Introduction

Issaquah School District paraprofessionals are valued members of the educational team. They share the mutual goal of providing quality education for all learners. The value of paraprofessionals and the complexity of their roles are recognized as important to the success of every school.

This handbook is intended to provide helpful information and strategies that will enhance your role as it continues to develop. It spans important and practical topics including Washington State standards, district policies, roles and responsibilities, effective instructional strategies and cultural competencies.

Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning in Washington State</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PESB Paraeducator Certificate Program</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Policies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roles and Responsibilities</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential Questions the First Week on the Job</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Effectiveness</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Development</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBSES Positive Behavior and Social Emotional Support</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Management</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational and Instructional Support</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Learners</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Competency</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Acronyms</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network of Support</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning in Washington State

Basic education in Washington State is defined by the Legislature. They do this with the guidance of the national academic standards called The Common Core State Standards. As required by state law, OSPI (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction) develops the state’s learning standards and oversees the assessment of the learning standards for state and federal accountability purposes. Learning standards define what all students need to know and be able to do at each grade level.

These four learning goals provide the foundation for the development of all academic learning standards in Washington State.

1. Read with comprehension, write effectively, and communicate successfully in a variety of ways and settings and with a variety of audiences.

2. Know and apply the core concepts and principles of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics and history, including different cultures and participation in representative government; geography; arts; and health and fitness.

3. Think analytically, logically, and creatively, and to integrate technology literacy and fluency as well as different experiences and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems.

4. Understand the importance of work and finance and how performance, effort, and decisions directly affect future career and educational opportunities.

Learning standards are developed through collaborative, public processes informed by educators, administrators, community members, parents and stakeholder groups across the state and nationwide.

Curriculum and grade level teams in schools across the state use the learning standards to plan instruction.

Teachers create lesson plans and learning goals to meet the learning standards. Paraprofessionals support teachers as valuable team members delivering instruction and assisting with assessments.

(Source: State of Washington OSPI, www.k12.wa.us)
Washington is heavily invested in ensuring that all instructional paraeducators receive training to support our most diverse and vulnerable student populations. In 2017, the Washington Legislature created the nation’s first ever Paraeducator Board, and tasked members to establish, develop and implement paraeducator minimum employment standards and the certificate program. The new minimum employment requirements must be met by school year 2019-20.

A paraeducator must:

Be at least eighteen years of age and hold a high school diploma or its equivalent.

In addition, a paraeducator must meet one or more of the following:

(a) Have received a qualifying score on the Education Testing Service paraeducator assessment; or

(b) Hold an associate degree or higher from an accredited college or university; or

(c) Have earned seventy-two quarter credits or forty-eight semester credits at the one hundred level or higher at an accredited college or university; or

(d) Have completed an apprenticeship as a paraeducator, in a program registered with the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council.

The certificate program offers statewide standards-based training for all paraeducators, and supports a career growth ladder for those who wish to pursue a teaching profession.


For more information regarding the ISD implementation of the certificate programs contact a district Paraprofessional Learning Coach.
District Policies

All new hire paraprofessionals receive a district orientation provided by the Human Resource Department prior to their work start date. The orientation and new hire packet includes information on all district regulations. Additionally, all new hire paraprofessionals are required to complete online SafeSchools training including Boundary Invasion, Responsible Use Guide: Issaquah School District, and What Every Employee Must Be Told. The following district policies relating to the legal and ethical duties of paraprofessionals are further reviewed within the required state certificate program:

Reg. 3207 Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

Paraprofessionals are essential to identifying and combating discrimination. They provide the trained eyes and ears in multiple settings throughout the schools. Any school staff who observes, overhears, or otherwise witnesses harassment, intimidation or bullying or to whom such actions have been reported must take prompt and appropriate action to stop the harassment and to prevent its reoccurrence. Intervene to the extent time allows and that your skills can resolve. Report to school principal, dean of students, assistant principal or district compliance officer. Minor incidents that staff are able to resolve immediately or incidents that do not meet the definition of harassment, intimidation or bullying, may require no further action.

3210 Nondiscrimination

The district will provide equal educational opportunity and treatment for all students in all aspects of the academic and activities program without discrimination based on race, religion, creed, color, national origin, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, marital status, the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. Harassment against any student that is based on one of the categories listed above that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive as to limit or deny the student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the district’s course offerings, educational programming or any co-curricular or extra-curricular activity will not be tolerated. The district will take prompt and effective steps reasonably calculated to end the harassment, prevent its recurrence and remedy its effects when the district knows, or reasonably should know, that such discriminatory harassment is occurring or has occurred.

