

A photograph of two women, one Black and one white, looking at a document together outdoors. The Black woman is on the left, wearing a blue and white striped shirt under a tan jacket. The white woman is on the right, wearing a white turtleneck under a dark jacket with white stitching. They are both looking down at a document held by the white woman. The background is a blurred green outdoor setting.

THE UTAH SPECIAL EDUCATOR

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Recruitment & Retention: Valuing Paraprofessionals

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Call For Articles

We would like to invite you to write an article for *The Utah Special Educator*. The *Utah Special Educator* for 2002-2003 focuses on issues facing educators involved in providing services to students with disabilities. The theme this year is Recruitment and Retention. Articles should focus on the monthly topics below.

MONTH • MONTHLY TOPICAL FOCUS • ARTICLE DUE DATES

December • Fostering Personal Professional Growth • November 8, 2002
February • Mentoring: Relationships to Grow On • January 3, 2003
March • English Language Learners & Special Education • February 21, 2003
May • Recognizing and Honoring Excellence • April 4, 2003

The editors are available for consultation or assistance as needed to complete your submission. Contact either Cheryl Hostetter cherylh@ulrc.org or Michael Herbert michaelh@ulrc.org. Phone numbers for both are 800-662-6624 or 801-272-3431.

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The Utah Special Educator is a symbol of the leadership of Dr. R. Elwood Pace whose vision made the Consortium, the ULRC and this journal possible.

Two, Four, Six, Eight Who Do We Appreciate? Paraprofessionals!

From The Editor.....

In Peter Senge's *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*, Michael Hunt speaks of his experience at Herman Miller. He states, "We understood that we could not expect people to be proud and take care with the making and selling of a product unless we recognized them as individuals, as members of families, and as members of communities. Ultimately, every diversity effort will raise questions about people's personal visions, and how they expect they might bring their personal visions together, no matter what their background may be. If we value differences, we have to learn to listen to voices different from our own. Any kind of prejudice or shutting down communications is going to get in the way of a team of people attempting to create something special together."

So it is with our own organizations. In education we recognize that paraprofessionals in our schools provide us and our students with the much-needed support to assist students in a successful school career. I would like to suggest that each school in our state take that philosophy up a notch and use Michael Hunt's experiences at Herman Miller to heart.

All of us are stronger than one (some) of us. With this philosophy our paras come to the table (to which they should be invited) with a wealth of knowledge and experiences different from our own and can offer a variety of suggestions to support not only the students, but also the teachers and parents in our buildings. As Michael Hunt emphasizes in his quote it is important for each member of a team to be able to share information and be part of the decision making in order to create "that something special." The more each member feels valued and recognized as an integral part of a whole, the more they will

work for and support the common vision. If we are expecting our paras to participate in advanced training, then our expectations of what they can contribute to the team must increase exponentially.

As a Special Programs Coordinator working in schools in Provo School District I knew from the very beginning that I could not do it all. I was responsible for overseeing students in special education, Title I, English Language Learners, Indian education and migrant education. If it weren't for my paras and their desire to meet the needs of the students in our programs, their willingness to be trained and go the extra mile, I hate to think what my life and the lives of the students and teachers would have been. Many times I would see "teachers in the making," paras who had better insight about a student than I and marveled at what they would produce when they felt we were a team rather than hired help.

In our efforts this year to focus on topics to increase our success in recruitment and retention, it was important for our staff to include the paraprofessionals and dedicate a full issue of *The Utah Special Educator* to efforts nationally (our own Marilyn Likins; see her article in this issue) as well as at the preservice, district and school level.

We are fortunate to have wonderful people in our state at all levels to speak to this issue. I feel we have captured the insights of just a few educators—but several who have and will continue to have impact on our state in their dedication of their lives to provide the much needed support in our schools. Enjoy! ■



Cheryl Hostetter,
Editor
Michael Herbert,
Co-Editor

Don't Take It Personally

*“O suns and skies and clouds of June,
And flowers of June together,
Ye cannot rival for one hour
October's bright blue weather.”*

Happy autumn everyone! What a beautiful time of the year. The air is crisp and invigorating, the colors are brilliant and inspiring, and the sky is such a vibrant blue. Like springtime this season somehow seems to infuse us with renewed hope and exhilaration.

Yet all of these wonderfully pleasant, healthy feelings can evaporate in an instant. In fact, in the amount of time it takes for a person to utter one short sentence, the crisp inspiring brilliance of autumn vanishes and we are left with the infuriating, steamy heat of anger. As I hope you know by now, this series of articles is about keeping ourselves physically, psychologically and emotionally healthy so we can offer the best of ourselves to our students.

When I think about it, it is truly amazing that all of this autumnal beauty can be swept away in a heartbeat by a couple of words or an uncivil act. How and why this seemingly cruel trick takes place is the subject of the second agreement in Don Miguel Ruiz's book, *The Four Agreements*.

The first agreement, **BE IMPECCABLE WITH YOUR WORD**, deals with the integrity of our own speech and how we can use it to nourish others and ourselves. The second agreement, **DON'T TAKE ANYTHING PERSONALLY**, suggests that nothing other people do is because of you. At first glance this may appear to be a bit overstated. Nothing anyone does is because of moi?

You've got to be kidding Don Miguel! How about the students when they disrupt my class or won't follow my instructions? Or the supervisor who complains about my choice of attire. How about the parent who blames me for their child not reading on grade level, even though she made great improvement during the first



Jim Curtice • Utah Personnel Development Center

Understanding

quarter? Not to mention the regular education teacher who said he didn't need my help, or my own "colleague" who questioned my work ethic, or the custodian who evidently is refusing to fix my thermostat, or the lunch worker who won't keep the line open a mere five minutes longer or, or, or...ok, ok, I'm sure you get the idea. None of the things these people say or do is because of me?

Not according to Ruiz. None of these insults and slights are about me but are about the beliefs and agreements others have made with themselves. Their view of the world and mine are not necessarily the same because each of us is trapped in a life of personal importance. You know, "its all about me!"

Don Miguel suggests that what others say and do to me is really about them and the agreements they have made with themselves from the viewpoint of their own personal lives. Students don't have disabilities to make my class difficult, nor do parents worry about their children in order to torment me. Again, what others say and do is not about me at all, but about their lives.

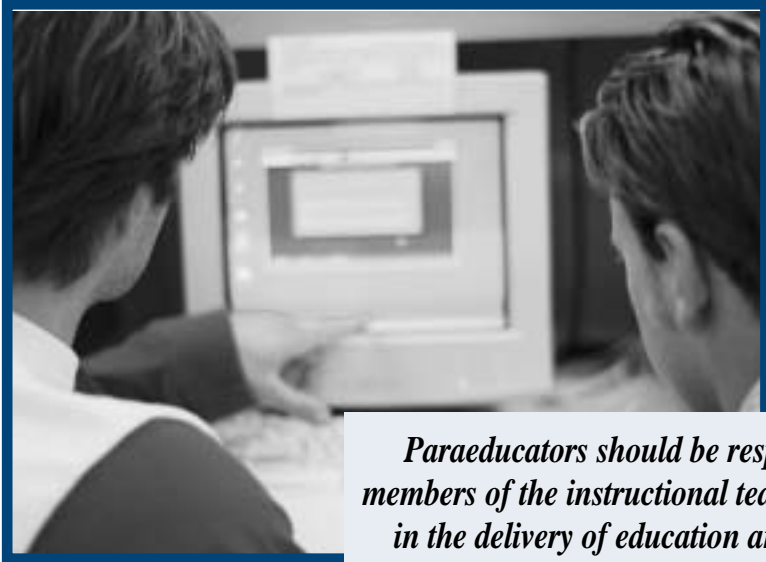
If I take these things personally, it is as if poison goes through me and I am trapped in a dream. One small word or

action taken personally can hook me and turn the reality of a beautiful autumn day into a worrisome illusion. I feel offended and go on the defensive explaining how I have been slighted or mistreated, how I am right and they are way wrong. But as soon as I do, I find I have broken the first agreement, **TO BE IMPECCABLE WITH MY WORD**.

These two agreements are definitely interrelated. One is about being aware of what we say and do and the other about understanding why others say and do what they do. If we can truly understand this, we will keep Ruiz's second agreement, **TO NOT TAKE THINGS PERSONALLY**, and find ourselves immune to our emotional illusions and those of others.

If I could but follow this apparently simple agreement! Oh, what a difference it would make in my relationships with my students, their parents, my colleagues, my friends, my family and myself! To have the power to enjoy the reality of this beautiful fall day and not get drawn into the fantasy of my own self importance and the conflict that brings. All I've been able to accomplish so far is to write, **"DON'T TAKE ANYTHING PERSONALLY"** on the white board in my office. But hope springs eternal. Here's to cool breezes and blue skies for all of us. Ciao! ■





Paraeducators should be respected and supported as members of the instructional team responsible for assisting in the delivery of education and other related services.
Utah Paraeducator Guidelines May, 1985

If paraeducators have been in their profession for greater than 4 to 5 years, they are well aware of how much their duties have changed. No longer are paraeducators merely responsible for creating bulletin boards, taking roll, or making duplications. Today's paraprofessionals are found in preschool, elementary or secondary classrooms providing accommodations for students with special needs, supervising on the playground or bus, serving as a job coach in the community for students with moderate to severe disabilities, conducting small group sessions in reading and math, working in early childhood programs or assisting non-English speaking students.

With the reauthorization of IDEA 97, appropriate training, skill development and supervision of paraprofessionals and teaching assistants has become a necessity, not an option for states and school districts. Provisions in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 applied further pressure on states by establishing employment criteria for all paraprofessionals working in positions or school-wide programs funded by Title I. NCLB tied present and future employment of paraprofessionals to a university/community college degree, 2 year's of higher education, or a "rigorous" assessment of knowledge and skills in the areas of reading, writing, math, and readiness skills. Clearly, this most recent round of federal legislation has left states and districts scrambling to assess what

Nationally, there are over 525,000 paraprofessionals* serving students in today's schools. Their numerous job titles, e.g., paraprofessional, teacher's aide, speech therapy assistant, instructional assistant, intervener, classroom reduction assistant, direct care provider, or paraprofessional, (and there are more) reflect

Paraprofessionals

Key Members of Instructional Teams

the variety of roles and responsibilities paraprofessionals assume as key members of instructional teams.

The National Resource Center defines a "paraeducator" as:
"....a school employee who:

- 1) works under the supervision of a teacher(s) or other licensed/certificated professionals who have the responsibility for
 - a) identifying learner needs,
 - b) developing and implementing programs to meet learner needs,
 - c) assessing learner performance, and
 - d) evaluating the effectiveness of education programs and related services, and
- 2) who assists with the delivery of instructional and other direct services as assigned and developed by certified/licensed professional practitioners."

