ongoing direction about how to adjust the level of student support depending on the task, student needs, and the learning environment.
- Provide adapted materials for use with students in general education classrooms.
- Provide guidelines for “on-the-spot” adaptations of classroom materials and decision-making.
- Routinely check-in and informally monitor paraprofessionals’ work with students.

### **Providing Ongoing Paraprofessional Development**

- Coordinate and provide school-based, job-embedded development.
- Develop the paraprofessionals’ skills to work with several students in a variety of learning environments.
- Promote paraprofessionals’ attendance at district-level sessions.
- Provide background material about student disabilities.
- Assist with annual paraprofessional evaluations.

### **Facilitating a High Level of Communication**

- Meet regularly with the paraprofessionals.
- Be available for “on-the-fly” consultations about students throughout the school day.
- Provide ways for paraprofessionals to share their feedback about student performance while respecting student privacy and confidentiality.
- As needed, be involved in conflict resolution.
- Seek out administrative involvement with specific paraprofessional concerns.

## Strategies For Being An Effective Paraprofessional

You are about to begin a commitment that can reward you with a high degree of accomplishment. If you approach this commitment with seriousness of purpose and intelligence both you and your students will benefit immensely.

1. In general, the less work you do for the student the better. Although it is quicker, easier and less frustrating for a paraprofessional to do a problem or an assignment, doing so would be of little permanent help to the student. Instead, help him/her learn how to do his/her own work. Your goal is to promote student independence at whatever level s/he is capable.

A good paraprofessional will spend most of the time ASKING QUESTIONS, LISTENING, WRITING, AND HELPING THE STUDENT TO THINK FOR HIM/HERSELF.

When you supply an answer, be sure your student understands *how* you arrived at it. If you are not sure s/he does, test your student with a similar example.

2. Once you feel your work is going well, don't be guilty of under-expectation. If you expect little from your student, s/he will produce little. Let him/her know you have high expectations for him/her. With this encouragement, s/he may come to have the same high expectation for him/herself.
3. To the extent possible, be creative and imaginative in your methods. Look for ways to motivate your student. Actively involve him/her in the activity.
4. Many of your questions about the student's difficulties and solutions to them may be answered by a visit or call to his/her teacher. Teachers are grateful for your work and they can be most helpful.
5. Be sensitive to the existence of emotional or psychological problems that may be affecting the performance of the young person. However, it is not your responsibility to handle these problems. Bring them to the attention of the student's case manager or the school principal. ASK FOR HELP!
6. AVOID ASSUMING THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TEACHERS AND PARENTS. Your job is to help these people, not replace them.
7. Always be on time. If you are late, the student may begin to doubt your commitment.
8. Be open to helping the student with his/her special needs. Providing assistance in lifting, toileting or feeding may be a very important part of your student's day and your job.
9. Be patient. Progress may seem slow, but with time you will notice gain. Gains may be slower for students with severe and/or multiple impairments.

## **Caution:**

The goal of the paraprofessional is to help other people toward greater independence. It is not difficult, in trying to help others, to do more harm than good. Offering help in patronizing or condescending ways can create or compound feelings of inadequacy.

To promote a sense of self-efficacy rather than inadequacy, the following approaches that have proven valuable.

1. Relate to your student as an equal. Do this in a sense that you and s/he are human beings with problems and a future to face. Think of working with your student in partnership, rather than talking at him/her. The essence of a relationship of partnership is the practice of truthfulness.
2. Don't expect your student to show appreciation for your efforts before you have established a partnership. One paraprofessional destroyed the relationship he had developed with a student by repeating on two occasions, "Here I am driving ten miles every day to help you out of your difficulties and you have not even finished your homework for me."
3. Empathy is an important quality. Have enough understanding of your student and knowledge of his/her background and possible cultural differences so that you accept him/her, rather than reject him/her because s/he is not what you think s/he should be.
4. Be sensitive in communicating with your student. More than anything, this means being a careful listener.
5. Do not be quick to judge. Many students have lived a life of finding themselves judged according to stereotypes of character, ability, and intelligence. Avoid perpetuating this pattern!
6. Many of the characteristics, which make your student different from you, are what make him/her an individual. Viewed this way, differences often appear as strengths. Your student has experienced things you have not and has knowledge you do not. Respect the student for these things and do not belittle him/her for things that s/he does not know or skills s/he does not possess.
7. Set the same standards of effort for your student as you would set for other students his/her age. Do not adopt the attitude, "Well s/he did as well as could be expected." Avoid lowering standards out of a feeling that they are unattainable. Do not allow your student to just "get by."
8. Allow your student to be as independent as possible. Avoid helping the student too much.

# Additional Professional Issues

## Health Risk & Management

Every district is required to provide training to staff (teachers and paraprofessionals) in the area of health risks and management. This information can be provided through numerous channels, e.g. school nurse, health and safety supervisor, on-line training modules, etc. Check with your building administrator as to your district's training opportunities.

Depending on district policy, training may include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Blood Borne Pathogens
2. First Aid
3. Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
4. Non-Violent Crisis Interventions (NCI): aka Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI)

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality is the most critical and important aspect of your job. With respect to data privacy, it is your legal responsibility to observe both the rights of individuals with disabilities and the parent.

### Always ask yourself:

- What information would you want discussed with others regarding your child?
- What would you like said about yourself as a parent?
- What would you like said about your family, your values, your lifestyle?

### What information is confidential?

- Results of formal and informal assessments.
- Performance levels and progress.
- Program goals and objectives.
- Social and behavioral actions.
- Information about family relationships and other personal matters.

### Other Pointers:

- Avoid using names if you are asked about your job.
- Suggest that questions about a student are best directed to the special education teacher.
- DO NOT share students' names or information during staff meetings, conferences, or informal conversations.
- Information regarding specific students and programs should not be shared in lunchrooms, staff rooms, office areas, out in the community, and/or any other setting.
- When conferencing or writing information regarding a student or family that contains confidential information, be aware of those around you who may be within hearing distance. Look for a more private place within the school building.
- No matter who asks you a question about a student, if you don't want to answer or are unsure whether you should answer, DON'T. You can do this gently and politely.

**Also important to remember:**

For consistency of program as well as confidentiality, it is very important that paraprofessionals support teacher's techniques, materials, and methods, especially in the presence of students, parents, and other paraprofessionals. Questions/concerns should be directed to the specific teacher privately.

**Classification of Data:**

- **Public Data:** Information often printed and shared in directories, i.e. personnel data/information on compensation, assignment, and discipline; student data/information such as weight, height, etc. and is often published in the paper.
- **Private Data:** Information directly related to the student, gathered and kept in an educational record. Accessible to students, parents, and school staff on "need to know" basis, i.e. identifying data, academic courses completed, level of achievement, test scores, health data, special education placement, and program information.
- **Confidential Data:** Information NOT accessible to the public, parents, or student, i.e. records from other agencies deemed confidential and not placed in the student's records or reports pertaining to neglect and/or physical and/or sexual abuse, investigative data, etc. When this information is placed in the student's cumulative file, it becomes private data.
- **Desk Drawer Exception:** Information on a student that is kept by the teacher and never shared can be kept for no longer than one year.