Reg. 3421 Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

When school personnel has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect, they shall report such incident, or cause a report to be made to the proper law enforcement agency or the department as provided in RCW 26.44.040. When possible the report should be made in the presence of the principal. The principal shall in all cases be immediately informed of reports to law enforcement or the department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)/Children’s Protective Services (CPS). This report must be made at the first opportunity, but in no case longer than forty-eight (48) hours after there is reasonable cause to believe that the child has suffered abuse or neglect. The report must include the identity of the accused if known. If you are in doubt about what should be reported, it is better to make your concerns known than to remain silent and possibly allow a child to remain unprotected.
Reg. 4020 Confidentiality and Ethics

The district recognizes that school staff must exercise a delicate balance regarding the treatment of information that is revealed in confidence. Paraprofessionals must maintain confidentiality and respect the legal and human rights of children, youth and their families. Only those who are directly involved in the education of a special needs student may have specific student information. If you are unsure about accessing specific student information or sharing student information, ask your supervising teacher. Questions asked by parents regarding their child should be directed to the certificated staff. Information regarding specific students and programs should not be shared in the lunchroom, staff room, office areas, out in the community or any other setting. When in doubt, check the district policy or ask your supervisor what to do.

Reg. 5013 Sexual Harassment Prohibited

The district is committed to a positive and productive working environment free from discrimination, including sexual harassment. It is the perception of the receiving individual, not that of the acting individual, that weighs most heavily if harassment has occurred. Even though sexual harassment may not have been the motive, if the receiving individual finds the behavior uncomfortable, embarrassing, or threatening, there is a problem and interventions are needed. All staff are responsible for directing complaints to the formal complaint process. Reports of sexual harassment will be referred to the District’s Title IX or Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator in the Human Resource Department.

Reg. 5201 Drug Free Workplace

The district has an obligation to staff, students and citizens to take reasonable steps to assure safety in the workplace and to provide safety and high quality performance for the students and educational community that the staff members serve. Being under the influence of, using, possessing or transmitting alcohol, controlled substances, illegal chemical substances or opiates is strictly prohibited at the workplace. Any staff member convicted of a felony attributable to the use, possession, or sale of controlled substances, illegal chemical substances, or opiates will be subject to disciplinary action, including termination of employment. Use of, possession by or distribution of tobacco products is prohibited on all district property, including all buildings, grounds, and district owned vehicles, and within five hundred feet of school.

Reg. 5253 Maintaining Staff/Student Boundaries

The district expects all staff members to maintain the highest professional, moral and ethical standards in interaction with students. Staff members are required to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, through consistently and fairly applied discipline and established and maintained professional boundaries. The district expects staff and agency personnel who work in the schools to set examples for students of appropriate conduct and behavior.

5282 Civility

The district believes that a safe, civil environment is essential to high student and staff achievement, to the free exchange of ideas central to a quality educational process, and to the development of youth as thoughtful participants in our democracy. Conversely, uncivil conduct, like other forms of disruptive behavior, interferes with a student’s ability to learn and a district’s ability to support and educate its students.

All district regulations can be found on the district website under District/Regulations Manual. If you have questions contact the Human Resource Department.
In Greek, the meaning of para is “alongside of.” Throughout the district, paraprofessionals contribute many skills and talents to the educational team and assist teachers in all phases of the instructional process. It’s important for paraprofessionals to understand how their responsibilities differ from certificated teachers’ responsibilities. The following chart compares and contrasts the roles of both the teacher and paraprofessional.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher roles</th>
<th>Paraeducator roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizing the classroom:</strong> Designs the layout of the classroom; plans lessons; plans schedules</td>
<td><strong>Organizing the classroom:</strong> Follows plan according to teacher’s lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching lessons:</strong> Sets objectives; teaches the whole class, small groups, and individuals</td>
<td><strong>Teaching lessons:</strong> Helps teacher manage small groups and individual students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessing learning:</strong> In charge of making sure all students complete lesson testing</td>
<td><strong>Assessing learning:</strong> Helps manage testing process, including scoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Managing behavior:</strong> Plans and implements behavior management strategies for staying on track in class</td>
<td><strong>Managing behavior:</strong> Supports and implements behavior management strategies; tracks progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meeting with families:</strong> Communicates with families regarding students’ progress</td>
<td><strong>Meeting with families:</strong> Supports teacher’s efforts to communicate with families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Working with individualized education programs (IEPs):</strong> Plans, develops, and implements IEPs; creates instructional materials; participates in professional development opportunities</td>
<td><strong>Working with individualized education programs (IEPs):</strong> Supports teacher’s IEP efforts; tracks student progress; reports progress to teacher; creates supporting materials according to teacher’s plans; attends professional development geared toward paraeducators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Paraeducator Handbook, Puget Sound Educational Service District, Revised 2007)
Potential Questions the First Week on the Job

Human Resource Department

- Are there any required trainings for my position?
- Are there any affiliations or organizations that I’ll be expected to join?
- When and how will I be paid? What benefits will I receive?
- What is the procedure for when I am sick or need to take a leave of absence?
- What are the district weather-related schedule change procedures?
- What are the district policies and procedures?