*Throughout this article, the terms "paraprofessional, teaching assistant, and paraeducator" are used interchangeably.

personnel development systems they currently have in place, and in most cases, what remains to be developed to ensure their paraprofessional workforce is well-trained, qualified, and effectively supervised.

What should training look like?

Paraprofessional training falls into three categories: on-the-job, inservice, and preservice training. Adequate pre-service, inservice, and on-the-job training protects students and maximizes the effectiveness of paraeducators provided it is systematically planned and ongoing. Effective training can take many forms such as credit-based courses offered through universities or community colleges, a series of inservice workshops, web based training courses, peer mentoring or coaching sessions as well as systematic on-the-job training by a supervisor. However, a word of caution. If paraeducators are to gain knowledge and skills to improve their performance, meaningful training must be much more than a "one-shot, 3 hour workshop by a paid consultant." Such a workshop might be extremely relevant, but should be viewed as the first step in a number of coordinated training efforts that build upon each other in content and follow-up activities.

Several states have developed personnel development systems to support training and career development for paraprofessionals (See Table 1 for information on validated training resources & programs). While there are a variety of effective models, Utah's will be highlighted.

Utah's training options.

In Utah as in other states, some districts have independently developed courses focused on paraprofessional training needs and offer these to their paraprofessionals on a regular basis. Inservices may be 1-3- or 6 hour workshops provided by the district or a consultant. Another option available to paraeducators and their districts is the Utah Personnel Development Center (UPDC). Based on district requests, UPDC staff train paraprofessionals and teachers within individual districts. Trainings range from a single overview session to monthly inservices throughout the school year.

Paraeducators can also take advantage of courses offered through distance education. For the last eight years, distance learning classes for paraprofessionals have been offered over the EDNET system. Unlike discussion activities with local groups of paraprofessionals, ideas and experiences of peers from distant sites and from different perspectives are shared. Communication occurs across the state, not within a single classroom.

The distance education classes, part of a paraeducator associate degree program at the Salt Lake Community College (SLCC), were developed collaboratively between the Utah State Office of Education, Utah State University, Salt Lake Community College, and Utah school districts. Because the program is readily accessible regardless of location, paraeducators can receive consistent, quality training without leaving their districts. The SLCC program offers two terminal options, a certificate of completion for those paraeducators seeking training specific to their jobs and an associate degree program.

For paraprofessionals interested in pursuing a teaching career, one added bonus of this training option is that it articulates with two university teacher training programs. Upon completion of an associate degree, paraprofessionals can enter as juniors in a special or elementary education teacher preparation program. Because the university classes are also offered through distance education, paraprofessionals are afforded the opportunity of taking classes for credit and completing a teaching credential, if so desired, without "leaving home."

Things to Consider.

As states and districts explore viable training options for their paraprofessionals, some questions to be considered, particularly in light of recent federal legislation, include:

- What will the paraprofessional have to show for the training experience? Will there be:
 - University or community college credit offered? If so, can the paraprofessional afford it or are there other funding options available?
 - If training comes in the form of an inservice workshop, is there an agenda, certificate or instructional materials that can become part of a portfolio?
 - Is attendance documented?
- Will the training help the paraprofessional to do a better job or is it geared primarily toward teachers?
- Are there follow-up training sessions or homework assignments linked to the work site?
- Is the training offered at a time that is practical for the paraprofessional?

In summary, state and local administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals must take an active role in determining what works best to meet their unique needs. A "one-size fits all" mentality may not be the answer when designing training programs for paraprofessionals, particularly when faced with their varied backgrounds, experiences and needs. Today's federal requirements for hiring, training and supervision of paraprofessionals must also be taken into account when selecting appropriate curriculum and building comprehensive systems of personnel development for paraeducators and their supervisors. Laying the foundation for quality personnel development requires time and commitment. The end result—highly skilled paraeducators, effective instructional teams, and better services for students. ■

Table 1: Information on validated training resources:

Minnesota Paraprofessional Consortium
<http://ici2.coled.umn.edu/para/default.html>
 Contact: Teri Wallace, (612)626-7220

National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals
www.nrcpara.org/bookstore/index.shtml
 Contacts: Marilyn Likins, (801)599-8708 & Teri Wallace, (612)626-7220
 Co-directors, NRCP

PAR2A Center, University of Colorado
<http://paracenter.cudenver.edu/>
 Contact: Nancy French, Director, (303)556-6464

Paraprofessional Academy, City University of New York (CUNY)
<http://web.gc.cuny.edu/dept/case/paracad/index.htm>
 Contact: Thalia Moshoyannis, Project Director, (212) 817-1829

Paraeducator Support-University of Vermont
 Paraeducator and Supervisor Training-University of Vermont
www.uvm.edu/~cdci/paraprep/
 Contact: Stephen Doll, (802)656-1140

Paraeducator Issues*Washington Education Association
www.wa.nea.org/Prf_Dv/PARA_ED/PARA/HTM
 Contact: Jane Robb-Linse, Puget-Sound ESD, (206)439-3636

Project Para Website, University of Nebraska
<http://para.unl.edu/>
 Contact: Stan Vasa, Co-director, (402)472-5494

Project Impact, Tri-SPED Projects, Utah State University
www.trisped.org
 Contact: Dave Forbusg, Project Director, (435)797-0697

Rhode Island Teaching Assistant Resources
www.ric.edu/ritap/current%20project%20areas/teachreg.htm
 Contact: Judith Saccardo, Director, (401) 456-4600

Utah Paraprofessional Website
www.utahpara.org
 Contact: Marilyn Likins, (801) 599-8708

V A L U I N G Paraprofessionals

Catherine Benitz, Program Specialist, Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center, North Logan, Utah

When my son was starting school, he required the support of the elementary paraprofessional from kindergarten through third grade. She provided support for daily health care needs and individualization related to his hearing disability. In about the second grade, he reported to me that he didn't think he wanted to go to high school when he got older. When I questioned him further, his reason was that he didn't think they would let Mrs. Dolence go with him and he wouldn't want to go to the big school alone. It was then that I realized as a parent how much I valued the special relationship that she provided to my young son over several years. I am aware, too, that she was valued by the teachers and administrators of the school for her contributions in looking after the unique needs of individual children while teachers were involved in structuring the classroom for academic success.

The responsibilities of paraprofessionals will often be defined by the approaches to inclusion adopted by the school, the number of students needing support, the availability of related services, and the individual needs of children served. And, the models for the design of the roles for special education paraprofessionals in public school vary from building to building, even from classroom to classroom.

The individuals that come to schools and programs to fill these needs come from a wide variety of backgrounds and motivation for the positions. Some have no formal education while others will hold college degrees. But the common thread is usually a desire to stay connected with children. Thus, our task in leadership for the paraprofessional position is to value and support these individuals and the contributions that enhance services for children.

Three important ways of assuring the success of the paraprofessional in the special education program are in

- defining the usefulness for the position,
- providing the skills necessary for competence, and
- developing a sense of belonging.

In defining the usefulness for the position, there needs to be agreement between the special and regular education teachers about the responsibilities of the paraprofessional and a method to convey expectations to the paraprofessional. Too often, miscommunication about how to handle situations in different classrooms can lead to confusion and misunderstanding resulting in inappropriate service delivery for the child. Will the role of the paraprofessional be to provide individual instruction, to facilitate small group activities, or to assist the large group while the teacher provides individual support? What will the paper work duties include? Where will the services take place? Do other staff members understand the use of this individual and know who is coordinating his or her time?

Secondly, providing the skills necessary for competence includes both inservice training and on-the-job mentoring. When the roles of

the paraprofessional are determined, a complete list of the skills needed should be developed with a list of the options for both training and ongoing support. For example, inservice training in behavior management can be provided for many staff, including paraprofessionals, with additional instruction and follow-up support by the special education teacher or school psychologist in reinforcement systems and daily monitoring for individual children.

Paraprofessional training will need to include training in the routines of the school day, the administrative system and procedures, general curriculum topics, special education rules, behavior management, and the needs of the children they will be teaching. The paraprofessional needs to know when and how to help each child and when that extra assistance is hindering the child's independence.

An important aspect of the training includes ongoing support that can be provided through a system of reflective supervision or through mentoring by an experienced paraprofessional or mentor teacher. Keeping in close contact with the new paraprofessional will allow for problem solving before something goes wrong and less disruption for the children being served.

The third area of consideration in ensuring that the paraprofessional is valued through creating a sense of belonging. For all humans, being part of a group is a basic need.

The daily tasks of a paraprofessional may include functioning in several classrooms and in several different groups, which may create a feeling of isolation. Inclusion of the paraprofessional in the activities of both regular and special education will help to establish the trust and relationship between teachers, support staff, and paraprofessionals necessary for collaboration. Inclusion in regular education staff meetings and inservice training are important for communication and a sense of belonging. When the duties of the paraprofessional include assisting children at lunch time, playground duty, or riding the bus, a consideration of starting the meeting early, or adjusting the schedule so the paraprofessional can participate will keep him or her built into the group.

Being part of the group means also being part of the IEP team. Whether a part of the actual meeting or through a system of providing input, the paraprofessional may have contributions to the understanding of a child's likes and dislikes, what strategies work, how to provide encouragement, and what happens between learning sessions. There may not be a way to quantify a relationship between paraprofessional and child but we must recognize and value the support to the child, family, and educational plan through the valuable role of the paraprofessional. ■

V A L U I N G Paraprofessionals



Educating Paraeducators From a Distance

Introduction

Teacher educators at universities that serve rural populations face a number of unique challenges when designing programs for paraeducators and teachers living and working in remote locations. Southern Utah University, a regional institution serving students across the state, will meet this challenge in the spring of 2003 by providing paraeducators and teachers with an alternative method of instructional delivery. Internet-based course modules are being designed and piloted with plan in place for future expansion of the program. Porter (1997) states that both educators and trainers must receive the necessary educational support and specific training for any distance learning program to be successful, therefore modules designed for this program will provide not only content information but also technical support services to ensure student success. Courses in the program are being specifically designed to overcome the barriers of distance, provide technical support services to students, and ensure delivery of quality education to paraeducators and teachers serving students with special needs. This method of instructional delivery will create a unique learning environment in which paraeducators and teachers of students with special needs can develop collaborative teams for the purpose of planning instruction solving problems, and exchanging ideas.