**Record of Inspection:**

Log sheets are used to document, by whom and why the records have been inspected.

Important Information to Remember:

- Unless the court orders otherwise, both parents have full right of access. A signed release is required to share information with stepparents.
- Discuss students in private and only with staff directly involved in the student's program.
- A parent's right to information is limited to their child only.
- Always and only discuss students in private, and never in their presence.
- Keep student information under lock and key.
- A signed "release" form is needed to share information with outside agencies.
- A subpoena is not enough to provide information. A court order is required.

**When is Parental Consent not Required for Disclosure?**

**Parental consent is not required when the disclosure is:**

- to school officials or a teacher within the district who have a "need to know".
- to a school or post-secondary institution where the student plans to enroll.
- to authorized government officials.
- in connection with financial aid.
- to organizations conducting studies on behalf of educational agencies.
- to accreditation organizations.
- to the parents of dependent students.
- in compliance with judicial orders.
- in an emergency health situation.

- to administrators of immunization programs, i.e. school nurses.

### **Collection, Storage, Usage, and Dissemination of Information:**

- Private and confidential data should be collected and used only for purpose intended.
- District shall establish data collection procedures.
- Districts must review data privacy policy annually and notify parents and students of their rights.
- Parents and students have the right to inspect educational records.
- With parental requests to inspect, districts have five (5) days to comply.
- Parents may request the district to explain a record.
- Districts must provide copies of records when requested in writing.
- Parents may use a representative to inspect the records.
- Both parents have full right of access, unless a court orders otherwise.
- Districts may charge a reasonable fee for copies, unless cost prevents parents/students from exercising their right to inspect.
- Data privacy rights transfer to students at age 18.

### **Consequences for Breach of Privacy:**

- The employee is guilty of a misdemeanor and is subject to criminal prosecution.
- A violation is automatically just cause for discipline of the employee.
- The grieving party (-ies) may recover significant damages plus any expenses and attorney's fees.

**NOTE: The most common violation of the Data Privacy Act is the unlawful disclosure of information.**

# Standards-Based Teacher Evaluation

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment Status: Probationary: \_\_\_1<sup>st</sup> year \_\_\_2<sup>nd</sup> year \_\_\_3<sup>rd</sup> year

Continuing Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Standard	Score				
	1	2	3	4	N/A
<p><b>Standard 1 Subject Matter:</b> A teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines taught, and is able to create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.</p>					
<p><b>Standard 2 Student Learning:</b> A teacher understands how students learn and develop and provides learning opportunities that support a student's intellectual, social, and personal development.</p>					
<p><b>Standard 3 Diverse Learners:</b> A teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to students with diverse backgrounds and exceptionalities.</p>					
<p><b>Standard 4 Instructional Strategies:</b> A teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage student development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.</p>					
<p><b>Standard 5 Learning Environment:</b> A teacher is able to use an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create learning environments that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.</p>					
<p><b>Standard 6 Communication:</b> A teacher is able to use knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.</p>					
<p><b>Standard 7 Planning Instruction:</b> A teacher is able to plan and manage instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.</p>					
<p><b>Standard 8 Assessment:</b> A teacher understands and is able to use formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the student.</p>					
<p><b>Standard 9 Reflection and Professional Development:</b> A teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of choices and actions on others, including students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community, and who seeks out opportunities for professional growth.</p>					
<p><b>Standard 10 Collaboration, Ethics and Relationships:</b> A teacher is able to communicate and interact with parents or guardians, families, school colleagues, and the community to support student learning and well being.</p>					

## Probationary Teacher Observation/Evaluation Schedule

YEAR	Evaluation Period*	Minimum of 3 formal observations and evaluation completed by:	Standards										Minimum Acceptable Rating on ALL Evaluated for Period
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
1 <sup>st</sup> Year Probation	1	December 1				X	X		Set goal				2
	2	February 1				X	X		X		Set goal	Set goal	2
	3	April 1		Set goal		X	X		X	Set goal	X	X	2
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year Probation	1	December 1		X	Set goal	X	X	Set goal	X	X	X	X	2
	2	February 1	Set goal	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	2
	3	April 1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	2
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year Probation	1	December 1	Concentrate on standards needing specific focus										2
	2	February 1	Concentrate on standards needing specific focus										2
	1	April 1	Concentrate on standards needing specific focus										2

Additional data may be gathered from the following – but is NOT to be used in lieu of formal observations:

- Observations of non-teaching events (IEP meetings, parent conferences, department meetings).
- Artifacts such as lesson plans, portfolios, study guides, etc., could also provide information.

# Rubrics for Standards Evaluation Rating

## Standard One: Subject Matter

### Level 4

In understanding subject matter, the teacher...

- Demonstrates extensive knowledge of the central concepts and common misconceptions that can influence a student's learning.
- Consistently applies tools of inquiry to present the material from multiple perspectives.
- Effectively creates meaningful learning experiences that connect disciplinary knowledge to other subjects or everyday life.

### Level 3

In understanding subject matter, the teacher...

- Demonstrates good knowledge of the central concepts and common misconceptions that can influence a student's learning.
- Frequently applies tools of inquiry to present the material from multiple perspectives.
- Creates meaningful learning experiences that connect disciplinary knowledge to other subjects or everyday life.

### Level 2

In understanding subject matter, the teacher...

- Demonstrates basic knowledge of the central concepts and common misconceptions that can influence a student's learning.
- Is able to apply tools of inquiry to present the material from multiple perspectives.
- Is developing meaningful learning experiences that connect disciplinary knowledge to other subjects or everyday life.

### Level 1: Unsatisfactory

In understanding subject matter, the teacher...

- Demonstrates superficial knowledge of the central concepts and common misconceptions that can influence a student's learning.
- Demonstrates some ability to apply tools of inquiry to present the material from multiple perspectives.
- Struggles to create meaningful learning experiences that connect disciplinary knowledge to other subjects or everyday life.

# Rubrics for Standards Evaluation Rating

## Standard Two: Student Learning

### Level 4

In understanding student learning, the teacher...

- Demonstrates extensive knowledge about how students learn and develop intellectually, socially, and personally. Continually use a student's strength as a basis for growth.
- Consistently provides supportive learning opportunities that encourage students to assume responsibility for their own education.
- Effectively uses a student's thinking and experiences as a resource in providing opportunities for active learning.

### Level 3

In understanding student learning, the teacher...

- Demonstrates good knowledge about how students learn and develop intellectually, socially and personally and occasionally use a student's strength as a basis for growth.
- Frequently provides supportive learning opportunities that encourage students to assume responsibility for their own education.
- Uses a student's thinking and experiences as a resource in providing opportunities for active learning.

### Level 2

In understanding student learning, the teacher...

- Demonstrates basic knowledge about how students learn and develop intellectually, socially and personally and uses a student's strength as a basis for growth.
- Has demonstrated the ability to provide supportive learning opportunities that encourage students to assume responsibility for their own education.
- Is developing the ability to use a student's thinking and experiences as a resource in providing opportunities for active learning.

### Level 1: Unsatisfactory

In understanding student learning, the teacher...