School Administrators – Principal, Assistant Principal or Dean of Students

- What is my schedule? Can I expect my schedule to change in any way?
- Is there anything I’m expected to do that was not mentioned in the interview or job description?
- Where do I put my personal belongings? Where do I eat lunch and take breaks?
- What are the school guidelines on reading email or cell phone use?
- Am I expected to attend staff meetings? How will I be compensated for any extra time?
- Who is my direct supervisor? Who evaluates me?
- What is the line of communication and authority I’m expected to follow?
- What are the school regulations regarding discipline outside the classroom?
- What is expected of me in implementing Positive Behavior Social Emotional Support outside the classroom? What is the school emergency plan?

Supervising Classroom Teacher(s)

- What student records are available to me? Is there information from student IEPs, BIPs, 504s, health plans (school nurse) or general information to assist me?
- What are your classroom rules and expectations for students?
- What is expected of me in implementing instruction in the classroom?
- What is expected of me in implementing Positive Behavior Social Emotional Support in the classroom?
- What should my response be when a parent raises a question regarding a student I’m working with?
- Where are supplies, equipment and materials kept? How are they obtained? When will I be trained to use the materials or equipment?
- When the teacher is absent, will my role change in any way?
- When is the best time/way to communicate with you?
Team Effectiveness

Teamwork requires effort, commitment, and a willingness to accept the challenges of working together. Effective teamwork includes: shared goals, good communication, role clarification, and clear directions. How we communicate and function as an educational team ultimately affects the students we support. Effective communication includes active listening, a free flow of ideas and information, and an opportunity for feedback and evaluation of mission and goals.

As the team leader, it’s important that certified teachers communicate specific student learning goals and expectations to the paras they supervise.

As a team member, paraprofessionals have a responsibility to ask for clarification if unsure of the student learning goals or if they’re unsure about what they’re being asked to do. Paraprofessionals also contribute by communicating their thoughts on how to best support student learning.

The effectiveness of teams depends on the integrity of each team member; administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, and support services personnel. The integrity of team members makes it possible for teams to be both collaborative and productive. The following are components of team member integrity:

- Demonstrate trustworthiness by treating others with respect, maintaining confidentiality, telling the truth, and honoring promises.
- Communicate effectively by being a good listener, sharing ideas clearly, and asking good questions.
- Build a community of practice by encouraging all team colleagues to contribute to discussions, entertaining different perspectives, giving consent to workable solutions, and providing kind but honest feedback.

A team spirit develops when members work well together and it benefits students and their families as well as the entire educational community.

(Source: Teachers Coaching Paraprofessionals, OPEPP, 2017)

Conflict occurs in any work relationship. Conflicts arise as a result of opposing ideas, unclear goals, and confusion of roles or behavior management strategies. When disagreements occur, it is important that the conflict is resolved. In problem solving, a series of conflict resolution strategies should be followed by all who are involved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict Resolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: Pause and reflect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: Identify the conflict or source of the conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3: Determine what part you play in the conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4: Determine the various options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 5: Choose the best option or strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 6: Develop an action plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 7: Implement the plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 8: Evaluate the solution and problem solving process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Paraeducators in Schools: Strengthening the Educational Team, Pickett, Gerlach, Morgan, Likins and Wallace, 2007)
Child and Adolescent Developmental Stages

As a paraprofessional it’s important to understand how developmental stages impact students physically, cognitively, behaviorally and social and emotionally. Understanding these stages helps us support students more effectively. These are predictable stages, however, this development does not necessarily proceed evenly. Development is affected by such factors as heredity and the environment. Changes influence how a child perceives and understands the world. The following describes some general characteristics of developing children.

Birth to 2 years

Cognitive – Sensorimotor
Children learn about the world through their senses, the manipulation of objects and by trial and error. They learn to differentiate themselves from the environment. Imaginative play and symbolic thought emerge. By the end of this stage, children understand 10-50 words, can identify body parts, have a sense of ownership with people or objects and can follow two task directions.

Physical
Grasping reflexes develop into greater agility and strength. Mobility increases within first year from crawling to walking. By age two children develop skill in balance and hand-eye coordination; throwing objects, using crayons and turning knobs and handles.

Social/Emotional
Social interaction becomes increasingly important. Skill building develops from responding to touch and language to playing peek-a-boo and expressing emotions. Children begin to mimic the actions of others and express anxiety when separated from caregivers. They also become more self-assertive and independent in play.