Course Modules: Paraeducator Training and Teacher Supervision

Course modules are being designed to meet the recently approved Council for Exceptional Children (1997) national standards for paraeducator preparation. Focus of instruction for the modules will be placed on addressing the credentialing requirements for paraeducators and the supervisory training of special education teachers. Course modules are being developed for presentation using WebCT, the Web-based courseware chosen by the university. Porter (1997) suggests “chunking” material for use on the Web; therefore materials are being divided into general course information (lessons), course documents, study guides, case studies, and assessments. Study guides, to accompany each lesson, will be utilized to help paraeducators and teachers identify significant information. Modules are being prepared in advance to allow time for prompt responses to students’ questions and comments, keeping the discussion current and the instructor actively involved (Young 2000). Supervisory skills will be taught to special education teachers through collaborative training with paraeducators.

Continued Page 10

Margaret M. Cramer, Southern Utah University and Linda Alexander, University of South Florida

Course objectives will include the following learning activities: a) interacting with the instructor via e-mail, (b) participating in online class discussions, (c) posting responses to questions to a discussion board, (d) analyzing and responding to case studies, (e) interacting with guest speakers, and (f) participating in group, virtual chats. Guest speakers will be invited by the instructor to share expertise with the class and all students will be required to post a question to the speaker on the discussion board. Student enrollment in the course modules will be limited to approximately 20 students, as suggested in the literature (Young, 2000), in order to keep course interaction more interpersonal. The electronic transmission of assignments will virtually eliminate the transfer of actual paper, creating a paperless classroom (Foreman, 2000).

Sample Materials

The following is a sample of five lessons associated with one training module:

Training Module Title: Paraeducators as Instructional Assistants

Lesson 1: Introductory Information

Lesson 2: Identifying Performance Levels

Lesson 3: Making Task Assignments

Lesson 4: Choosing Instructional Strategies

Lesson 5: Supervising Instruction

Part of Lesson 1 is included below:

Lesson 1: Introductory Information

Participants: Paraeducators and Special Education Teachers

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to provide students with a general overview of how and why paraeducators' roles have changed. Important information on how to assist with credentialing procedures and how to provide paraeducators with the necessary training needed to successfully assist teachers in inclusive classrooms will be covered.

Lesson Objectives

After completing this lesson, the student should be able to:

- Understand how the roles and responsibilities of paraeducators have changed.
- Locate information on credentialing procedures and educational opportunities for paraeducators.
- Identify new terminology relating to paraeducators.

Learning Activities

- Review the *Introductory Information*.
- Read the textbook, *Supervising Paraeducators in School Settings (1997)*.

- Complete the *Web Field Trip*.
- Respond to the *Message Board Discussion*.
- Complete the *Online Quiz*.
- Complete the *Additional Activities*.

Expected Program Outcomes

An anonymous exit survey is being developed to provide the instructor with information needed for evaluation of course modules and for implementation of change procedures. Survey questions are being designed to be open-ended, allowing students the opportunity to explain their answers. The exit survey will focus on the students' need for supplemental materials, instructor feedback, and interaction with classmates. Information obtained from the survey will be utilized to develop additional courses modules for either Web-assisted or totally online presentation. The development of this distance education program will extend the instructional process by: (a) creating a convenient method of teaching nontraditional students, (b) expanding communication with remote sites through group chats and discussion boards, (c) improving the technological skills of all participants, and (d) providing access to archived discussions in best practices and problem solving techniques. Also, paraeducators and special education teachers will improve collaboration skills while working together on course modules in order to ensure success for students with special needs.

Contact information on course enrollment:

Margaret M. Cramer
Associate Professor
Southern Utah University
Special Education Department
E-mail: mmcramer@sisna.com

References upon request at Utah Personnel Development Center ■



When I started my special education career as a paraeducator I was fortunate to start in a school that valued teaming and collaboration at all levels. I was made to feel a valuable contributing member that played a key role in the success of the students. A year later after receiving my special education endorsement, I had a classroom of my own with an experienced paraeducator to start the year. Looking back I now realize my only knowledge about supervising and supporting paraeducators was through my experience the previous year as a paraeducator. It was a good start but not enough to maximize the potential of working together.

training package *Colleagues In The Classroom* available through Tri-SPED Projects listed below. Before long your efforts will be rewarded with increased results for your students.

References:

- Friend, M., Cook, L., (2003). *Interactions: Collaboration Skills For School Professionals* 4th Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon,.
- *Colleagues In The Classroom*, Project Impact, Tri-SPED Project, Utah State University, www.trisped.org

Teachers & Paraeducators: Collaboration That Gets Results.

Bruce Schroeder, Project Director • Utah SIGNAL Project

Knowing how to create an optimal teaming situation for teachers and paraeducators takes advanced skills and competencies.

Of the many responsibilities facing special education teachers, supervising paraeducators is often an afterthought in most preservice programs. Most teachers receive minimal staff development in supervising paraeducators.

Changing roles of special education teachers puts a priority on collaboration skills and competencies. Just like other skills it is unreasonable to expect that good intentions to collaborate are enough. Collaboration needs to be planned and implemented as part of an overall comprehensive approach to supporting students with disabilities. See the attached table for a list of competencies that would be useful for supervising staff preschool through adult programs.

In working with teams of teachers and paraeducators across the state I have identified some common barriers to teacher/para collaboration. Teachers often have difficulty balancing the role of providing supervision with their hopes for a collaborative working style. Paraeducators often report that they receive little guidance from teachers. Additional barriers to effective teaming include lack of time for communication and planning. Teachers who view ongoing training and support for their paraeducators as a valuable part of their role will see better results for their students. Strategies effective teachers use to support paraeducators learning on the job include the following:

- a) Encouraging paraeducators to attend conferences (like the statewide conference in November)
- b) Providing opportunities to share with other paraeducators and educators in your school
- c) Sharing student data that shows progress. Review what's working and what is not
- d) Using student mistakes as an opportunity to provide on the spot modeling and coaching

For the teacher learning the additional skills and competencies for working with paraeducators will be well worth the time and effort. Start with a self assessment using a table like the one included here. Identify areas to work on through self study or district staff development. There are a number of other ways to gain information such as the multimedia

RECOMMENDED COMPETENCIES FOR THE QUALIFIED SUPERVISING TEACHER/SERVICE PROVIDER

I. Interviewing skills

II. Mentoring

1. Identifies and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of paraprofessionals
2. Delineates lines of authority
3. Demonstrates/models behavior

III. Communication

1. Applies interpersonal skills
2. Demonstrates effective listening skills
3. Uses team-building skills
4. Exhibits elective written and oral skills to provide team management

IV. Problem solving

1. Resolves conflicts
2. Identifies and clarifies a problem
3. Assumes the perspective of another

V. Motivation skills

1. Creates a positive environment
2. Sets achievable goals
3. Rewards goal achievement
4. Shows respect and acknowledges achievement of others
5. Promotes change and growth

VI. Coordination skills

1. Demonstrates time-management skills
2. Designs effective meeting strategies
3. Implements scheduling techniques

VII. Delegation skills

1. Selects tasks to be delegated based on an individual's competence
2. Clarifies roles and clearly delegates responsibilities
3. Provides constructive feedback to the delegate

VIII. Feedback and Evaluation skills

1. Monitors the performance of others
2. Provides constructive feedback
3. Participates in formal evaluation process
4. Describes and clarifies the evaluation process and content
5. Participates in individual personnel growth plans

National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities
www.ldonline.org/njcd/paraprof298.html ■

Paraprofessionals—An Invaluable And Indispensable Resource

**David Forbush Ph.D. and Robert Morgan Ph.D., Utah State University
Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling**



Currently, an estimated 7,500 to 8,000 paraprofessionals serve students in Utah's public schools. Nationwide, an estimated 500,000 paraprofessionals are working in public schools and it is predicted that this number will reach 1,000,000 early in this decade. In Utah alone, paraprofessionals working a conservative estimate of 3 hours per day deliver 24,000 hours of educational support daily to teachers and children in Utah. At this rate, 4,368,000 hours of service are accrued for Utah's children each school year. Paraprofessionals in Utah and across the nation are irreplaceable because of the high quality educational support that they offer and, compared to certified staff, at a comparatively low cost.

Unfortunately, paraprofessionals are often not adequately recognized for the value of their educational support to at-risk students and students with disabilities. John Barth (1988) stated "nothing is intrinsically valuable; the value of everything is attributed to it, assigned to it from outside the thing itself, by people." If this is true, we should attribute significant value to paraprofessionals. It is indisputable that each of us has a need to feel valued for who we are, what we are, and what we do. Our need to feel valued is particularly acute when we encounter difficulties or seemingly insurmountable challenges.

For many paraprofessionals, the requirements of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act presents difficulties and challenges that seem insurmountable. In January of 2002, President Bush signed into law the NCLB act which among other things, requires paraprofessional candidates desiring work in Title I programs to either hold an associate's degree or higher, complete two years of study at an institution of higher education, or pass a rigorous state or local assessment indicating that they are "highly qualified." The requirements of the NCLB act extend these same requirements to all paraprofessionals, including paraprofessionals working in special education who work in schools designated as "school wide" Title I programs. Finally, all paraprofessionals hired prior to January 2002 must meet NCLB requirements by January of 2005 to resume employment. It is widely held that similar requirements for special education paraprofessionals will be announced with the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) which is anticipated later this year.

Passage of this law has unsettled many paraprofessionals and left them to wonder how the NCLB requirements may personally affect them. We have spoken to several paraprofessionals who plan to leave the public schools in advance of the 2005 deadline because they do not see how they will meet the requirements. This is unfortunate! In these discussions, we have attempted to reframe for paraprofessionals how the NCLB act is potentially the most powerful attribution of their value in public schools to date. Prior to the NCLB act, paraprofessionals were often not factored in when professional development budgets were set. Now, with the NCLB act, public education must acknowledge paraprofessionals' irrefutable importance and the need for them to receive training that leads to their identification as "highly qualified." By reframing these issues for paraprofessionals, we reveal to them that organizations demonstrate the value for their membership by requiring that they meet high standards. The NCLB act requires states to set high standards for paraprofessionals and assist them in meeting them. Paraprofessionals can no longer be overlooked!

Due to the NCLB act, paraprofessionals' basic need to be valued has probably increased. We must meet this need and underscore for paraprofessionals their indispensable value in the public schools. Recently, we asked eight paraprofessionals, whose tenure in public schools ranged from 2 months to 22 years, what school administrators, teachers, students and parents could do to demonstrate that they valued them for who they are, what they are, and what they do. The following is an abbreviated list of their responses.