- Demonstrates superficial knowledge about how students learn and develop intellectually, socially and personally.
- Struggles to provide supportive learning opportunities that encourage students to assume responsibility for their own education.
- Rarely uses a student's thinking and experiences as a resource in providing opportunities for active learning.

# Rubrics for Standards Evaluation Rating

## Standard Three: Diverse Learners

### Level 4

In understanding diverse learners, the teacher...

- Demonstrates extensive knowledge on how students differ in approaches to learning and recognizes that a student's learning is influenced by their individual differences and experiences.
- Effectively creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse backgrounds and exceptionalities.
- Consistently sees that all students should learn at the highest possible level and persists in helping all students achieve success.

### Level 3

In understanding diverse learners, the teacher...

- Demonstrates good knowledge on how students differ in approaches to learning and recognizes that a student's learning is influenced by their individual differences and experiences.
- Creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse backgrounds and exceptionalities.
- Frequently sees that all students should learn at the highest possible level and persists in helping all students achieve success.

### Level 2

In understanding diverse learners, the teacher...

- Demonstrates basic knowledge on how students differ in approaches to learning and has the ability to recognize that a student's learning is influenced by their individual differences and experiences.
- Has the ability to create instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse backgrounds and exceptionalities.
- Sees that all students should learn at the highest possible level and tries to help students achieve success.

### Level 1: Unsatisfactory

In understanding diverse learners, the teacher...

- Demonstrates superficial knowledge on how students differ in approaches to learning and rarely recognizes that a student's learning is influenced by their individual differences and experiences.
- Creation of instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse backgrounds and exceptionalities is well below expected level.
- Is unclear that all students should learn at the highest possible level.

# Rubrics for Standards Evaluation Rating

## Standard Four: Instructional Strategies

### Level 4

In understanding and applying instructional strategies, the teacher...

- Demonstrates extensive knowledge and successfully implements state and/or district standards in the classroom.
- Consistently enhances student development of critical thinking, problem solving and performance skills and continually develops a variety of clear, accurate presentations that present varied perspectives.
- Effectively and insightfully analyzes and uses a wide variety of materials and educational technology to stimulate advanced levels of learning.

### Level 3

In understanding and applying instructional strategies, the teacher...

- Demonstrates good knowledge and successfully implements the state and/or district standards in the classroom.
- Frequently enhances student development of critical thinking, problem solving and performance skills and develops a variety of clear, accurate presentations that present varied perspectives.
- Knows and applies strategies for evaluating and using a wide variety of materials and educational technology to stimulate advanced levels of learning.

### Level 2

In understanding and applying instructional strategies, the teacher...

- Demonstrates basic knowledge and tries to implement the state and/or district standards in the classroom.
- Has the ability to enhance student development of critical thinking, problem solving and performance skills, but is inconsistent in application. Tries to develop presentations that present varied perspectives, but at times can be unclear or inaccurate.
- Knows and uses a wide variety of materials and educational technology to stimulate advanced levels of learning, but is inconsistent in application.

### Level 1: Unsatisfactory

In understanding and applying instructional strategies, the teacher...

- Demonstrates superficial knowledge and struggles to implement the state and/or district standards in the classroom.
- Student development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills are well below expected level.
- Demonstrated knowledge and use of a wide variety of materials and educational technology are well below expected level.

# Rubrics for Standards Evaluation Rating

## Standard Five: Learning Environment

### Level 4

In creating a learning environment, the teacher...

- Demonstrates extensive knowledge of human motivation and behavior to develop individual and group activities.
- Demonstrates effective classroom management and consistently encourages positive social interaction and active engagement to develop a community of learners.
- Continually uses different motivational strategies to encourage the development of each individual learner's abilities.

### Level 3

In creating a learning environment, the teacher...

- Demonstrates good knowledge of human motivation and behavior to develop individual and group activities.
- Demonstrates good classroom management and frequently encourages positive social interaction and active engagement to develop a community of learners.
- Frequently uses different motivational strategies to encourage the development of each individual learner's abilities.

### Level 2

In creating a learning environment, the teacher...

- Demonstrates basic knowledge of human motivation and behavior to develop individual and group activities.
- Demonstrates knowledge and applies classroom management techniques but the inconsistency of its application has an effect on the community as a whole.
- Demonstrates knowledge of different motivational strategies to encourage the development of each individual learner's abilities, but is inconsistent in application.

### Level 1: Unsatisfactory

In creating a learning environment, the teacher...

- Demonstrates superficial knowledge of human motivation and behavior, and struggles to develop individual and group activities.
- Effective classroom management skills are well below expected level.
- Knowledge and application of different motivational strategies are well below expected level.

# Rubrics for Standards Evaluation Rating

## Standard Six: Communication

### Level 4

In communicating to the students, the teacher...

- Demonstrates extensive knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal and listening techniques.
- Consistently applies communication techniques to foster active inquiry by and among the students.
- Continually supports learner expression and stimulates discussion to encourage collaboration and positive interaction in the classroom.

### Level 3

In communicating to the students, the teacher...

- Demonstrates good knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and listening techniques.
- Frequently applies communication techniques to foster active inquiry by and among the students
- Supports learner expression and stimulates discussion to encourage collaboration and positive interaction in the classroom.

### Level 2

In communicating to the students, the teacher...

- Demonstrates basic knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal and listening techniques.
- Demonstrates knowledge and applies communication techniques to foster active inquiry by and among the students, but is inconsistent in application.
- Tries to support learner expression and stimulate discussion to encourage collaboration and positive interaction in the classroom, but is inconsistent in application.

### Level 1: Unsatisfactory

In communicating to the students, the teacher...

- Demonstrates superficial knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal and listening techniques.
- Communication techniques are well below expected level.
- Displays little support to learner expression and student interactions with each other are characterized by conflict.

# Rubrics for Standards Evaluation Rating

## Standard Seven: Planning Instruction

### Level 4

In planning instruction, the teacher...

- Demonstrates extensive knowledge of how to plan effective instruction based upon subject matter and curriculum goals.
- Consistently utilizes information about students and the community to create and implement meaningful learning experiences.
- Continually monitors and adjusts to the student's individual instructional needs.

### Level 3

In planning instruction, the teacher...

- Demonstrates good knowledge of how to plan effective instruction based upon subject matter and curriculum goals.
- Frequently utilizes information about students and the community to create and implement meaningful learning experiences.
- Monitors and adjusts to the student's individual instructional needs.

### Level 2

In planning instruction, the teacher...

- Demonstrates basic knowledge of how to plan effective instruction based upon subject matter and curriculum goals.
- Displays little knowledge of information about students or the community, but tries to create meaningful learning experiences.
- Demonstrates knowledge of the importance of monitoring and adjusting to the student's individual instructional needs, but does not apply techniques in classroom.

### Level 1: Unsatisfactory

In planning instruction, the teacher...

- Demonstrates superficial knowledge of how to plan effective instruction based upon subject matter and curriculum goals.
- Demonstrates little knowledge of information about students and as a result does not create meaningful learning experiences.
- Is unaware of the need to monitor and adjust to the needs of the student's individual instructional needs.

# Rubrics for Standards Evaluation Rating

## Standard Eight: Assessment

### Level 4

In using assessment techniques, the teacher...