Ages 2 – 7 years

Cognitive – Preoperational
Children develop memory and imagination. They begin to understand things symbolically, and to understand the ideas of past and future. The use of instruments and tools develop. Striving for independence and learning the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behavior emerge. Understanding concepts like “please” and “thank you,” and gaining knowledge of 100 to 150 words. 10+ new words are added per day. Begin to understand emotions, such as love,
trust and fear. Views are self-centered. Testing of limits. Increased attention span. Learning to read and develop routines.

**Physical**
Increased coordination and speed. Movement and balance become more advanced from standing on one foot to riding a bike. Towards the end of this stage, children increase confidence in cutting with scissors, writing letters and drawing shapes, climbing on playground equipment, dressing, personal hygiene, and developing hand preference.

**Social/Emotional**
Creativity and confidence increase. Becoming aware of gender. Rapid changes in mood and awareness of other people’s feelings. Will try to express feelings with words but may resort to aggression when upset. Enjoy competitive games. Friendships develop and understanding of good and bad behavior increases. Social interactions with playmates develop into cooperation.

**Ages 7 – 12 years**

**Cognitive – Concrete Operational**
Children become more aware of external events, as well as feelings other than their own. Logical reasoning replaces intuitive reasoning. Able to classify and organize objects. Considers different aspects of a task. Builds on past experiences. Attention span increases from being able to focus on a task from 15 minutes (6 yrs.) to an hour (9 yrs.).

**Physical**
Growth rate slows and then may spurt. Develops adult proportions. Require more sleep. Improved writing, art, musical and athletic skills.

**Social/Emotional**
Start narrowing peer groups. May withdraw from family to develop their own identity. Affectionate, silly and curious but can also be selfish, rude and argumentative.

**Ages 12 – 18 years**

**Cognitive – Formal Operational**
Children are able to use logic to solve problems, view the world around them, and plan for the future. Independent and abstract thinking develops. Increase in introspection and self-consciousness. Metacognitive abilities improve with a preoccupation with the self. Complex problem solving and planning develop with ability to see multiple perspectives. More likely to question others’ assertions and less likely to accept facts as absolute truths.

**Physical**
Rapid growth period during puberty. Preoccupation with physical changes and critical of appearance. Excessive physical activity alternating with lethargy. Physical growth slows for girls and continues for boys.

**Social/Emotional**
Thinking becomes more logical. Need more privacy, are introspective and moody. Begin to value friends’ and others’ opinions more. Discover their own strengths and weaknesses. Test out new ideas, clothing styles and mannerisms. May be interested in dating and spending a lot of time with friends.
The ISD is committed to a vision for Positive Behavior Social Emotional Support to promote respect, positive relationships, and predictable, proactive learning environments so that students can lead socially and emotionally safe and healthy lives.

**What is PBSES?** It’s modeled on PBIS, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, a national program funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education. PBSES is not a curriculum, but a process of planning and problem solving that includes direct teaching of social behaviors just like academics are taught. Most importantly, it establishes ongoing behavior support that can be used by all students, staff, volunteers, parents and community members. PBSES consists of four evidence-based components that work together to create good outcomes for students and a better school climate. The four components work together and overlap.

**PBIS** (Positive Behavior and Intervention Support) is a national pro-active approach to increasing positive student behavior through direct instruction. In every school, staff teach behavior expectations to students that are consistent with pro-social traits such as responsibility and respect.

**SEL** (Social Emotional Learning) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions.

**Positive Relationships** with adults has been found to be a major component of adaptation in school. Staff can act as role models, reward and reinforce children’s competencies, and provide high levels of social support.

**Proactive Classroom Management Strategies** refer to an approach to classroom management that simultaneously promotes high levels of academic engagement while also preventing off-task and disruptive behavior.
What is the PBSES framework for implementation? It involves a multi-tiered system of support. The integrated instruction and intervention is delivered to students in varying intensities based on student need.

Tier 1 – School wide implementation including behavior expectations posted, taught and modeled by staff, students and parents and a positive reward/motivation system. It is effective for approximately 80% of student population.

Tier 2 – Targeted implementation for students needing additional support including small group or individual activities with counselor or PBSES coach, parent communication, and/or behavior contract. Supports approximately 15% of student population.

Tier 3 – Intense individual support for approximately 5% of student population. May involve teachers, counselors, administrators, psychologists and parents working together to form a behavior support plan.

The Paraprofessional Tool Kit contains four components of a safe and positive learning environment that contributes to proactive behavior management.

Safe
Welcoming staff
Organized spaces and materials
Proximity/active supervision
Clear and explicit expectations

Engaged
Student centered opportunities to respond
Transitions are modeled, taught and reinforced

Connected
Relationships are establish, maintained and restored
There is a 5:1 ratio of positive reinforcement/redirection

Supported
Pro-social skills are taught, modeled and practiced
There is a motivational system in place
Behavior Management

When supervising students outside of the classroom, the paraprofessional supports the school’s rules and expectations. Within a classroom, the role of the para is to support the behavior management plan of the supervising teacher.