School Administrators:

- Write notes of appreciation
- Express words of appreciation

- Include us in teacher appreciation week
- Provide us with a reasonable workspace
- Tell us that you value the work we do
- Listen to our concerns
- Express appreciation for our work
- Ask how you can make our job more pleasant
- Know our name and where we work
- Provide us with training to improve our skills
- Treat us professionally even though we are not certified staff
- A simple thank you is wonderful
- Recognize us as part of the school team
- Acknowledge our skills and abilities
- Ask for, and value our opinion

Teachers:

- Leave notes of appreciation
- Acknowledge our work
- Ask for our ideas
- Be willing to listen and talk through problems that arise
- Offer words of encouragement
- Ask for our ideas and opinions and value them
- Show confidence in our skills and ability to complete assignments
- Let us know how much we lighten your load
- Show us the same respect you show your fellow teachers
- Give us ideas on how to improve our instruction
- Include us in decision making
- Praise us when we do something well
- Praise us in front of students so they know that you value our work and us
- Don't give us an assignment without providing clear instructions

Parents:

- Tell us about increases in your child's skills that you notice
- Express appreciation for the help that we offer your children

Students:

- Show appreciation with a smile, notes and colored pictures
- Come back to visit after you leave our school
- Be excited to see us in the hall and community
- Call us by name
- Follow our instructions

This list of suggestions from paraprofessionals spurred us to think of additional expressions of value, particularly when coming from school administrators or teachers. Here is our list of suggestions.

- Nominate paraprofessionals for the Utah Outstanding Paraeducator Award. (Contact Jeff Rydalch at (801) 263-6221 to nominate your paraeducator).
- Send thank you cards
- Arrange for students to create artwork saying "thanks!"
- Allow paraprofessionals to attend the annual Utah Paraeducator Conference
- Write a brief letter to the principal on how much paraeducators contribute
- Develop a "brag board" in the school to post 3x5 cards describing accomplishments of paraeducators.

- Schedule an annual "potluck" breakfast to highlight paraprofessionals
- Make buttons, drink mugs, or framed awards for "Greatest Paraprofessional in the Universe"
- Publish ideas for working by students based on submissions by paraprofessionals
- Arrange for brief periods (e.g. one half day) off work with pay
- Distribute discount coupons for meals, movies, and other activities
- Arrange a special parking spot for the "Paraprofessional of the Month"
- Recognize birthdays of paraprofessionals
- If your local newspaper recognizes Outstanding Employees, describe a "Paraprofessional of the Month."
- Refer paraprofessionals to web sites with resources and information of interest to them, including the following:

www.nrcpara.org
www.trisped.org

The primary message that threads through paraprofessionals' statements is the need to be valued, treated with respect, and treated professionally. Our list of suggestions provides additional examples of how we can value paraprofessionals. We need to begin today, in this new and challenging climate to demonstrate increased value for paraprofessionals. Everyone will be the winner! Most importantly children!

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Now Everyone Is Paying Attention



Carol Harrington • Ogden School District, Retired

With the “No Child Left Behind” legislation there seems to be a new focus on “highly qualified individuals” working with America’s students, particularly the portion related to paraeducators. The component of the law that requires paras to have at least two years of college education or be able to pass a “rigorous test” seems to have suddenly caught the attention of many a state and district administrator. But in the Ogden School District we have been paying attention for quite a long time.

My personal journey with paraeducators in Utah and across the nation has been interesting, fulfilling and challenging. It began with my special education teaching assignment in 1974. I was an elementary resource teacher and a high school student came to my classroom in the afternoons as part of a work study program. I quickly realized that not only had my college degree not adequately prepared me to work with the learning disabled and behaviorally disordered students I was trying to appropriately teach, but it certainly had not prepared me to effectively use another adult in my classroom. This young woman was excellent with students and great to work with as a colleague. She was not doing

well in her classes at the high school and was at great risk of dropping out, but she was great with my kids and this assignment seemed to be the chance for her to do better in her own school program. She graduated from high school and continued to work with me for a couple of years, but then had to seek other employment for more hours and better pay and possibly the chance of benefits. I couldn’t blame her and wished her well, but I knew there would be a gigantic void in my program and my heart. At that point I realized how truly valuable paraeducators were to our school programs and how undervalued they were, both financially and “status wise” in the system.

The next event that really drove that point home occurred when our district faced yet another budget shortfall and the solution was to lay off all of the paraeducators, or at least to cut all of their hours significantly, no matter their tenure or expertise. Dr. Cy Freston was the director of special education at that time and he re-negotiated an agreement with the administration to re-examine that decision and it was rescinded.

Through Cy's insight and contacts with Utah State University, we put together a task force to examine the issues around paraeducators. This task force included teachers, speech therapists, paras, teacher specialists, Dr. Alan Hofmeister, Dr. Marilyn Likins and others. We began to examine in depth the skills, training, duties and job assignments of our paras. When we began the process we discovered that no one could even tell us exactly how many paras we had employed, their names and locations, let alone what their job descriptions or duties were. However, with tireless effort on the part of the task force, we began to gather a very interesting picture of our paraprofessionals. Through a very detailed survey we gathered information showing that many of them were being asked to do jobs such as dispensing medication, and other medically related tasks with no previous training to do such "high risk" assignments. They were also routinely providing initial instruction of content to students without the direct support of a licensed instructor. Many other worrisome pieces of data came through our investigation.

The information didn't really surprise anyone that had been "in the trenches" but I think when the data was shared with other district and state level administrators and university based professionals, they were shocked. And so it began. Ogden's task force continued to meet and developed standards, job descriptions and levels of training for paraeducators. It was our hope that eventually these standards and a ranking system would lead to a differentiated pay scale for our paras. Unfortunately, as of this writing, that has not yet happened, but I am not giving up hope. Our task force was also very involved with the work of Utah State's Bob Morgan as training

materials for paras and teachers were developed. We helped develop the issues to be included in the training materials, as well as field testing and piloting the programs. We even have some of our own Ogden movie stars in the videos and CD scenes. The Ogden standards were used as a foundation for the guidelines that were later developed at the state level and adopted by the Utah State Board of Education. We have made great progress. Yet we have a great distance to go. I still run into people who refuse to use the term paraeducator, they refer to them as "just staff assistants". We need to educate everyone inside and outside of our systems of the true value these individuals bring to our children and our programs and our lives.

As a closing note I would like to tell all of my friends and colleagues in Utah how much I am going to miss them and how I have enjoyed our associations. I took advantage of a post employment benefit option that was available in our district and I took an early retirement. I have moved to Grand Junction, Colorado and yesterday spent my first day driving the beverage cart on a beautiful 27 hole golf course. The hourly pay isn't much, but teachers are used to that and I have unlimited golf privileges. Those of you who know my love for golf realize that I've died and gone to heaven. I am also doing some private consulting and some work with Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado. I will return to Utah frequently to see my son, my friends and family and of course to continue my work and involvement with the great paraeducators of Utah. Thanks for the memories!

You can reach me at cjharrington@earthlink.net ■



Progress
Progress
Progress

Hispanic Paraeducators Serving as Role Models

The Need

When Hispanic students come to the U.S., many feel that they are left in a sink-or-swim situation. They find themselves searching for someone to relate to and with whom to communicate. They need a guiding hand, or an “amigo” to help them understand both academic and cultural issues. When these young and tender children are unable to bridge that gap, their confidence and self esteem falls to an all time low, leading to low academic success and high behavior problems. Language barriers and misunderstood cultural backgrounds often force them to feel that most teachers do not care much about them. They do not want to be perceived as not understanding (appearing dumb or un-cool), so they often act up, diverting attention from their lack of understanding. Their trust in teachers becomes distant and motivation wanes. The dropout rate among our Hispanic population most frequently occurs during the post-elementary school and post-junior high transitions.

The Project

One Utah career preparation project seeks to increase the recruitment of linguistically and culturally diverse schools, while providing appropriate role models for younger children. This program, called the Estudiantes Latinos Para la Comunidad (ELPC) project identifies qualified high school bilingual students and trains them to become paraeducators. ELPC personnel focus on the recruitment of academically successful high school Hispanic students who can serve as positive role models for this vulnerable young Hispanic population. The program was started in high Hispanic population schools in Provo and Granite districts and has quickly spread, in an adapted form, to Box Elder and Cache School Districts—with others investigating the feasibility of adding it to their school curriculum.

The Recruitment Focus

The Estudiantes Latinos Para la Comunidad was designed to teach high school students the skills they need to be paraeducators in elementary and junior high schools. The objectives of the project for the student-paraeducators are:

- To provide opportunities for Hispanic high school students to give service in their own communities;
- To give valuable work experience for the high school students;
- To provide educationally successful role models for younger Hispanic students; and
- To add additional bilingual services to elementary and middle schools.

In order to achieve these objectives, internship placements were arranged for the high school students (seniors and juniors) as paraeducators in local elementary and middle schools. Before the internships began, administrators, ELPC personnel, parents and students all met to discuss the objectives of the program. The paraeducators received basic training in the principles of effective teamwork; clearly defining roles and expectations for both instructional and classroom management duties; setting standards for professional behavior and dress; and brainstorming how to anticipate situations which may arise.

During the internship, the student-paraeducators traveled to the elementary and middle schools for up to one hour 3 days per week to provide tutoring in basic skills, according to individual student needs as identified by the supervising teacher. Paraeducators kept journals about their experiences as part of the high school credit requirements. The high school teachers met weekly with these paraeducators to followup on questions related to classroom behavior, instruction and/or curriculum, and student motivation, and how to prepare for classroom duties.

Project Results

Project success was evident at three levels: for the high school paraeducator, for the student who received services, and for the teachers.

The high school students raised their expectations for graduation and future employment. All of the high school seniors who participated in the project graduated from high school (although 100% had not planned to do so before participating in the program). Of those who participated as paraeducators, four students were hired to continue working as paraprofessionals, one received a scholarship for a teacher-training program, and two others plan to become teachers. Teachers who received the services of a bilingual paraeducator indicated that their elementary/junior high students who received the services were more successful in their programs. The major benefit for younger students, according to the teachers, were the role models of educational success that the paraeducators provided, and the sense of security and comfort that they seemed to derive from having someone they could relate to in the classroom.

The teachers also focused on the value of the additional instructional time that was given to the younger Hispanic students. During the year of the program, the paraeducators provided over 2200 hours of instructional support to younger Hispanic and non-Hispanic students.

Assuring that Hispanic students reach their full educational and intellectual potential is in the best interest of everyone and plants the seeds for recruitment of tomorrow’s educators. This both enhances the linguistic and cultural diversity of the school and its personnel, and provides more culturally appropriate support for students. With the increase in the minority population in Utah, a project such as Estudiantes Latinos Para la Comunidad not only raises expectations for Hispanic students but also greatly increases their chances of success. ■





I hear from paraeducators from all over the country almost daily. The “all day suckers” that have been given to them have done nothing to help them become more confident. Even though they appreciate a “thank you” card or a small gift, paras often feel that they are at the bottom of the list of priorities. Some have been in various classrooms for many years and still retain the feelings of inadequacies. Mindsets need to be changed to find ways of giving “candy bars” instead of an “all day sucker.”