- Demonstrates extensive knowledge and successfully applies formal and informal assessment strategies in the classroom.
- Consistently applies a variety of strategies to evaluate the continuous development of the student.
- Effectively utilizes assessment data to modify teaching and learning strategies.

### Level 3

In using assessment techniques, the teacher...

- Demonstrates good knowledge and applies formal and informal assessment strategies in the classroom.
- Frequently applies a variety of strategies to evaluate the continuous development of the student.
- Utilizes assessment data to modify teaching and learning strategies.

### Level 2

In using assessment techniques, the teacher...

- Demonstrates basic knowledge and tries to apply formal and informal assessment strategies in the classroom.
- Demonstrates knowledge and applies a variety of strategies to evaluate the continuous development of the student, but is inconsistent in application.
- Demonstrates the knowledge of the need to utilize assessment data to modify teaching and learning strategies, but is inconsistent in application.

### Level 1: Unsatisfactory

In using assessment techniques, the teacher...

- Demonstrates superficial knowledge and as a result is unsuccessful at applying formal and informal assessment strategies in the classroom.
- Is unaware of the need to apply a variety of strategies to evaluate the continuous development of the student.
- Utilizes assessment data to modify teaching and learning strategies on a minimal basis.

# Rubrics for Standards Evaluation Rating

## Standard Nine: Reflection and Professional Development

### Level 4

As a reflective practitioner, the teacher...

- Demonstrates extensive knowledge and insightfully employs reflection and self-assessment.
- Continually evaluates the effects of choices and actions on others, including students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community.
- Actively seeks and engages in opportunities for professional growth.

### Level 3

As a reflective practitioner, the teacher...

- Demonstrates good knowledge and employs reflection and self-assessment.
- Frequently evaluates the effects of choices and actions on others, including students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community.
- Seeks and engages in opportunities for professional growth.

### Level 2

As a reflective practitioner, the teacher...

- Demonstrates basic knowledge of reflection and self-assessment.
- Demonstrates the knowledge of the need to evaluate the effects of choices and actions on others, including students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community, but is inconsistent in application.
- Participates in opportunities for professional growth only when convenient.

### Level 1: Unsatisfactory

As a reflective practitioner, the teacher...

- Demonstrates superficial knowledge of reflection and self assessment
- Is unaware of the need to evaluate the effects of choices and actions on others, including students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community.
- Makes no effort to participate in opportunities for professional growth.

# Rubrics for Standards Evaluation Rating

## Standard Ten: Collaboration, Ethics and Relationships

### Level 4

In understanding the need for collaboration, the teacher...

- Demonstrates extensive knowledge of the student's rights and the teacher's responsibilities to equal education, privacy, and mandatory laws/rules.
- Consistently establishes productive relationships with parents or guardians in support of student learning and well-being.
- Effectively collaborates with other professionals and in activities to assist in creating a productive learning environment.

### Level 3

In understanding the need for collaboration, the teacher...

- Demonstrates good knowledge of the student's rights and the teacher's responsibilities to equal education, privacy, and mandatory laws/rules.
- Frequently establishes productive relationships with parents or guardians in support of student learning and well-being.
- Collaborates with other professionals and in activities to assist in creating a productive learning environment.

### Level 2

In understanding the need for collaboration, the teacher...

- Demonstrates basic knowledge of the student's rights and the teacher's responsibilities to equal education, privacy, and mandatory laws/rules.
- Demonstrates the skills to establish productive relationships with parents or guardians in support of student learning and well-being, but is inconsistent in application.
- Will, on a limited basis, collaborate with other professionals and in activities to assist in creating a productive learning environment.

### Level 1: Unsatisfactory

In understanding the need for collaboration, the teacher...

- Demonstrates superficial knowledge of the student's rights and the teacher's responsibilities to equal education, privacy, and mandatory laws/rules.
- Makes no effort to establish productive relationships with parents or guardians in support of student learning and well-being.
- Participates in no collaboration with other professionals or activities to assist in creating a productive learning environment.

# Teacher Yearly Goal Sheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level/Subject \_\_\_\_\_

## Standard 1 - Subject Matter

Teacher's goal(s) stated in terms of performance outcomes:

Activities: What teacher will do to achieve goal(s):

Source of Data/Proof/Evidence:

## Standard 2 - Student Learning

Teacher's goal(s) stated in terms of performance outcomes:

Activities: What teacher will do to achieve goal(s):

Source of Data/Proof/Evidence:

## Standard 3 - Diverse Learners

Teacher's goal(s) stated in terms of performance outcomes:

Activities: What teacher will do to achieve goal(s):

Source of Data/Proof/Evidence:

# Teacher Yearly Goal Sheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level/Subject \_\_\_\_\_

## Standard 4 - Instructional Strategies

Teacher's goal(s) stated in terms of performance outcomes:

Activities: What teacher will do to achieve goal(s):

Source of Data/Proof/Evidence:

## Standard 5 - Learning Environment

Teacher's goal(s) stated in terms of performance outcomes:

Activities: What teacher will do to achieve goal(s):

Source of Data/Proof/Evidence:

## Standard 6 - Communication

Teacher's goal(s) stated in terms of performance outcomes:

Activities: What teacher will do to achieve goal(s):

Source of Data/Proof/Evidence:

# Teacher Yearly Goal Sheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level/Subject \_\_\_\_\_

## Standard 7 - Planning Instruction

Teacher's goal(s) stated in terms of performance outcomes:

Activities: What teacher will do to achieve goal(s):

Source of Data/Proof/Evidence:

## Standard 8 - Assessment

Teacher's goal(s) stated in terms of performance outcomes:

Activities: What teacher will do to achieve goal(s):

Source of Data/Proof/Evidence:

## Standard 9 - Reflection and Professional Development

Teacher's goal(s) stated in terms of performance outcomes:

Activities: What teacher will do to achieve goal(s):

Source of Data/Proof/Evidence:

# Teacher Yearly Goal Sheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level/Subject \_\_\_\_\_

## Standard 10 - Collaboration, Ethics, and Relationships

Teacher's goal(s) stated in terms of performance outcomes:

Activities: What teacher will do to achieve goal(s):

Source of Data/Proof/Evidence:

# Professional Development Written Evaluation Summary

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Building \_\_\_\_\_

Subject/Grade \_\_\_\_\_ School Years: A: 20\_\_\_\_ - 20\_\_\_\_

B: 20\_\_\_\_ - 20\_\_\_\_

C: 20\_\_\_\_ - 20\_\_\_\_

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## Teacher Standards

1 – Subject Matter

6 – Communication

2 – Student Learning

7 – Planning Instruction

3 – Diverse Learners

8 – Assessment

4 – Instructional Strategies

9 – Reflection and Professional Development

5 – Learning Environment

10 – Collaboration, Ethics and Relationships

- 
- Strengths
  - Areas for Improvement
  - Progress Toward Goal(s)
  - Commendations/Recommendations
- 

Signature acknowledges that this form was shared with the teacher; not necessarily agreement.

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

This form is to be placed in the professional file.