The PBSES model rethinks discipline by viewing it as an opportunity to teach rather than viewing discipline as punishment. This learning can include regulating emotions, inhibiting impulses and considering how our actions impact others. It also encourages making a connection with students before redirecting them.

*When we offer comfort when our kids are upset, when we listen to their feelings, when we communicate how much we love them even when they’re messed up: when we respond in these ways, we significantly impact the way their brains develop and the kind of people they will be, both now and as they move into adolescence and adulthood.*

*No Drama Discipline, Dr. Siegel and Dr. Payne Bryson*

It’s helpful to remember that behavior is a form of communication. We see the behavior but what we can’t see is the source of the behavior. Like an iceberg, we don’t see what’s below the surface.
**Behavior Management Cont.**

Knowledge of the setting events and the antecedent (what comes before the behavior), helps identify the function of behavior and identify appropriate responses. Typically students engage in a behavior because more than once it has worked in gaining a desired response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attention</th>
<th>Behavior is used to get attention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Behavior is used to get something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid/Escape</td>
<td>Behavior is used to get out of something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automatic</td>
<td>Behavior is done for its own reward (Others are not needed to make behavior reinforcing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The use of proactive management strategies often help to avoid behavior difficulties. Prepare ahead of time to identify challenges and make changes to minimize the escalation of behavior.

In spite of our best efforts challenging behavior occurs. Specific intervention strategies should be discussed ahead of time with building administrators, teachers and support specialists. It’s best to have a plan in place before behavior problems emerge. The following are general behavior management strategies.

**Behavior Management Strategies**

**Triggers to avoid:**
- Minimizing – “Calm down!” or “It’s not that big of a deal!”
- Shaming – “You’re acting like a baby!”
- Guilt tripping – “You’re stressing me out!”
- The phrase, “I need you to…”
- Arguing or engaging in a power struggle

**Instead try:**
- Positive approach – “Walk” instead of “Don’t run”
- Curiosity – “I’m wondering how I may help you…”
- Validation – “This is hard!”
- Empathy – “I know how frustrated you must be!”
- Offer help – “What can I do to help?” and “Show me how to help.”
- Use short and simple phrases
- Allow time for de-escalation
- Create space from the perceived demand
- Use re-direction
- Provide a clear choice that is immediately accessible
Educational and Instructional Support

Paraprofessionals assist in providing instructional services to students while working under the direct supervision of certified teachers. Instructional strategies are defined as the approach for delivering specific content to students. It's important for paras to have background knowledge and skills to better support students.

The Learning Cycle

**Assessment** - The cycle of learning begins with assessing and recording data on a students’ current level in skill, behavior and preferences. Pinpointing a students’ level informs decision making regarding instruction.

**Instruction** – Delivering instruction includes lesson plans and instructional strategies based on skill level. Prior knowledge and prerequisite skills need to be considered.

**Re-assessment** – Re-assessment and data gathering continues throughout the learning cycle and helps determine progress and decision making about continuing onto new material or repeating instruction in specific gaps of learning.

Assessment

The Issaquah School District believes that an effective system for improving K-12 learning requires implementation of a comprehensive assessment system. A comprehensive assessment system connects curriculum, instruction and assessment by aligning instruction to curriculum standards and by using assessments to determine students’ status and progress on these standards.

Given adequate training and supervision, paraprofessionals may administer informal assessments of students. This includes gathering data on skills, behaviors and preferences. Paraprofessionals that assist in administering standardized testing must attend required trainings provided by the district.

**Standardized tests include:**

- CogAT – Cognitive Abilities Test
- SBA – Smarter Balanced Assessments
- WA-AIM – Washington Access to Instruction and Measurement
- WCA – Washington Comprehensive Assessment in Science
- WAAS – Washington Alternative Assessment System
- 2nd Grade Fluency and Accuracy Assessment
- ELPA21 – English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century
- High School Testing – State test or alternative tests required for graduation
Educational and Instructional Support Cont.

Gradual Release Model

A best practice style of teaching is called the gradual release model. It’s used to strategically transfer the responsibility in the learning process from the teacher to the students. It begins with focused instruction by the teacher, “I do it” then moves into guided instruction and collaborative learning, “We do it,” and “You do it together,” and ends with independent learning, “You do it alone.”

Principles of Good Instruction

**Clear Directions** – What to do - Clear directions should avoid confusing words, phrases and idioms that can be misinterpreted. Providing models such as worked examples, a step-by-step demonstration of how to perform a task or solve a problem while identifying the thought process.

