

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPECTATIONS FOR PARA PROFESSIONALS



WASHINGTON 4-5 CENTER

“Never forget that you are one of a kind. Never forget that if there weren't any need for you in all your uniqueness to be on this earth, you wouldn't be here in the first place. And never forget, no matter how overwhelming life's challenges and problems seem to be, that one person can make a difference in the world. In fact, it is always because of one person that all the changes that matter in the world come about. So be that one person.”

– R. Buckminster Fuller

Welcome to the Washington 4-5 Center!

Thank you for your commitment and dedication to our school. You are a vital part of the education team that serves to support and provide services to the students attending this school, helping them to achieve excellence.

The intent of this guide is to be a resource to you, and to answer all the questions you may have about your role and your responsibilities. The guide includes an overview of your job expectations, morals and ethics, and tips for working with students. Information specific to the students you will work with, and further direction will come from your supervising teacher and the district administrative team. Continued professional development will assist you in refining your skills and knowledge related to both the academic and behavioral progress of the students you work with.

Your work is valued, as well as your dedication and professionalism. Please let me know how I can support you, and help you grow professionally. Thanks for being a valuable member of the Washington team!

Kari Hinker
Principal

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Professionalism

- Present yourself as a positive role model for students, be responsible and accountable at all times.
- Represent the Huron School District in a positive manner, maintaining professional conduct in thoroughly performing all duties and responsibilities.
- Be punctual and attend work regularly.
- Follow your schedule consistently.
- Share relevant information with supervising teacher to facilitate problem solving, program planning, and student progress.
- If you have questions, seek answers and/or input. Review the school's handbook.
- Discuss a student's progress or educational program only with the teachers who are responsible for that student's instruction.
- Discuss confidential school and student issues only with appropriate school personnel.
- Maintain a positive attitude.
- Refrain from talking about a student in the community.
- Understand and follow school policies and procedures, and be aware of the expected conduct in the building, as well as all emergency procedures.
- Maintain appropriate dress as advised by your administration. Be mindful of wearing safe shoes/warm clothing to perform duties.
- Communication with parents is the teacher's responsibility. Refer parent inquiries regarding student progress to the student's teacher.
- Maintain student dignity by being discreet about students' physical needs.

- Refrain from discussing information about students in front of students.
- Maintain a professional relationship with students at all times.
- Be flexible and willing to assist when and where needed.
- Seek opportunities for professional growth such as reading journal articles, attending available training sessions, and/or participating in staff development.
- Focus on what a student “CAN do”, rather than what he/she cannot do.

General Ethical Considerations for Para Professionals

Accepting Responsibilities

- Engage only in instructional and non-instructional activities for which you are qualified or trained.
- Refer concerns expressed by parents, students, or others to your supervising teacher.
- Recognize that the teacher has the ultimate responsibility for instruction and behavioral management of the children and follow the prescribed directions.
- Help to see the best interests of the individual students are met.
- Do not communicate progress or concerns about students to parents.

Relationships with Students and Parents

- Discuss a child's progress, limitations, and/or educational program only with the supervising teacher in a private setting.
- Express differences of opinions with your supervising teacher in private.
- Discuss confidential matters only with the appropriate school staff.
- Respect the dignity, privacy and individuality of all students, parents, and staff members
- Be a positive role model and influence in the school.
- Do not engage in discriminatory practices based on a student's handicap, race, sex, cultural background, or religion.
- Use behavior management strategies that are consistent with the standards established by the school and the classroom teacher.

Relationship with the Teacher

- Recognize the teacher as your supervisor.
- Establish communication and a positive relationship with the teacher.
- If a problem arises, follow the district's complaint/grievance policy.
- Discuss concerns directly with the teacher in private.
- Express differences of opinion in private, and only with the direct teacher.
- Follow the procedures and routines in the classroom as established by the teacher.

Relationship with the School

- Accept responsibility for improving your skills.
- Familiarize yourself with the handbook, and follow school policies and procedures.
- Represent the school and its programs in a positive manner.
- Refrain from discussing confidential matters with others, gossiping and venting.
- Be a contributing and supportive member of the team.