# Teacher's Pre-observation Planning Record

The teacher completes this form for each formal evaluation. However, the evaluator may need to discuss the contents of this form for clarification purposes. Teachers retain the right to make instructional decisions/changes during the observation.

1. What is the student goal(s)/objective(s) for the lesson? (What is the ultimate desired outcome of this lesson?) In the event that students are working on individual objectives, choose 2 or 3 students and project their objectives.
2. What information do you have regarding your students' current abilities in relation to this objective(s) and how has this impacted the design of the lesson?
3. What teaching strategies will you use to teach the objective(s)? How will you accomplish your objective(s)?
4. What are the student indicators of success within this lesson? What behaviors will you look for to determine whether or not the students are meeting the objectives?
5. Identify the data which will be collected to evaluate the students' achievement of the goal(s)/objective(s).
6. What future assessments will you use to determine the retention and ongoing application of today's learning?
7. What is the relationship of this lesson to the larger unit of study and to your annual goals?
8. Do you have any concerns at this point regarding this lesson or these students?
9. What specific teaching strategies or standards would you like evaluated during this observation?
10. What school and/or community activities are you actively involved in this year?

**Integrating the "Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice", "Council of Exceptional Children Special Education Teacher Standards", and "Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Learning" For Use With Special Education Teachers**

<p align="center"><b>Standard 1 Subject Matter</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher has knowledge of the content of a curriculum including such areas as language arts, mathematics, social and emotional development, communication skills and oral language development, social/behavior skills, motor skills, functional and independent living skills, employment-related skills, self-advocacy skills, orientation and mobility skills, and travel instruction.</li> <li>• Teacher has knowledge of when and how to develop, structure, and implement accommodations, modifications and/or adaptations to provide access to the general curriculum for students with disabilities.</li> <li>• Teacher has knowledge of services, procedures, and policies that support transition from secondary school settings to post secondary and work settings, as well as participation in all aspects of community life.</li> <li>• Teacher has knowledge of the requirements and responsibilities involved in developing, implementing, and evaluating Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs), and Individual Interagency Intervention Plans (IIPs) for students with disabilities. The teacher knows what the law requires with regard to documents and procedures and takes responsibility for ensuring that both the intent and the requirements of the law are fulfilled.</li> <li>• Teacher designs consistent and clearly articulated instruction.</li> <li>• Teacher actively engages students in the learning process.</li> <li>• Teacher understands and completes work related to Extended School Year decision-making.</li> <li>• Teacher understands and completes work related to medical assistance billing.</li> <li>• Teacher understands rules relating to the discipline of students with disabilities.</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>Standard 2 Student Learning</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher has knowledge of a wide array of disabilities and is cognizant of the range and types of individual variation that exist within disability categories. The teacher knows the characteristics associated with specific disabilities and the potential impact that particular disabilities may have on learning and development.</li> <li>• Teacher understands how a disability in one area (e.g., physical, cognitive, social/emotional) can impact learning and development in other areas. The teacher uses this knowledge to provide specialized supports that enable the student to benefit from learning opportunities.</li> <li>• Teacher seeks a holistic understanding of each student's current learning and development, based on knowledge of the student's performance within a variety of settings (e.g., home, school, workplace).</li> <li>• Teacher selects appropriate instructional goals.</li> <li>• Teacher assesses student learning on an ongoing basis.</li> <li>• Teacher makes effective use of questioning and discussion techniques.</li> <li>• Teacher actively engages students in the learning process.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Standard 3 Diverse Learners</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher has a repertoire of strategies to build students' awareness, sensitivity, acceptance, and appreciation for students with disabilities, and collaborates with general education teachers to implement these strategies.</li> <li>• Teacher works closely with families to establish mutual understanding of the student's educational goals, performance, and meaningful contexts for intervention.</li> <li>• Teacher actively asks questions, seeks information from others, and takes action to guard against inappropriate assessment and identification of students whose cultural, ethnic, gender, and linguistic differences may be confused with manifestations of a disability.</li> <li>• Teacher knows the similarities and differences of individuals with and without exceptional learning needs.</li> <li>• Teacher knows the educational implications of various abilities/disabilities.</li> <li>• Teacher establishes and maintains rapport with learners and treats them with dignity and respect.</li> <li>• Teacher designs consistent and clearly articulated instruction.</li> <li>• Teacher establishes a positive and supportive culture for learning.</li> <li>• Teacher makes effective use of questioning and discussion techniques.</li> <li>• Teacher actively engages student in the learning process.</li> <li>• Teacher provides students feedback that is clear, accurate, substantive, constructive, specific, and timely.</li> <li>• Teacher demonstrates flexibility and responsiveness as it relates to lesson adjustment, response to students, and persistence in meeting students' needs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standard 4 Instructional Strategies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher has responsibility for ensuring the appropriate delivery of instruction for students with disabilities. Major aspects of the special educator's responsibilities include assessing students' strengths and needs with respect to the curriculum, designing and modeling instructional strategies, working with general education teachers to develop or implement instructional strategies to meet the needs of individual students, collaboratively teaching with general educators, directly teaching students with disabilities, and monitoring student progress.</li> <li>• Teacher knows a range of specialized instructional strategies and curricular materials that have been found through research and best practices to support learning in individual students with disabilities.</li> <li>• Teacher collaborates with general education teachers to infuse individualized goals and specialized strategies into instruction for students with disabilities.</li> <li>• Teacher keeps abreast of research-based instructional practices for students with disabilities. They are able to locate, evaluate, and use instructional materials, programs, software, and equipment (e.g. communication devices, switches) that are appropriate for individual students with disabilities.</li> <li>• Teacher develops and selects instructional content, resources, and strategies that respond to cultural, linguistic, and gender differences.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Standard 4 Instructional Strategies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher chooses and uses technologies in the instructional process.</li> <li>• Teacher selects, adapts, and uses instructional strategies and materials according to the educational needs of the learner. Teacher sequences, implements, and evaluates individualized learning objectives.</li> <li>• Teacher uses strategies that promote successful transitions for individuals with exceptional learning needs. Teacher implements instruction that addresses IEP goals and objectives.</li> <li>• Teacher instructs students individually and/or in small or larger groups as needed.</li> <li>• Teacher provides instructional opportunities for students to develop: socially responsible values and behaviors; life skills, e.g., community living, daily living, employment, transition to adult life; communication skills including expressive and receptive language; positive, mutually supportive interactions with other students with and without disabilities; self management and self advocacy skills; appropriate affective behaviors; study skills; motor skills and mobility; and technology skills.</li> <li>• Teacher promotes students' maintenance and generalization of skills across different settings, times, persons, etc.</li> <li>• Teacher designs consistent and clearly articulated instruction.</li> <li>• Teacher makes effective use of questioning and discussion techniques.</li> <li>• Teacher actively engages students in the learning process.</li> <li>• Teacher provides students feedback that is clear, accurate, substantive, constructive, specific, and timely.</li> <li>• Teacher demonstrates flexibility and responsiveness as it relates to lesson adjustment, response to students, and persistence in meeting students' needs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standard 5 Learning Environment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher has a repertoire of effective strategies, including explicit teaching and adult-mediated and peer-mediated learning, for promoting positive behavior, and building constructive relationships between students with disabilities and their age appropriate peers.</li> <li>• Teacher conducts functional behavioral assessments such as behavioral observations and analyses, explores optional strategies and activities, monitors outcomes, and designs and implements positive behavioral support plans.</li> <li>• Teacher individualizes curriculum and instruction so that students with disabilities are motivated and challenged, but not overwhelmed by educational demands.</li> <li>• Teacher facilitates the development, implementation and monitoring of prevention and intervention programs for students with disabilities who exhibit challenging behavior.</li> <li>• When it is appropriate to do so, teacher prepares students with disabilities to take an active role in their IEP planning process, in order to support their commitment to learning, self-motivation and self-advocacy.</li> <li>• Teacher uses the least intensive behavior management strategy consistent with the needs of the individual learner.</li> <li>• Teacher modifies the learning environment to manage behaviors.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Standard 5 Learning Environment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher integrates social skills instruction into the curriculum.</li> <li>• Teacher uses procedures to increase the individual's self-awareness, self-management, self-control, self-reliance, and self esteem.</li> <li>• Teacher manages the daily classroom environment effectively for students and other staff in the following areas: organizes physical space effectively, time management, transitioning between activities, general classroom organization, e.g., posted schedule, classroom behavioral expectations, posted lesson objectives, assignments, materials, lesson plan book.</li> <li>• Teacher adheres to legal guidelines and responsibilities of educators in dealing with inappropriate and/or violent behaviors as well as other inappropriate behavioral issues that interfere with the education of a target student or other students.</li> <li>• Teacher establishes and maintains a sense of community and promotes interaction and relationships among students.</li> <li>• Teacher designs consistent and clearly articulated instruction.</li> <li>• Teacher creates an environment of respect and rapport with all students.</li> <li>• Teacher establishes a positive and supportive culture for learning.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standard 6 Communication</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher knows how to assess, design, and implement strategies that foster the language and communication development of students with disabilities, including non-verbal and verbal communication.</li> <li>• Teacher is familiar with a variety of types of assistive communication devices and knows how to access support specialists and services within and outside the school setting.</li> <li>• Teacher monitors students' use of assistive communication devices across environments, e.g., special class, general education class, after school child care center, home, etc., and provides assistance in using the devices or in changing the device in response to changing needs.</li> <li>• Teacher creates an environment of respect and rapport with all students. Teacher makes effective use of questioning and discussion techniques.</li> <li>• Teacher actively engages students in the learning process.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standard 7 Planning Instruction</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher incorporates their knowledge of the impact of disabilities on individual student learning and information gathered in assessment of specific students to guide and oversee the development of IEPs, IFSPs, and IIPs.</li> <li>• Teacher oversees the development of transition plans to guide learners' transitions from preschool to elementary school, elementary school to middle school, middle school to high school, and high school to post-secondary opportunities.</li> <li>• Teacher provides for the active involvement of students, families, and other professionals in constructing the student's educational program.</li> <li>• Teacher takes the primary responsibility for planning and developing an expanded curriculum, such as the development of functional life skills, communication skills, and specialized academic programs when needed.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Standard 7 Planning Instruction</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher implements students' programs as outlined in their IEPs.</li> <li>• Teacher coordinates instruction, related services, and delivery of special education services to students.</li> <li>• Teacher interprets and uses assessment data for comprehensive instructional planning.</li> <li>• Teacher plans and writes appropriate IEP goals and objectives that take into consideration the student's gender, culture, socioeconomic status and linguistic diversity.</li> <li>• Teacher plans and writes appropriate IEP goals and objectives that are chronologically age-appropriate, reflect access to the core curriculum, content standards, and interaction with peers without disabilities.</li> <li>• Teacher plans and writes appropriate IEP goals and objectives in all domains and skills (e.g., developmental, academic, behavioral, social-emotional, communication, career-occupational, and community life skills) as is appropriate.</li> <li>• Teacher writes appropriate IEPs that specifies methods to evaluate student progress.</li> <li>• Teacher plans and facilitates student participation in setting learning goals and charting progress.</li> <li>• Teacher demonstrates knowledge of curriculum content and instructional methods.</li> <li>• Teacher demonstrates knowledge of student with regards to characteristics of age group, varied approaches to learning, interests and cultural heritage.</li> <li>• Teacher selects appropriate instructional goals.</li> <li>• Teacher demonstrates knowledge of resources.</li> <li>• Teacher designs consistent and clearly articulated instruction.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standard 8 Assessment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher understands how to administer, score, interpret, and report on formal and informal assessments (including standardized tests) related to their areas of specialization.</li> <li>• Teacher plans and conducts assessments (e.g., informal and formal assessments of academic achievement, functional behavioral analyses, curriculum-based assessments, ecological assessments) in the school, home, and community in order to make eligibility and placement decisions about individual students with disabilities. S/he knows the legal requirements related to assessment of students with disabilities, and takes steps to ensure that these requirements are met.</li> <li>• Teacher involves families as partners in the assessment and eligibility/placement process, including when planning assessments, gathering information and making decisions.</li> <li>• Teacher initiates, contacts, and collaborates with other professionals (e.g., general education teachers, psychologists, social workers, speech/language pathologists, medical personnel) throughout the identification and initial planning process.</li> <li>• Teacher regularly uses ongoing assessment and student progress monitoring to make instructional decisions, adaptations, and modifications in instruction.</li> <li>• Teacher ensures that students with disabilities participate in district and statewide assessments and documents on the IEP the use of accommodations or an alternate assessment when appropriate.</li> </ul>