**Appropriate Scaffolding** – Way to do - Scaffolding guides students through the process of acquiring new skills or content knowledge. As students acquire the targeted skills or knowledge, scaffolding can be removed.

**Opportunities to Practice** – Chance to do - Students need opportunities to practice using new skills or knowledge by making small adjustments in the instruction we give and questions we ask. This reinforces their learning while letting us know which students might still be struggling and what they’re struggling with.

**Constructive Feedback** – What to do next - Providing the right feedback gives students a way to build on what they’ve done – whether they have mastered the skills and content that are the focus of a lesson, or they need more support to reach that goal. Frequent feedback is necessary to shift newly gained knowledge from short-term memory to long –term memory. Constructive feedback should be immediate, specific, delivered in a neutral tone and focused on next steps.
Scaffolding

Scaffolding is an instructional strategy that provides students a variety of ways to practice. The purpose of scaffolding is to support students as they develop the skills they need to become independent learners. It helps metacognitive understanding, thinking about thinking and increasing a student’s awareness of what they know, what they need to learn, and how they might learn it. Scaffolding is adapted by grade level or content and will change over time. There are many scaffolding techniques. These are just a few examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manipulatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word Web</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flash Cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Prompts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Lists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Frames</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Organizers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction is an approach where teachers adjust their curriculum and instruction to meet the diverse academic levels of students. There are three main instructional elements to adjust:

**Content** – Changing the curriculum to teach the same concept or skill.

**Process** – Changing the activities students use to master the concept or skill.

**Product** – Offering students a variety of ways to demonstrate their knowledge.
Special Education

What is Special Education?

Washington State was one of the first states to establish laws mandating at public expense the education in the public schools of all children who experience disabilities. Washington State’s, *Education for All*, law in 1972 represented a revolutionary new concept in education. Programs for children with disabilities were to become individualized and meet the unique needs of each child with a disability.

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* as amended in 2004 (IDEA ‘O4), states:

*The purposes of this title are:*

To ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living;

To ensure that the rights of children with disabilities and parents of such children are protected; and to assist states, localities, educational service agencies, and federal agencies to provide for the education of all children with disabilities.

The most recent regulations of this bill were published in August 2006 (Part B for school-aged children) and in September 2011 (Part C, for infants and toddlers).

IDEA Primary Purposes:

- **To provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities.** IDEA requires schools to find and evaluate students suspected of having disabilities, at no cost to parents. Once kids are identified as having a disability, schools must provide them with special education and related services (like speech therapy and counseling) to meet their unique needs. The goal is to help students make progress in school.

- **To give parents a voice in their child’s education.** Under IDEA, you have a say in the educational decisions the school makes about your child. At every point of the process, the law gives you specific rights and protections. These are called procedural safeguards. For example, one safeguard is that the school must get your consent before providing services to you child.

(Source: http://www.understood.org)

Children ages 3-21 may be determined eligible for special education and related services if they meet the requirements of any one of the disability categories found in Washington State law (WAC 392-172-114-148):

- Developmentally Delayed
- Seriously Behaviorally Disabled
- Communication Disordered
- Orthopedically Impaired
- Specific Learning Disability
- Mental Retardation
- Multiple Disabilities
- Deafness
- Hearing Impairment
- Visually Impaired/blindness
- Deaf/Blindness
- Autism
- Traumatic Brain Injury
All students are general education students first!

Issaquah School District Special Services programs serve students with disabilities from birth through twenty-one years who reside within district boundaries. As specified in federal and state law, students with disabilities are served in the least restrictive environment to the maximum extent possible. Thus, at all schools in the district, there are students with special needs participating as appropriate in general education classrooms and general education curriculum.

District Special Education Programs

Birth to Three. Infants and toddlers with disabilities are provided early intervention assistance through agencies such as Kindering and Encompass.

Early Childhood. Children, ages 3-5, with developmental delays in communication, cognition, social-emotional, adaptive, and motor skills areas receive specially-designed instruction at one of three schools in the district. This is a half day program (Location: Regional)

Extended Day. Children, ages 3-5, with a medical diagnosis on the autism spectrum or an educational disability category of autism, and a demonstrated need based on data for early intervention may be eligible to receive additional services that address the unique communication, social, and behavioral needs of this disability. (Location: Regional)

Learning Resource Center I (LRC I). Students receive specially-designed instruction in academic, behavior, and social areas as indicated on their evaluation from the LRC I staff/classroom and/or related service therapists. (Location: Every building)

Learning Resource Center II (LRC II). Students with moderate to severe disabilities receive specially designed instruction in all areas as indicated on their evaluations from the LRC II staff/classroom and/or related services. Opportunities for participation in the general education class will occur as designated in the IEP. (Location: Regional)

Issaquah Skills Enhancement Program (ISEP). Students with emotional and behavioral disabilities receive specially-designed instruction in a self-contained setting. (Location: Regional)

Academy for Community Transition (ACT). Students, ages 18-21, with significant disabilities receive on-going specially-designed instruction in the areas of community living and work training (Location: Downtown)

Home Instruction/Tutoring. Students, ages 3-21, receive specially-designed instruction at home due to medical, physical, emotional, or behavioral needs or students who have been suspended or expelled from their school receive specially-designed instruction as per their IEP team.