Roles of Teachers and Paraprofessionals

I. Instruction

Teacher's Role	Paraprofessional's Role	
<p>*Determines appropriate objectives for groups and individual students.</p> <p>*Plans weekly schedules, lessons, room arrangement, learning centers, and activities for the entire class, as well as modifications and accommodations for students on an IEP or LAP.</p> <p>*Teaches lessons to the entire class, small groups, and individual students.</p> <p>*Administers and scores assessments.</p> <p>*Determine the appropriate use of assistive technology to meet the needs of students.</p> <p>*Develops data collection tools and collects data on student progress.</p>	<p>*Follow schedule and implement plans designed by teacher.</p> <p>*Provides direct, individual assistance to student(s) so that they can participate, as independently as possible.</p> <p>*Implements student IEP or LAP goals, accommodations and modifications as directed by the teacher.</p> <p>*Administers informal assessments under the direction of the teacher.</p> <p>*Facilitates the use of assistive technology.</p> <p>*Collects data on student progress as designated by the teacher.</p>	<p>*Provides assistance to individual students on completing follow-up or reinforcement activities.</p> <p>*Supports a student or small group of students during instruction.</p>

II. Behavior and Social Support

Teacher's Role	Paraprofessional's Role
*Observes behavior, plans and implements behavior intervention plans and strategies for the entire class and for individual students.	*Implements and supports behavior plans and strategies under teacher direction.
*Facilitates appropriate social interactions between students.	*Facilitates appropriate social interactions between students.
*Develops data collection tools and collects data on student behavior.	*Collects data on classroom behavior as designated by the teacher.

III. Communication

Teacher's Role	Paraprofessional's Role
*Communicates with administrators, related service providers, general educators, para's, and appropriate staff regarding student progress.	*Communicates with case manager or teacher regarding student progress.
*Communicates with parents regarding student progress.	

IV. Clerical

Teacher's Role	Paraprofessional's Role
*Develop, model, and/or provide detailed instruction on preparing instructional materials.	*Prepare instructional materials based on a model and/or detailed instructions provided by a teacher.
*Develop an organization system to manage student work samples and materials.	*Assist with organization of student work samples and materials, as directed by the teacher.

Classroom Management

- Treat all students with respect and courtesy.
- Demonstrate sensitivity to diversity, teach tolerance.
- Be aware of your surroundings and events in the classroom.
- Be consistent.
- Help students determine good versus inappropriate behaviors.
- Allow the student to have a voice, be listened to, and be validated.
- Model appropriate behaviors, language and manners for students.
- Remain calm, even when upset or frustrated.

Communication

- Provide lots of praise and encouragement.
- Provide immediate feedback.
- Speak directly to the student rather than across the room.
- Speak directly, with short, meaningful sentences.
- Keep your voice and facial expressions pleasant.
- Do not teach life lesson or impart your beliefs on students.
- Let the student set the pace in talking.

Teaching Strategies

- Use the student's strengths to work on difficult areas.
- Encourage students by asking their plan, instead of solving it for them.
- Celebrate current skills and accomplishments.
- Be considerate of the extra time it may take to complete a task.
- Include examples when explaining something new.
- Appreciate what the student can do.
- Guide the student, rather than protect.

Positive Behavioral Strategies and Supports

- Behavior is a means of communication. Consider what the student is trying to tell you with the behavior.
 - Is she hungry? Is he frustrated? Is he trying to get attention? Is she trying to escape the demand? Is he sick?
- Behind most behaviors exists a skill deficit.
 - Language and social difficulties
 - Sensory processing difficulties
 - Academic and writing skill deficits
 - Difficulties managing stress and anxiety
 - Attention difficulties
 - Difficulties handling transition and change
 - Difficulties with self-esteem
 - Organizational difficulties
- Remind students of expectations prior to the transitions of an activity.
- Be cognizant of triggers/antecedents (what happens prior to the behavior occurring) that may lead to inappropriate behavior.
- Communicate with the teacher regarding student behaviors within a reasonable time frame.
- Encourage, expect and reinforce age appropriate behavior, even with students with lower cognitive abilities.
- Be proactive when assisting with behavior management. Provide structure and routine in an environment that is conducive to learning.
- When communicating with students, state directions and expectations in a simple, explicit, and positive manner. Tell the students what they are supposed to do. For instance, instead of saying “Don’t run”, say “Please walk in the halls”.
- Offer students choices to avoid a power struggle. Rather than say “Don’t tap your pencil”, state “Would you rather put your pencil in

your pencil case or in your desk.” Provide and encourage association with appropriate peer role models.