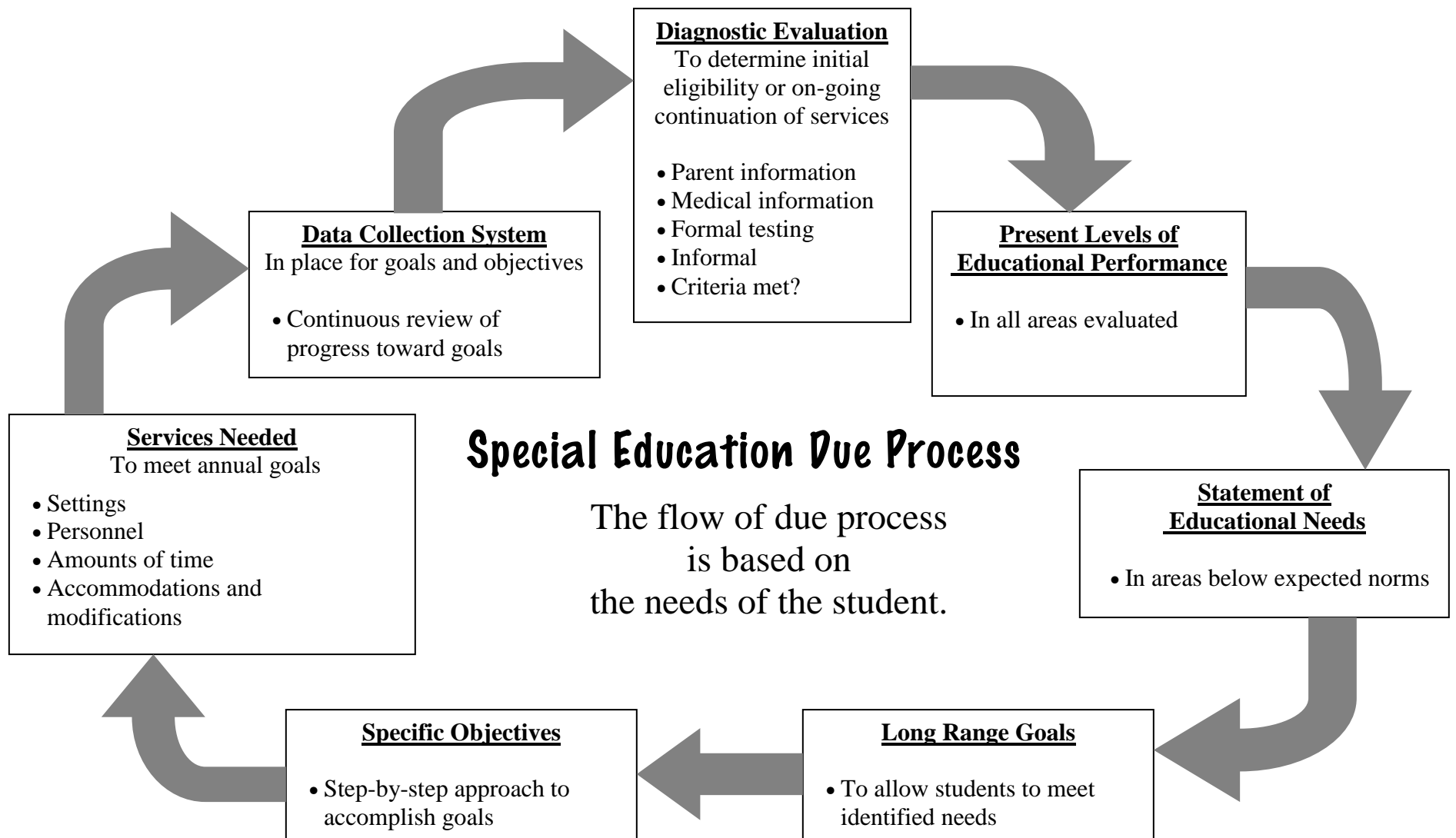
<p><b>Standard 8 Assessment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher writes evaluation reports, which clearly address all components of each disability criteria.</li> <li>• Teacher facilitates referral, evaluation, team planning and placement procedures.</li> <li>• Teacher reports assessment results to all stakeholders using effective communication skills.</li> <li>• Teacher uses performance data and information from all stakeholders to make or suggest modifications in learning environments.</li> <li>• Teacher uses assessment information in making eligibility, program, and placement decisions for individuals with exceptional learning needs, including those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.</li> <li>• Teacher assesses a variety of domains including developmental, academic, behavioral, social-emotional, communication, career-occupational, and community life skills.</li> <li>• Teacher documents consideration for assistive technology support.</li> <li>• Teacher regularly monitors (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly), assesses, and records student progress toward the obtainment of IEP goals and objectives.</li> <li>• Teacher obtains information from multiple sources (e.g., student, teacher, parent, other team members) to evaluate student progress toward obtainment of IEP goals and objectives.</li> <li>• Teacher maintains organized, accurate and updated assessment records and files.</li> <li>• Teacher uses evaluation data to modify curriculum.</li> <li>• Teacher uses evaluation data to modify instruction.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standard 9 Reflection and Professional Development</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher reflects on the progress of individual students with disabilities and works with general education teachers, other professionals, and families to consider ways to build on the students' strengths and meet their needs.</li> <li>• Teacher is current in his/her field. S/he reads the professional literature and research, networks with colleagues, and engages in professional development, e.g., workshops, professional association conferences, study groups.</li> <li>• Teacher actively seeks evidence about the approaches s/he uses in educating students with disabilities. S/he grounds his/her practices in the research literature and regularly examines his/her beliefs in relation to the literature on teaching, learning, and special education.</li> <li>• Teacher communicates and coordinates among home, school, regular and special education, and other agencies.</li> <li>• Teacher demonstrates high level of competence, integrity, ethics, professional judgment, and enthusiasm for teaching.</li> <li>• Teacher seeks, accepts, and utilizes suggestions and constructive criticism for professional growth. Teacher demonstrates proficiency in communication skills, e.g., reading, listening, writing, and use of oral language.</li> <li>• Teacher contributes to the school and district beyond what takes place in the classroom.</li> <li>• Teacher demonstrates organizational skills, including efficient time management strategies, and maintenance of updated student files.</li> </ul>