You might consider these “nutrageous” suggestions:

- Involve paraeducators in some of the decision making processes. Even though they work under the direction of a certified teacher, they often have insights that can be of great value.
- Draw from their experiences. Often paraeducators have been in the classroom longer than has the teacher. Look for those qualities that can contribute to the classroom and make certain that they get the credit for that contribution.
- Provide relaxing times for discussions. Arrange with the building administrator opportunities to plan and review.
- Invite paraeducators to staff development opportunities.

Why Are We Given Dum Dums When What We Want Are Nutrageous Candy Bars

While facilitating a discussion group of paraeducators at the 15th National Paraprofessionals Conference in Boulder Colorado in 1998, a participant expressed her feelings I shall never forget, “Teachers and administrators give us an all-day-sucker when what we really want is a candy bar.”

The “candy bar” needs to take the form of acknowledgment of the paraeducator’s contribution to the classroom. It needs to be the type of responses from the school staff that will contribute to the paraeducator’s self image. The “candy bar” will help the paraeducators get what they desire most: recognition as a paraprofessional.

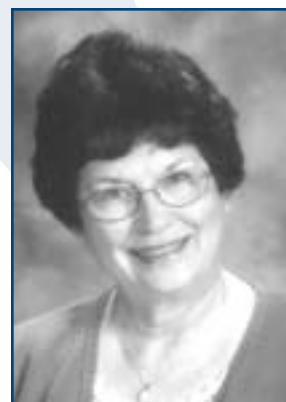
Over the years, I have had numerous opportunities to train paraprofessionals. While providing specific instruction to enhance needed skills and to develop potential value as a paraeducator, I have observed changes in self-confidence and personal growth. Many of my former students have now become my colleagues.

From the beginning, I have seen attributes that would make paraeducators wonderful teachers. Recognizing their abilities, I am fully aware that they could be in my position if they had taken steps earlier in life to fill requirements for teaching certification.

They may desire to attend. Even through credit earned by the teacher does not equate to the para credentials, a certificate of completion can be presented for them to put in a portfolio that gives evidence of the training.

- Invite paraprofessionals to participate in school social events. Contributions to a faculty fund that is used for gifts or parties should also involve paraeducators.
- Make paras feel welcome in the faculty lounge or other places of gathering.
- Explore ways of providing additional training. Keep them updated on opportunities for attending conferences and workshops. Give them professional literatures that they might enjoy reading.

I have come to the conclusion that my approach to expressing the worth of individuals who assist me in the classroom can enhance the teamwork that is essential to providing the best learning environment for children. ■



Deanna Avis, Learning Center Teacher, Mountain View Elementary • Salt Lake District

Paraprofessionals

Stepping Up To The Plate

Jan Pace , Paraeducator • Davis District



This is an exciting time to be a paraprofessional (paraeducator/teacher assistant) in the state of Utah. Paras now have their own newsletter, *The Paragraph* and a state and national website. The addresses are <utah-para.org> and <nrcpara.org>. Much has been happening statewide over the past 10 years to help paras enhance their skills and further their education. The state Paraeducator

Conference is now in it's eighth year. This one day conference offers training by outstanding state and national presenters. Paras may apply for college credit from USU by attending. The conference this year will be at the Egyptian Conference Center in Ogden on Nov. 22-23. Salt Lake Community College offers an 18 credit hour course which gives participants a Paraeducator Certificate of Completion. Many districts across the state reward paras who complete this course with a higher wage. The certificate can lead to an Associate of Science Degree. Other programs include USU's Mild/Moderate Alternative Teacher Program with 50 participants this year, USU's Mild/Moderate Distance Education program and Project Impact which is a distance education course offered online.

With the signing of the new ESEA (No Child Left Behind) law, many paras are concerned as to how this will effect them. Further information will be forthcoming. However, the paras who have taken advantage of previous training offered will be that much ahead of the game. I would strongly urge all paraprofessionals to become life long learners. We should participate in training being offered in districts and throughout the state.

There are over 8000 paraprofessionals in Utah who are highly qualified and valued for the services they provide students and staff. Their job descriptions are definitely changing and they are ready and willing to "step up to the plate." ■

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Many paraeducators, such as myself, have enjoyed the courses, classes and conferences mentioned above so much that we have decided to continue taking classes in the evening in order to complete a teaching certificate in Special Education. Some have been lucky enough to be accepted into the pilot program which assists paraeducators with tuition at SLCC, Utah State, or Weber State. The funding is through the State Improvement Grant (SIGNAL). This program assists paras who have a desire to teach in Special Education and in Utah.



One day two teachers were meeting together to discuss some student issues. Two of their classroom assistants (older, dedicated paraeducators) came to them for some guidance and answers on what they should do. After receiving their answers, the two left to carry out what needed to be done. After they left the room, one teacher turned to the other and in a derisive voice said, "There go the Bobsey Twins." The other teacher carefully swallowed her first impulse and replied, "Yes, but aren't we glad that we have them."

This episode is an example of the different attitudes that paraeducators encounter. The first attitude was one of condescension and contempt. The other was one of respect and appreciation. The teachers and administrators who have the most success with paraeducators are those who adopt the latter of the two attitudes.

Paraeducators can be one of our most valuable assets. Like all school personnel, paraeducators facilitate academic, behavioral and social growth of students. They extend the services provided by the public school system. Paraeducators collaborate with school personnel, parents, community and outside agencies to facilitate student goals.

When a paraprofessional feels valued and respected, that person is much more likely to be motivated and effective. Retention of trained, effective paraeducators improves. What are some ways of demonstrating that we value paraeducators?

Demonstrate respect by:

- Knowing and using their name
- Recognizing work well done
- Including them in social functions
- Show concern about them as an individual
- When correction or criticism must be given to the paraeducator, do it in private and deliver it with respect.

Make paraeducators a part of the "team" rather than a gofer.

- Listen and allow them to make suggestions. When the suggestions are worthwhile, implement them and give the paraeducator credit. When not workable, give the paraeducator an explanation, if possible.
- If you make a commitment, follow through. There are times when the paraeducator will need you to do something before they



can complete their responsibility.

Enable paraeducators to do their job well by providing:

- The tools needed to do their job (supplies, place to work, etc.)
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- Appropriate supervision
- Appropriate, meaningful training
- Opportunities for inservice and growth

Paraeducators: Assets Or Liabilities

Paraeducators also have a responsibility to strive to be exemplary. This can include key traits such as:

- Initiative - Learn what your responsibilities are and be an active team player. Take ownership of the programs you are involved in. A survey showed wages and position were secondary to a persons happiness in the workplace. Motivation is a fire within.
- Professionalism - Present yourself as a positive role model. Over 90% of learning comes from modeling. Dress and act in a professional manner.
- Adaptability - "Blessed are the flexible for they shall not be broken." Change can be a challenge. Be teachable and adaptable.
- Collaboration - Collaboration is a process. It requires team effort. When we work together our skills are sharpened as we learn from one another.
- Communication - To make communication work, we must make sure that those we are talking to understand what we are saying as well as we do.
- Integrity - Respect the dignity, privacy, and individuality of all students, parents and staff members. Represent the school and the district in a positive manner.
- Positive Attitude - Attitude is the reflection of a person. Our attitude is the way we see events, people and circumstances in life.

When paraeducators strive to be exemplary and schools recognize and value them, you have a combination that can't be beat. Obstacles are overcome and students are successful. ■

Respect.....
Respect

Jeff Rydalch, Principal • Hilda B. Jones Center & Diana Fillmore, Employment Specialist Leader • Granite District

PARAPROFESSIONALS: *Tapping The Treasures Within*



Special educators face increasingly demanding responsibilities in meeting the needs of their students. Rising public expectations and continually expanding government mandates lay claim to almost every moment of a teacher's time. In trying to balance the need for individual instruction with the requisite testing and assessments, special educators find themselves swamped with too much to do and too little time in which to do it. The greatest resource available to many special educators is the paraprofessional (para). Yet, for many special educators the use of this valuable resource may be viewed as another challenge that must be conquered. Too often special educators have little training in how to effectively utilize paras in their classrooms. They are uninformed regarding training and incentive programs available for their paras. Frequently, school districts fail to adequately tap into this valuable resource. Hopefully, this article will present some practical and painless means for finding and utilizing the various talents and abilities just waiting to be discovered within our paras.

A Unique View

It is very probable that I look at this topic differently than many special educators. I have been working in the field of special education for 16 years. Thirteen of them were as a para. When I was 32, conditions required that I move to Utah with my family and find employment for the first time ever. I loved children and so naturally the first place I applied was at the school districts. I will be forever grateful to the principal and teachers at Jordan Resource Center (JRC), the most restrictive setting for students with behavior disorders in Jordan School District, who were willing to take a gamble on something they thought they saw in me. Through their tutelage and patience, I was able to develop talents that I had no idea were inside of me.

For example, when I began working I had never loaded a 35mm camera. Before long I had developed an entire photography program for our students. I was given permission and encouragement to utilize the dark room that was in the basement of our school that hadn't been used for many years. It was a challenge that required me to move out of my comfort zone. My self-confidence in my abilities began to build as I observed our students' accomplishments.

Most special educators do not have the luxury of letting a para take a photography program and run with it. However, the same principles that led to my success in that one area can be applied to all areas. I have since become a special education teacher (with further encouragement from my mentors) and have been the supervisor of paras of my own.

I have always tried to remember my experience as a para and implement the techniques that made it a success.



Tana Allred, currently completing MED in Special Education at University of Utah

The Tapping Tools

As I examine my experience, I realize that there was nothing incredibly earthshaking in the way I was treated, but rather it was simply the consistency and genuineness of my supervisors that contributed to helping me become the teacher I am today. The principles are actually very simple:

- *Treat paras with respect*

It is a very wise strategy on the part of teachers to give up what many may feel to be earned status. When students are unaware of who is the teacher and who is the para, paras are able to perform their jobs with greater authority and the teachers are able to free themselves from many tasks that can be performed equally as well by paras. Recognize that they have invaluable insight into your students; value and ask for that insight.

- *Give paras trust*

Once teachers give their paras an assignment, they should demonstrate confidence in those paras by allowing them to complete that task in their own way. Display trust in the paras' abilities to complete the task in a professional manner. Always be available with support, encouragement and advice, but give them room to grow. Shower them with praise while they are working. Then, if there is a problem, after they have completed the task ask if they can see ways in which the project could be improved. There is no such thing as constructive criticism.