Outside Agencies. Students, ages 3-21, receive specially-designed instruction in a setting outside of the District if the District is unable to provide an appropriate program to meet the student’s needs.
What is an Individual Education Program (IEP)?

The IDEA of 2004 defines the rules and regulations for creating an IEP when a special education evaluation reveals areas of student need. The disability must affect the child’s educational performance and/or ability to learn and benefit from the general education curriculum, leading to the need for specialized instruction. An IEP team works together to create Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) and goals for the student. The IEP is reviewed every year to measure the student’s progress. A three year reevaluation is completed by the three year anniversary. An IEP provides a blueprint for a child’s special education experience at school. It provides individualized special education and related services to meet the unique needs of the child.

What is a 504 plan?

Section 504 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. The law applies to public elementary and secondary schools and other federally funded institutions. A school-aged student is considered disabled under Section 504 if the student has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. A 504 plan is a blueprint for how a child will have access to learning at school. It provides services and changes to the learning environment to meet the needs of the child as adequately as other students.

What is the role of the paraprofessional in Special Education?

One of the most common uses of paraprofessionals in K-12 public education is assisting in the education or instruction of a student with a disability. Paras working with students who have an IEP or 504 have the additional role of supporting the teacher’s efforts to implement the plans. This includes tracking student progress, reporting progress to teachers, creating supporting materials according to teacher’s plans and attending professional development/specialized trainings. As a member of the special education team, paras also assist in providing modifications and accommodations to curriculum to meet the needs of the students they support.
English Language Learners

The term English Language Learners (ELL) refers to students whose first language is not English but who are learning English. As our ELL population increases, paraprofessionals are being asked to use strategies to support ELL students while under the supervision of a certified ELL teacher. In addition to acquiring English proficiency, ELL students are also required to learn all of the content knowledge required at their grade level. The ISD follows the Washington State English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPs) which provide learning targets for teachers as they help ELL students learn English.

About 100,000 K-12 students in Washington are English Language Learners. More than 1,200 students receive ELL services in the ISD. These students represent 75 different cultures and language groups. The most common are Spanish, Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese (2017 data).

ELL Comprehension Support

- The following are strategies to help support comprehension:
- Slow down your speech. Use pauses between sentences and ideas using a natural pace
- Speak clearly and limit the use of contractions and stress key words to support meaning.
- Monitor vocabulary using high frequency words and explaining unfamiliar terms. Limit the use of idioms and slang.
- Use objects, pictures, diagrams and infuse demonstration throughout your lessons. Use gestures, movement and role play.
- Simplify the arrangement of words, keeping sentences and clauses short.

Elementary ELL model: The “Supportive Mainstream” model is used in our elementary schools. In this model, students spend their day in a regular classroom. Many of the classroom and ELL teachers are trained in Project GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design). As the basis for service, ELL certificated teachers and paraprofessionals push into the classroom to help students develop academic language, and/or provide other interventions as needed, to be successful in their class.

Middle School ELL model: A certificated teacher teaches the English Language Development class for ELL students. This class works to build student proficiency in academic language, helping students access the core curriculum throughout the rest of their day. These classes focus on oral language development, explicit instruction in the structure of the English language, and academic language development through reading, writing, speaking, and listening. They may also support the student in their core classroom work. Some middle schools also provide after-school support for ELL students.

High School ELL model: A certificated teacher teaches an English Language Development class for ELL students. This class works to build student proficiency in academic language helping students access the core curriculum throughout the rest of their day. These classes focus on oral language development, explicit instruction in the structure of the English language, and academic language development through reading, writing, speaking, and listening. They may also support the student in their core classroom work. Some high schools also provide after-school support so that students can receive extra help with academics and language learning.
Equity

The Issaquah School District is committed to a vision of equity and cultural competency. We value equity, diversity, and inclusion. We are committed to building and sustaining a welcoming school community where students, teachers, families, and staff achieve the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that value and promote inclusiveness, equity and understanding.

What is Equity?

Equality: We treat everyone the same and give them the exact same resources or support regardless of individual need or group history.

Equity: Addresses differences and takes into consideration that society has not always given equal treatment to different groups and every group has not had equal access to opportunities. Equity is treating people differently based on what they need.