**Standard 10  
Collaboration,  
Ethics and  
Relationships**

- Teacher provides leadership that enables teams to accomplish their purposes. He/She understands factors that influence how teams develop and employ skills (e.g., problem-solving, action planning, conflict resolution) that ensure optimal team functioning, promote decision-making, and support the use of appropriate learning activities.
- Teacher works with related service professionals to design, implement and evaluate instructional plans for students with disabilities.
- Teacher effectively supervises instructional assistants/paraprofessionals assigned to his/her program.
- Teacher works effectively with parents of students who s/he serves.
- Teacher is proficient in facilitating IEP meetings.
- Teacher serves as the primary contact for the parent as it relates to his/her child's special education program.
- Teacher communicates and coordinates among home, school, regular/special education, and other agencies.
- Teacher fosters respectful and beneficial relationships between families and professionals.
- Teacher assists individuals with exceptional learning needs and their families in becoming active participants in the educational team.
- Teacher communicates with school personnel about the characteristics and needs of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
- Teacher communicates and models respect and sensitivity to all individuals and their families with regard to ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, gender, learning style, and life style orientation.
- Teacher demonstrates ability to actively plan and engage in collaborative consultation in all phases of the student referral and education process (e.g., pre-referral, formal referral, IEP) with a variety of individuals, e.g., parents, teachers, special/regular education staff and other support staff.
- Teacher demonstrates dependability and positive attitude in the workplace, e.g., punctual, attends to deadlines, and follow-through with professional responsibilities.

Developed by Dave Eberhardt (4/03) - Sources used in developing this document:

- Model Standards for Licensing General and Special Education Teachers of Students with Disabilities: A Resource for State Dialogue. Developed by Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, INTASC Special Education Sub-Committee, May 2001.
- What Every Special Educator Must Know: The Standards for the Preparation and Licensure of Special Education. Developed by The Council for Exceptional Children, 2000-Fourth Edition.
- Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Learning; Developed by Charlotte Danielson, 1996.
- Special Education Case Managers Responsibilities Identified In Minnesota State Law, 2002.
- Cambridge-Isanti School District #911 Teacher Standards Information, 2002.
- Competency Checklist, California State University Long Beach, Department of Educational Psychology, Administration and Counseling, 2002.



## Due Process Issues

### Critical Role of Mentoring:

For many beginning educators, paperwork and due process procedures are the most overwhelming part of the job. The mentor is advised to arrange for a discussion of due process policies and procedures early on in the relationship. The practicalities of such a discussion will vary depending upon whether the mentor/mentee are in the same district. If they are not in the same district, the mentee may need to talk with district co-workers in order to learn how and where to access needed information. As early as possible in a new position, the mentee should:

- Know how to access paper and/or electronic copies of all district policy and procedure manuals
- Know how to access paper and/or electronic copies of district due process forms
- Know how to complete paper and/or electronic copies of district due process forms
- Know how/where to learn about district training opportunities
- Understand the regularities (sometimes unwritten) of how meetings are convened and facilitated.