- *Provide opportunities for personal growth*

When paras are challenged to explore talents by fulfilling a portion of the students' curriculum, whether it be creating a point card or an activity to enhance learning, they are more likely to become invested in the students' achievements. Remember to encourage them in their efforts. Give them feedback that lets them know they are not forgotten. Always be available for assistance if they are unsure of themselves. They should feel challenged but never overburdened.

- *Schedule brainstorming time*

Be creative and flexible in scheduling time with paras. Although they are desperately needed during academic time, they will be more effective when they have been allowed to spend time with the teachers to plan, create, problem solve, and prepare as an equal and valued member of the team. Make them feel that they are part of the solution to any problem.

- *Show genuine interest*

Take time to build relationships and rapport. Remember to ask about their families, their outside interests- even their pets. Take time for bowling, picnics, dinners. Have fun away from the environment of the classroom. Write notes of thanks or encouragement, give gifts that require thought not money.

These simple but highly effective principles are what kept me coming back to a very demanding and often highly stressful job for 13 years. Not to have done so would have caused me to feel that I had let my friends down because they always made me feel that I was an integral and vital member of the team. ■



Teach Special Education And Go To Heaven?

Karen Neves, Lyman Middle School • San Juan District



Left To Right- Lula, Karen and Marilyn

paraprofessionals work hard with teachers, peers, and parents to help them achieve their goals.

A special education program is only as good as the plan that is written and the people that execute it. As the teacher it is my job to assess the needs of each of my students and to work with many different entities to achieve their success. I write the goals and objectives and use my paraprofessionals to execute the plan. I am the travel agent; they are the plane, fuel, and gate agents. There is NO way I could run an effective program without aggressive professionals to help me realize our goals.

Lula Atcitty has been with me for 13 years. She provides me with so much help. She is always willing to follow the plan and the students' interests become hers. She takes time to teach in any setting, teaching life skills to students with severe needs. I have witnessed her tender care using hand over hand methods of teaching a student to comb her hair daily with minimal progress. She has even opened her home for an overnight "sleep over" to facilitate a special need.

Marilyn Palmer has been with our program for 11 years. Marilyn is so dedicated to the progress of the students. She is like Mom at school. She worries and frets over each one. For some extra money for our program our students run the paper route in our small town. Marilyn takes the time to make sure the papers are distributed to our townspeople, at the same time teaching the students responsibility and pride. She is seldom late and always willing to do what it takes for the students to be successful.

As I sit here and analyze the success of the program, I ask many questions. "Is it the district that sets the policy and administrates? Is it the parents that care so much? Could it be the endless hours of writing IEP's? Is it the desire of the students to want to be better?" While all this is vital I have surmised that it is the ladies that execute the desires of the people in charge. The ladies in the trenches "getting their hands dirty" so to speak that make this program a success. If in fact a successful special education program makes it possible to go to heaven. I am most grateful to my 2 paraprofessionals, which will make it possible for me. In truth the reason we are successful is because of the tireless efforts of the women that work side by side with me. The road is no easy one! ■

After nineteen years of teaching Special Education, I have been told I am going to heaven. I laugh to think of such a thing but if that statement were true my Paraprofessionals are my wings and my halo. Without such dedicated individuals all of what I try to do and envision would not be possible. I was watching television the other night and watched the Master card ad. I thought of my paraprofessionals in this way. "Seeing progress with a student-Amazing! Writing an IEP-necessary. Seeing the paraprofessionals show up for work-priceless." To me it is such a relief to see them ready to work with a smile. They make my job as the teacher a snap.

Having been a special education teacher for as many years as I have, I know what most of the ups and downs are in my program. In my opinion the ladies I work with are the key to a better than average program. I have been fortunate to have worked with my 2 professionals for a respectable combined twenty-three years of faithful service. Most people only experience one right hand man- I get two. They approach teaching with a different style than most. The rewards are many. They marvel at the progress even if it is learning to fold a shirt. The love they have for each child shows in their faces. Seldom sick and looking for an excuse to stay home they work side by side with me teaching and loving each child. I never worry if the students are not being taken care of. My



suggestions as to continuing goals or possible modifications that could be made.

Additionally, trained paraprofessionals often have great ideas that the service provider may not have thought of. Many paraprofessionals have worked in various areas of special education and have experience at elementary, secondary, and post-high levels. They are able to contribute ideas and knowledge from their backgrounds in order to meet good outcomes for students.

Support

Not only are paraprofessionals valued for their input, they are also highly valued as a support structure for students, teachers, and classrooms. Paraprofessionals support students both in the classroom and out. Many are in content area classes making modifications or adaptations for students, as well as ensuring that the students are understanding the content. They are also out in the community in vocational settings where they supervise students, develop jobs, and try to troubleshoot any problems that may arise.

Every successful organization seems to have people who make a huge impact, yet get very little credit or recognition. Paraprofessionals in the Special Education field are some of those people. Although many do not possess college degrees or have a title, they have a huge impact on the service delivery to students with disabilities. Trained paraprofessionals are assets to both teachers and students. They are depended upon to provide input on student needs, to provide support, and to deliver instruction.

Input

Due to the fact that many paraprofessionals work just as closely with students as teachers or other related service providers (speech, vision, occupational/physical therapy), they have a wealth of information when it comes to planning and developing Individualized Education Plans (IEP's). Many service providers ask for input from paraprofessionals as to what goals or outcomes they feel individual students should achieve. Their opinions are valued because they work with the students and have a vested interest in the students' success. Furthermore, they help carry out programs with the students and know the progress that students are making; thus, they are able to make

Unsung Heroes

In as much as trained paraprofessionals support students, they also support teachers or other service providers. Paraprofessionals assist with data collection and decision-making, alternate assessments, informal evaluations, and observations. One person cannot be everywhere at once, nor can he/she do all that is needed in the course of a workday. Therefore, paraprofessionals are relied upon to help take up the slack, so to speak. They are essential in meeting the needs of the numerous students who are served in Special Education.

Instruction

Teachers and other service providers depend on paraprofessionals to deliver instruction to students. They rely on their expertise, experience, and knowledge of individual students to carry out appropriate instruction with modifications and adaptations as needed.

Having more than one person delivering instruction is beneficial to students as well as teachers. Multiple persons inadvertently teach students generalization and coping skills. They must adapt to multiple persons and various teaching styles. It also provides students with an opportunity to work with more than just one person throughout the day, thus enhancing the learning experience.

Paraprofessionals play a vital role in Special Education as a whole. They are an important part of the educational team and provide an invaluable service to both the students and the teachers with whom they work. They should be valued for the input, the support, and the instruction they provide. ■



Gin Wimmer, Paraprofessional/Therapy Department & Tami Youngman, Special Education Teacher • Ogden City School District

One paraeducator told the authors:

"I don't know if you'd call it harassment or what, but I was really uncomfortable one afternoon. The teacher and I had to drive to a personnel development meeting. I drove that day. It was weird because he kept leaning over and pointing to things out the window on my side of the car...his hands were awfully close to my breasts and I was really uncomfortable. It seemed so intentional."

Another said,

"I really don't know what to do or where to go to report it. I have one student in the class [self-contained special education classroom] who keeps trying to pull my clothes off me. Yesterday he ripped my skirt. I guess I have to put up with it because the student has a disability. Anyway, I can't afford to quit my job. I have to work."



vulnerable, and they do not want students to behave improperly without an opportunity to learn appropriate behavior and consequences.

Definitions of sexual harassment tend to be quite simple but cover a wide range of behaviors. Generally, sexual harassment

Prevention and Intervention: Paraeducators and Sexual Harassment

While there is extremely limited discussion in the literature about student-to-adult sexual harassment, anecdotal episodes indicate this does occur. Paraeducators (particularly in self-contained settings), cafeteria workers, and other non-teaching staff can be easy targets of sexual harassment because of their lower status among authority figures in the school and the general lack of training in this area. When paraeducators present their experiences and perceptions of being sexually harassed, supervisors may be prone to blame the school adult and imply that the harassment occurred because the adult did not have control over the students or the adult was being overly sensitive. One paraeducator told us, "I'd rather quit my job than go through the hassle of reporting it."

Sexual harassment is a topic that puts people on guard because it can be difficult to substantiate, has a relatively vague definition, and, unfortunately, often blamed on the victim because she "brought it on herself." Authorities tend to respond to sexual harassment complaints with "If we ignore it, it will stop," or "They were only joking and that's not harassment." Yet, most leaders agree that they do not want to leave staff



is considered to be any unwanted or unwelcome sexual advances. Inappropriate touching, repeatedly being called sexual names, starting sexual rumors, sexual jokes, or displaying pornography may constitute legally significant

sexual harassment if the behaviors are persistent and severe. Sexual harassment may also include threats of losing a job or not getting a promotion unless sexual favors are granted. Not all sexual harassment is legally significant. It may violate the school or district policy but not result in a legal consequence. Even if a case does not end up in court, sexual harassment is unacceptable and should not be tolerated.

Based on a survey by the American Association of University Women, 81% of secondary students report being sexually harassed at school, and almost as many boys as girls report that they have experienced sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is not something that only happens in secondary schools; 35% of students reported experiencing sexual harassment before sixth grade. While we do not know the percentage of school adults who experience sexual harassment at school, there is some research showing that teachers and other adults

implementing this policy is imperative. Training should focus on identifying and responding to sexual harassment. This training is especially important for paraeducators because they often find themselves in a unique position. They are hired by an administrator, working in a classroom under the direction of one or more teachers, but evaluated by a district supervisor. The question of to whom and where to report sexual harassment occurrences must be addressed through training sessions. Procedures such as completing incidence reports and submitting to proper authority should be discussed. Furthermore, confidentiality issues should be discussed in relation to the paraeducator's role. Training also should target an emphasis of creating a school community which embraces respect and tolerance for all members of the school community. This is one of the most effective interventions for decreasing incidents of sexual harassment.



often describe incidents involving sexual harassment, but do not accurately identify the incident as sexual harassment. Those who experience sexual harassment tend to feel upset, embarrassed, anxious, vulnerable, and unsafe. These feelings of vulnerability and the experience of misused power—implicit in sexual harassment—are not conducive to a productive, caring school culture.

Each district should have a federal mandated policy prohibiting sexual discrimination and sexual harassment. Training and administrative support in understanding and

To summarize, addressing the issues of sexual harassment is imperative in the process of creating an effective school. Sexual harassment is often subtle and easily swept aside yet it can have an effect on job satisfaction, educational progress, and emotional well-being. Being aware of the extremely high incidence rate of harassment among students, the vulnerability of paraeducators and other non-teaching staff will help administrators and teachers target these groups for increased training and support.