The Issaquah School District is committed to promoting an environment and culture that is committed to every student having the opportunity to reach their full potential through educational equity. This includes addressing factors affecting student achievement and wellbeing:

- Recognize the existence of systemic and institutional inequities for students.
- Actively encourage, support and expect high achievement and social-emotional well-being for students from all racial groups and other identified subgroups.
- Provide equitable access and academic support throughout our educational system.
- Provide curriculum that prioritizes diverse viewpoints and cultural relevance.
- Promote an environment and culture that supports and encourages effective engagement of all students and fosters cultural competency in students.
- Provide professional development, training, and engagement opportunities to inform and practice cultural competence, and increase awareness of personal and systemic bias and inequities in teaching, counseling, advising, and coaching practices, as well as in discipline, staff – student interactions, and staff – parent interactions.
- Provide equitable access and an inclusive, welcoming, and safe environment to school activities, clubs, and athletics.
Cultural Competency

Our school district is working diligently to increase our knowledge about diverse cultures and races and become more culturally competent. Our equity work includes recruiting and supporting diverse staff, providing professional development for staff, curriculum development and implementation, parent and family engagement, and ensuring equitable opportunities for students.

What is cultural competency?

Becoming culturally competent is an active process. Cultural competency includes acquiring awareness, knowledge, and skills that lead to action and advocacy for making institutional change.

Awareness – How do I contribute to injustice?

What are my assumptions about human behavior, values and biases that contribute to inequity? Becoming self-aware is the starting point for understanding others who are different from ourselves.

Knowledge – What do I need to understand about others?

Educate yourself about the cultures in your school community to help you understand and effectively engage with students and their families. Think about how culture might influence the behaviors and attitudes of students in your school.

Skills - What can I do differently to honor differences?

Be careful not to make assumptions about a student’s racial/ethnic background or socioeconomic status, religious beliefs or sexual orientation. Communicating interest in students’ cultural backgrounds develops trustful relationships. Some students may experience difficulty in sharing their cultural experiences. Begin a culture conversation by sharing your own ethnic background, family traditions and other unique cultural components.

Action/Advocacy – What do we need to do to institutionalize change?

Consult with school staff about including culturally sensitive materials in the classroom. Intervene when you hear stereotypes. It is the responsibility of all school staff to intervene immediately in order to demonstrate a zero tolerance message regarding harassment and stereotyping. Attend cultural competency trainings provided by the school district.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABA</td>
<td>Applied Behavior Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>Academy for Community Transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>Advanced Placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASL</td>
<td>American Sign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT</td>
<td>Assistive Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASC</td>
<td>Before and After School Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIP</td>
<td>Behavior Intervention Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMP</td>
<td>Behavior Management Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCR</td>
<td>College and Career Ready</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCSS</td>
<td>Common Core State Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTE</td>
<td>Career Technical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE</td>
<td>Early Childhood Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELA</td>
<td>English Language Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELL</td>
<td>English Language Learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAPE</td>
<td>Free Appropriate Public Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBA</td>
<td>Functional Behavioral Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FERPA</td>
<td>Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLASH</td>
<td>Family Life and Sexual Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GE</td>
<td>General Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLAD</td>
<td>Guided Language Acquisition Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEA</td>
<td>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEP</td>
<td>Individualized Education Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IHP</td>
<td>Individual Health Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAP</td>
<td>Learning Assistance Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRCI</td>
<td>Learning Resource Center Level 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRCII</td>
<td>Learning Resource Center Level 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## District Acronyms Cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LRE</td>
<td>Least Restrictive Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MERLIN</td>
<td>Mind Education Right Left Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSPI</td>
<td>Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Occupational Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PESB</td>
<td>Paraeducator Standards Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBSES</td>
<td>Positive Behavior Social Emotional Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PD</td>
<td>Professional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLAAFP</td>
<td>Present Level of Academic and Functional Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Physical Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTSA</td>
<td>Parent Teacher Student Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBA</td>
<td>Smarter Balance Assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEIU</td>
<td>Service Employees International Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEL</td>
<td>Social Emotional Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>504</td>
<td>Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLP</td>
<td>Speech Language Pathologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPED</td>
<td>Special Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEM</td>
<td>science, technology, engineering and mathematics integrated curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLS</td>
<td>Teaching and Learning Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voc Ed</td>
<td>Vocational Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA-AIM</td>
<td>Washington Access to Instruction and Measurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEA</td>
<td>Washington Education Association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Network of Support

Certificated Teachers
Fellow Paraprofessionals
Dean of Students or Assistant Principal
Counselor
PBSES Coaches
Principal

Paraprofessional Learning Coaches:
Judy Heasly heaslyj@issaquah.wednet.edu
Julie Worsfold worsfoldj@issaquah.wednet.edu