- Avoid overreacting to inappropriate behavior. Some students may be reinforced by negative attention, which may increase inappropriate behaviors.
- When possible, ignore attention seeking behaviors that are not disruptive to the classroom.
- Diffuse stressful situations for students through redirection and distraction when appropriate.
- Provide positive reinforcement: Avoid focusing on punitive consequences or loss of privileges.
 - When offering positive reinforcement, state what you like about the behavior. Rather than just saying say “good job”, state “I like the way you raised your hand to participate.”
 - Focus on the positive!
- Avoid discussing incidents of behavior that occurred in the past.
- Avoid personalizing student behavior and language.
- Two words guaranteed to defuse any kid, anywhere, at any time- “I’m Sorry”.
- Make amends, repair the harm, make a plan to overcome the obstacle or change the behavior.
- Five non-negotiables:
 1. Never take it personally.
 2. Second to last word is best.
 3. Private is better than public.
 4. Negotiation is GOOD.
 5. Walking away = strength.

Ways to Positively Reinforce Students

- Remarkable!
- I knew you could do it!
- What a great idea!
- You are so smart!
- You brighten my day!
- Outstanding answer!
- Thanks for volunteering.
- What a good listener!
- I like the way... (you are working quietly, sitting nicely in your seat, working with your partner, etc.) How creative!
- Can you share your great idea with the class?
- Now you've got it!
- I can tell you worked hard on this.
- You must be so proud of your project!
- Hooray for you!
- You figured it out all by yourself!
- I like the way you are sitting nicely in your seat.
- That's a good point!

- Excellent work!
- Congratulations!
- I'll bet your mom and dad would be proud to see the job you did on this.
- Good thinking!
- Much better!
- I am so glad I get to work with you today.
- I appreciate your help.
- That is the coolest picture I have ever seen!
- You have put a lot of thought into the answer to the question!
- It is amazing how much you have learned this year!
- Way to go!
- How does it feel to know all of your multiplication facts?
- I learned something new from you.
- Good thinking!

Strategies for Facilitating Student Independence

- Increasing learner independence is the instructional goal for every student! Encourage students to be independent rather than dependent.
- Encourage and allow students to make choices and decisions.
- Encourage students to complete activity as independently as possible prior to offering support.
- Allow student work to be authentic, rather than completed by the paraprofessional or inclusion helper.
- Allow students to make mistakes and experience natural consequences, unless there is a safety issue.
- When appropriate, sit or stand at a distance from the student who requires additional adult support.

Keys to Effective Communication

- Maintain close proximity and use a low volume when communicating with students.
- Provide clear and simply stated directions of what you expect the child to do instead of telling them what you don't want them to do.
- Repeat back to the student what you think they are saying to clarify what the student means.
- Some children may require a model, picture, or sign of the action paired with the verbal direction.
- Use age appropriate language when speaking with students. (Refrain from using "baby talk"). Encourage students to use age appropriate language.
- Allow students time to communicate independently using their mode(s) of communication.
- Allow for extra processing and response time.

For example:

Instead of saying:	Say/Model	Reinforce
"No yelling!"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Use a calm voice." • "Use an inside voice." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Speak in a low voice while saying... Now I can listen, you are using a quiet voice." • "Nice job using your inside voice."
"Don't run!"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "We walk in the hallway." • "Use walking feet." • "Walk please." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I like the way you're walking." • "Thanks for walking!"
"Stop calling out!"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Raise your hand." • "When you raise your hand, the teacher will answer your question." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Thank you for raising your hand." • "I like the way you raised your hand to share your ideas."

Thanks for being a
part of our team!

Never underestimate
the ripple effect that
one positive
teacher/student
relationship can
have!