References are available from the authors upon request. ■

The SAALE Model: Reaching the Hard to Teach

Judy Wood, Professor Emeritus, Virginia Commonwealth University

Last month the Utah Mentor Teachers Academy was host to Dr. Judy Wood, Professor Emeritus at Virginia Commonwealth University. Dr. Wood's training was entitled, Teaching the Hard to Reach. The two sessions focused on intervention strategies for at risk students in general classroom settings. A dynamic and animated presenter, Dr. Wood, inspired the academy with her knowledge of successful methods for students requiring innovative instructional support. We hope you enjoy her following thoughts.



The SAALE model answers the call for differentiating instruction for all students. IDEA (Reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 1997) places a call to general education to provide even greater access to students with disabilities.

THE SAALE MODEL

SAALE (Systematic Approach for Adapting the Learning Environment) has been a best practice for providing an organized approach for educators to use when identifying, developing and implementing interventions for students at-risk within the schools. The model, evolving since the 1970's, consists of three steps: the visual model, the intervention/transition checklist, and strategies. The model incorporates all knowledge/information learned by educators.

The SAALE Model divides the school day into three major parts: (a) the socio-emotional/behavioral environments, (b) the physical environment, and (c) the instructional environment. In any one of these major areas, the educator can make a simple accommodation or modification that will make education more appropriate for a special-needs or at-risk student. Accommodations are simple adjustments to teaching, testing, or other areas within the environment. For example, if a student cannot read the textbook, the teacher can make several adjustments to the text to accommodate the lower reading level of the student, thus enabling the student to learn the material.

Logical Connections

Now that we have the concept of the instructional day being divided into blocks representing the visual of the SAALE model, let's see how the information an educator has learned and will learn fits into the model. This brings us to the concept of logical connections. Pretend that I'm giving you one of my business cards and I tell you that I will see you in three months. When I return and I ask, "Do you have my business card I gave you three months ago?" The answer probably will be "No. Why should I have kept the card? What did it possibly mean to me?"

Now let's pretend that I'm giving you a business card and I tell you that I'll return in three months. If you can produce my card when I return, I'll give you \$10,000. Will you have my card on this visit? You bet! This brings us closer to logical connections and the SAALE model. Everything needs a reason and a place.

Think of the SAALE model and visualize the model as a mental file cabinet. File all that you know about teaching children in the appropriate file or block of the model. These "files" are where strategies/information are placed. You can quickly see how crowded the file can become and how each educator has numerous pieces of information to file. This information storage or organization system brings us to the concept of a "mismatch," the real trick in teaching.

Mismatch

A mismatch is simply a point where the child cannot succeed because the teacher has expectations which are not compatible with the student's abilities. For example, if a student cannot copy from the chalkboard and the teacher requires copying from the chalkboard,

then you have a mismatch. There is nothing wrong with requiring copying from the blackboard or not being able to copy; the point is we have a mismatch and the place of the mismatch becomes the “point of intervention.” Finding the mismatch identifies the place where to place the selected intervention or strategy. The mismatch will be identified in one of the blocks in the Model. This mismatch may easily be identified using the second part of the SAALE Model, the Intervention/Transition Checklist.

THE CHECKLISTS

The Intervention/Transition Checklist is a helpful and practical method of identifying where adaptations in the learning environment are needed. This simple device enables teachers and other team members to compare characteristics of the general class setting with the performance levels of students in that setting. Identifying possible mismatches between a student’s performance and any of the aspects of the learning environment is the first step to developing pre-referral or post placement interventions. The checklist presents the characteristics expected in the general class (on the left) and what a selected student in that setting may or may not be able to do (on the right). Let’s say the teacher expects students in this setting to take notes from the lecture and from the textbook and the student is unable to perform this task. A mismatch is identified, and for this student in this setting, note-taking strategies are necessary when information must be copied from lecture and textbook. This mismatch occurs in the content file.

A question frequently asked is, “What if I do not have the time to prepare accommodations or selected strategies?” If we would see strategies as an ongoing part of instruction and made available to all students, this concern would diminish.

STRATEGIES

Strategies, the third part of the SAALE Model, are simple ideas which assist students with mismatches. Strategies represent everything you know which will help a student with classroom misbehavior or academic difficulties. This part of the model is a continuous process.

For several tips or strategies, which may be helpful, follow:

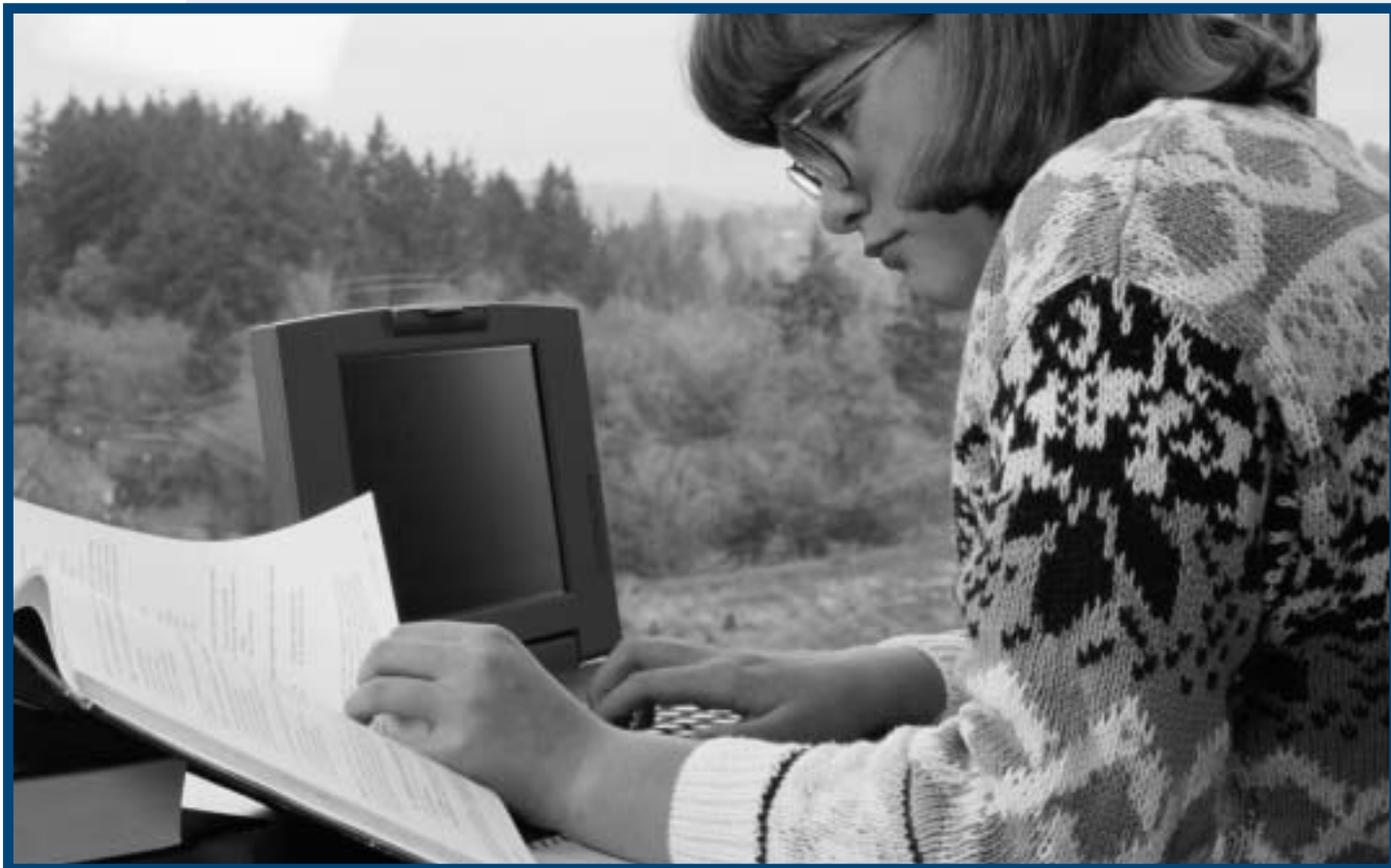
General study tips:

- Keep notes and guides organized.
- Plan study time for each task.
- Review all class notes nightly.
- Develop flash cards for recognition of information.
- Plan a specific time and place for study.
- Develop a plan for reinforcement of study.
- Help students see the value of planned, organized study.

General study tips for older students:

- Develop a study schedule for a week to one month in advance.
- Always cross off an assignment when completed. This is an excellent self-motivator.
- Always use an assignment notebook.
- Plan to break up long assignments with a brief rest period, or work on a different subject.
- Schedule rewards for finishing your assignments.
- Sit close to the front of the class.
- Make sure you have a complete set of notes.

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Alternatives to writing book reports:

- **Book jacket or bookmark:** Illustrate a cover for the book, or design a bookmark with characters or a setting from the book.
- **News report:** Summarize the book by writing a news report as if the events in the story actually took place. Pretend to be a TV anchorperson and give the report.
- **Ending rewrite:** Give the book a new ending. Pursue different ways the story could have ended.
- **Advertisement:** Dress and act like a character from the book and “sell” the book to the class.
- **Write the author:** The student can write to the book’s author in care of the publisher. Students should make comments about the book they have read.
- **Poetry:** Summarize a book by retelling it in poetry form.
- **Character journal:** Write a journal portraying a character from the book. The journal should be written in first person and describe the character’s thoughts, feeling, and ideas.
- **Plays:** Rewrite the book in play form. For longer stories, take a chapter or chapters and write an act or scene of the play.
- **Models:** Make a model of the setting or characters from the book.
- **Bulletin board:** Use a classroom bulletin board to describe and display the setting, characters, and theme of the book.
- **Map:** Draw a map of the story setting to show the story action. Use the map as a prop when discussing the book.
- **Life-sized posters:** Make life-sized characters to use as props when presenting an oral book report.
- **Letter:** Write a letter telling a friend about the book. Describe setting, characters, and the plot.
- **Comic book:** Summarize the book in the form of a comic book. This would be a good idea for unmotivated readers who are very interested in drawing and art.
- **Oral and taped presentation:** This is an easy alternative to written reports. With taped reports, sound effects can be added to interest the audience.
- **Condensed book:** Write and illustrate a short synopsis of the book. This is similar to what certain magazines do to advertise a book.
- **Illustrations:** Draw main characters, setting, or a climactic

scene from the book.