The following quote is a good example of a new teacher's response to due process demands, without the benefit of a mentor:

One aspect of the position that appeared overwhelming to me was the paperwork (including the evaluation and reevaluation process) and the meetings. Initially, I did not understand the school system's paperwork, particularly IEP forms; and its process of convening meetings seemed confusing. People would schedule me for meetings but not ask first whether I could attend. Often the guidance counselors would schedule meetings during my instructional periods and inform me of the meeting when it was happening. Also unclear was my role at many meetings. For example, I frequently was supposed to be the individual in charge, and at other times simply to be a member of the meeting. Clarification of the roles and responsibilities of the individuals involved in these meetings would have been beneficial. Moreover, I had not established a good procedure for monitoring the progress of my students' learning. I could have also benefited from advice on, and examples for, maintaining records, so that I would have had better information to share at those meetings.

### Most Pressing Due Process Issues

- Managing Due Process Timelines
- When applicable, finding time to meet with students on caseload
- Finding time to schedule meetings and complete assessments
- Parent communication

### Suggestions for Organizing Paperwork

- Start a master schedule the first week of school.
  - Review present caseload and map out dates for obligatory reassessments and IEP reviews for the entire school year.

- Identify “openings” where unanticipated meetings, evaluations, etc. can be scheduled.
- Fill “openings” as new referrals or parent requests arise.
- Use a tracking system that works for you: wall charts, desktop calendar, lesson plan book, computer calendar, or palm pilot.
- (It bears repeating) Whatever tracking system you use – Start EARLY!

### **Managing the Paper Trail - Importance of Getting it in Writing:**

The only way to demonstrate compliance with due process guidelines is to get it writing. As Pete Wright, an education rights attorney, advises “If it isn’t in writing, it didn’t happen.” When you are the case manager, take care to notify the other assessment team members well in advance of deadlines. In turn, when you are a team member take care to respect the case manager’s deadlines.

### **Case managers are often responsible for the following paperwork:**

- IEP
- Evaluation Plan
- Evaluation Summary Report
- Progress reports throughout the school year
- Initial schedule as well as schedule changes
- Parent contact log
- FBA supervisions
- Manifestation Determination
- Significant Change
- Conference summary reports
- Documentation of SEAs (State Education Agencies?)
- Documentation of student issues
- Notice of team meetings
- Grades
- Credit evaluation

### **Due Process Time Demands**

- Plan to schedule at least one hour per day
- Most IEPs can take 3+ hours to complete
- An evaluation summary report can take 6+ hours to complete
- Progress reports can take from 20 minutes to 2 hours per student
- Coordination with other service providers
  - Phone calls
  - Email
  - Notes
  - Thank yous!

## **Maximize Parent/Family involvement**

By law, family is an integral part of the IEP team. Parental support can empower even the slightest effort, but anger, fear or confusion can undermine the most powerful interventions. All communication and meetings should focus on two objectives –

- Providing meaningful information about student progress
- Heartfelt invitation for parent response/expression of concern

Suggestions for facilitating parent involvement:

- Make contact with parents early in the year. – Provide them with your 24-hour voice-mail and email.
- Provide meaningful information about student progress throughout the year – not just at the annual IEP review or when there is a problem/concern.
- Connect parents/family with community resources as appropriate.
- Offer flexible meeting times/locations, to accommodate parent work obligations and/or transportation challenges.
- Consider making home visits.
- Organize a get-to-know-each-other meeting for parents. Take the opportunity to inform them about special activities, opportunities for volunteering, and classroom needs for donations.
- Produce a student-generated resource room print newsletter and/or e-newsletter detailing special accomplishments and activities.

## **Mediation, Conciliation, Due Process Hearings**

- Conciliations and Due Process Hearings are not very common – follow your district manual!
- Education (e.g., PACER) advocates sometimes attend due process meetings along with the parent(s) and student. Advocates may ask difficult questions about due process, assessment and/or intervention strategies, but will proceed fairly. Advocates are looking to protect the student's rights – not to bully school professionals. If you are prepared for meetings, can document how you've followed due process guidelines and KNOW your students, an advocate will have no quarrels.



# Due Process Timeline Charts

## Initial Evaluation and IEP

Date Completed	Day	Due Process Step
		<b>Initial Evaluation Plan Meeting</b>
	1	Pre-referral information received and evaluation plan process initiated
	2	Meeting set up with parents - Notice of a Team Meeting – sent to all team members
	10	Evaluation plan meeting held
	10	Notice of Educational Evaluation/Reevaluation - completed and sent home to parents
		<b>Initial Evaluation</b>
	1	Signed parent permission received and team members notified of due date
	15	Eligibility Determination meeting set up with parents – Notice of Team Meetings – sent to all team members
	25	Team members have completed entering their data into the ER
	28	Eligibility determination meeting held
	30	Complete Evaluation Report – sent to parents
		<b>Initial IEP</b>
	1	Set up the IEP meeting date at the eligibility determination meeting and sent – Notice of a Team Meeting – to all team members
	10	IEP meeting must be held <b>within 14 school days</b> after the eligibility determination meeting
	20	IEP completed and sent to parents with – Notice of Proposed Special Education Services
	30	Permission received – an initial IEP <b>cannot be</b> implemented without signed permission from the parent/guardian

## Annual IEP

To find day one, take the IEP meeting date and count back 15 school days.

Date Completed	Day	Due Process Step
		<b>Initial Evaluation Plan Meeting</b>
	1	Parents called to schedule the IEP meeting
	5	Notice of Team Meeting sent to all team members
	15	Annual IEP meeting held
	25	Complete IEP and Notice of Proposed Special Education Services sent to parents
	35	Start date – permission received and/or IEP implemented

## Due Process Timeline Charts (cont'd)

### Interim IEP

An Interim IEP may be written for no more than 60 school days to allow the team time to determine the appropriateness of placement or to resolve questions regarding the content of the IEP.

### Re-evaluation and IEP Meeting

To find day one, take either the IEP meeting date or the evaluation date and count back 52 school days.

Date completed	Day	Due Process Step
		<b>Re-evaluation Plan Meeting</b>
	1	Parents called to schedule the re-evaluation plan meeting
	5	Notice of Team Meeting sent to all team members
	15	Re-evaluation plan meeting held and Notice of Educational Evaluation/Re-evaluation sent to parents
	29	Within 14 <b>calendar days</b> the re-evaluation begins if permission has not been received from the parents after reasonable attempts
	47	Parents called to schedule the IEP/re-evaluation meeting
	54	Team members enter information from their completed evaluation(s) into the ER
	57	IEP/Pre-evaluation meeting (this is the re-evaluation date and the IEP meeting date)
	59	Completed ER sent to parents
	67	Completed IEP sent to parents with Notice of Proposed Special Education Services
	77	IEP start date – permission received and/or IEP implemented