- **Panel discussion:** For students who are reporting on the same book, form a panel and have a question-and-answer period.
- **Demonstration:** For how-to-books, students can demonstrate what was learned. For example, for a book about cake decorating, a student could bring in a cake and show the steps in decorating.
- **Timeline:** Draw a timeline of events as they happened in the story. Illustrations may be added to explain events.
- **Popular music:** Have students write and perform (or record) rap songs about the book.
- **Shoe box filmstrips:** Have students illustrate and summarize the books on cards and then put the cards into a shoebox. When a reader flips the cards, they look like a filmstrip. These filmstrips are kept in the class, and other students look at them and decide whether to read the books.
- **Tape-recording stories:** Let students tape-record their short stories. You will be surprised how much students know orally that they can’t express in a written format.

Logical Connections

How does the SAALE Model fit within the instructional process and the curriculum as a whole? Let’s regroup how we think and make the intervention process (SAALE Model) an integral part of the curriculum. One does not function without the other. From now on let’s become a new generation of teachers —ones who see curriculum and the intervention process as synonymous. The current thought in education is develop outcomes, align the curriculum with the outcomes, then teach the curriculum to students who are expected to master the outcomes and therefore pass the “tests.” The concept of the intervention process and what is or is not fair are “afterthoughts.” This doesn’t work. If students at-risk are to be successful in inclusive settings, reach outcomes, and thus pass tests, an organized, systematic approach for providing accommodation/interventions must become integrated within the process of outcomes, curriculum, students, etc. That is we align outcomes with the curriculum. Now we must align curriculum to the students by finding the mismatch and providing the appropriate strategy to assist with the mismatch.

SUMMARY

Differentiating instruction is a total process aligning what we teach (curriculum) to the specific instructional needs of students. The SAALE Model provides an organized way to differentiate systematically while teaching all students. The bottom line in our schools today is for educators to successfully deliver information to students. This process is not an accident; it is a planned and systematic procedure.

Dr. Wood, Professor Emeritus, Virginia Commonwealth University, focuses on building a successful academic intervention system for at-risk students and students with unique needs within general education settings.

The preceding article has been extrapolated from: Wood, J.W. (2002). *Reaching the hard to teach: The SAALE Model*. Midlothian, VA., and Wood, J.W. (2002). *Adapting instruction to accommodate students in inclusive settings*. Columbus, Ohio: Merrill @Prentice Hall.

For further information contact judywood@judywood.com. For complete article with charts see the ULRC Web page: ■

Specific Learning Disabilities and WJ III Oral Language



Michael Herbert • Utah Personnel Development Center

What is more elementary or essential to learning than language? Without a strong foundation, even the best-designed house will crumble and fall. Without adequate receptive and expressive language, students struggle to make sense of what they hear or read, are unable to demonstrate what they

have learned through oral or written expression, become frustrated, and often fail.

Research suggests that a strong correlation (perhaps as high as 65-70%) exists between difficulties in receptive and/or expressive language and difficulty or failure in reading/writing tasks. These difficulties are not due to the equipment needed for learning (sensory or physical impairments), but rather how individuals process information that they hear or read. It's the software, not the hardware! This notion is integral to the definition of dyslexia, and of specific learning disabilities.

Dys'lex'i'a: *A learning disorder marked by a severe difficulty in recognizing and understanding written language, leading to spelling and writing problems. It is not caused by low intelligence or brain damage.*

A specific learning disability, according to the federal definition, is "a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term, includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia."

Language problems are highly correlated with learning difficulties and failure; yet, how often are students who are referred to special education evaluated for language (not speech) assessment? "The student must be assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability..." USOE rules, (2000) p. 16, (10). When was the last time a student was qualified as having a specific learning disability in listening comprehension or expressive language in your school? If six or seven of

every ten students who qualify as having a specific learning disability likely have concomitant difficulties in language, have they been assessed and if warranted are they receiving interventions for their basic language difficulties? If a basic or underlying problem exists, yet the student is not assessed in that area, then how can language-based learning problems be identified and appropriate interventions designed and implemented? Just asking...

How To Determine If Learning Failure Is Related To Language Or Other Basic Psychological Process Disorders

The Woodcock Johnson III offers practitioners the opportunity of assessing a student's oral language abilities and includes a diagnostic scoring procedure (oral language/achievement discrepancy) to ascertain if low achievement in reading or written language may be due to oral

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figure 1

WJ III ORAL LANGUAGE CLUSTERS

LANGUAGE CLUSTER	ADMINISTER TESTS:	OUTCOME
ORAL EXPRESSION	Test 3: Story Recall Test 14: Picture Vocabulary	Combined average of linguistic competency and expressive vocabulary.
LISTENING COMPREHENSION	Test 4: Understanding Directions Test 15: Oral Comprehension	Average of verbal comprehension and listening ability.
ORAL LANGUAGE (Standard)	Test 3: Story Recall Test 4: Understanding Directions	Average of linguistic competency, listening and comprehension.
ORAL LANGUAGE (Extended)	Test 3: Story Recall Test 4: Understanding Directions Test 14: Picture Vocabulary Test 15: Oral Comprehension	Comprehensive average of expressive vocabulary, reasoning, memory and listening comprehension.
Picture Vocabulary	Test 14: Picture Vocabulary	Expressive oral language and word knowledge
Oral Comprehension	Test 15: Oral Comprehension	Comprehend short audio passage and provide best word using listening, reasoning, vocabulary.

figure 2

WJ III ORAL LANGUAGE SUBTESTS

SUBTEST	RECEPTIVE DEMAND	EXPRESSIVE DEMAND	ABILITIES MEASURED
Story Recall (Achievement #3)	Listening, oral comprehension of taped passage	Oral response, repeating, paraphrasing	Oral Expression language development listening ability meaningful memory
Understanding Directions (Achievement #4)	Listening, comprehending taped passage	Non-verbal, pointing	Listening Comprehension Listening Ability Language Development
Story Recall (Achievement #12)	Listening, oral comprehending taped passage	Oral response, repeating/recalling details of taped passages	Long-Term Retrieval meaningful memory
Picture Vocabulary (Achievement #14)	Visual stimuli	Oral response, naming familiar objects	Oral Expression language development lexical knowledge
Oral Comprehension (Achievement #15)	Listening, comprehending taped passage	Orally providing a missing word from passage (auditory cloze procedure)	Listening Comprehension listening ability
Sound Awareness (Achievement #21)	Listening, comprehending oral and taped passages, manipulating phonemes	Providing oral responses	Reading phonetic coding

language deficits or other basic processing disorders. In the WJ III, oral language is a measure of receptive and expressive competency including such areas as semantic expression, expressive vocabulary, listening and verbal comprehension. Individual subtests or clusters (figures 1 and 2) may be administered to help establish a student's present level of educational performance in listening comprehension and oral expression relative to his/her peers.

Oral language tests in the WJ III are located in the Achievement standard and extended batteries. Best practice would be to administer clusters of tests (figure 1) that would yield standard scores in receptive and/or expressive areas as indicated by the referral question and by observations of the student in the regular classroom. Typically, this would be part of a comprehensive initial evaluation, which would include cognitive and achievement tests in areas related to the referral question.

1. Administer either the Standard Oral Language cluster (Achievement subtests #3 and 4, OR Extended Oral Language cluster (Achievement subtests #3, 4, 14, 15)
2. Administer selected achievement cluster subtests in reading and/or reading and written expression.
3. Enter data into the Compuscore or Report Writer software
4. Re-set "Ability/Achievement Discrepancy Basis" (the default settings used for qualification) setting on Compuscore or Report Writer (temporarily) to "Oral Language/Achievement discrepancy" option (see figure 3), and score report.

figure 3

SET COMPUSCORE FOR PREDICTED ACHIEVEMENT DISCREPANCY

Reset discrepancy basis from "GIA" to "Oral Language" by clicking option

Figure 4

ORAL LANGUAGE/ACHIEVEMENT DISCREPANCY

DISCREPANCIES	STANDARD SCORES			DISCREPANCY		Significant at + or - 1.50 SD (SEE)
	Actual	Predicted	Difference	PR	SD	
Oral Language/Achievement Discrepancies*						
BROAD READING	79	104	-25	3	-1.89	Yes ←
BASIC READING SKILLS	74	104	-30	1	-2.27	Yes ←
READING COMP	94	104	-10	23	-0.73	No
BROAD MATH	115	104	+11	80	+0.84	No
MATH CALC SKILLS	107	103	+4	62	+0.31	No
MATH REASONING	117	104	+13	85	+1.03	No
BROAD WRITTEN LANG	79	104	-25	3	-1.85	Yes ←
BASIC WRITING SKILLS	74	103	-29	2	-2.16	Yes ←
WRITTEN EXPRESSION	92	103	-11	22	-0.78	No
ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE	125	105	+20	97	+1.88	Yes

*These discrepancies based on Oral Language (Ext) with ACH Broad, Basic, and Applied

- Examine “Oral Language/Achievement Discrepancy” standard scores on the printout, and look for significant discrepancies. The “Actual” score is the achievement cluster score administered. The “Predicted” score represents the student’s potential to perform that academic task, based on an age/grade weighting of the achievement tests required to perform that task.
- Discrepancies greater than -1.5 standard deviations (look at far right column, figure 4) are considered significant. Approximately 7% of the school-age population would be expected to evidence a -1.5 sd. discrepancy. The greater the minus discrepancy, the greater the gap between oral language *potential* to perform reading/writing tasks, and present level of performance in the near term (3-6 months).
- Interpret low scores (see figure 5) and consider implications when writing IEP goals and designing interventions.



What Might A Significant Discrepancy Mean?

A significant oral language/achievement discrepancy suggests a degree of *unexpected low performance*. Students with specific learning disabilities MAY NOT evidence Oral Language/achievement discrepancies. Significant discrepancies imply that the referring academic problem (poor reading, etc.) is most likely NOT due to a receptive and/or expressive language problem as measured by the WJ III. If language is thus ruled out as a contributing problem, then achievement difficulties may be due to a cognitive processing disorder (see last month’s WJ III article), or due to other inhibiting factors, such as lack of appropriate instruction, inconsistent attendance, economic disadvantage, lack of motivation or persistence, or, other environmental or psychological factors. See figure 5 for possible implications of very low scores.

If Oral Language > Reading, writing...

If the oral language standard score (SS) is significantly higher than the reading/writing score, this suggests that the student has the oral language potential to perform that achievement task to a higher level

of proficiency. Focus instruction on reading, writing development, as the student evidences the linguistic aptitude to perform these tasks at a higher skill level.

If Oral Language = <Reading, writing

If the oral language score is commensurate or lower than the reading/writing score, this suggests that oral language may be a contributing factor in the student’s learning difficulty, and consultation/referral to a speech/language pathologist may be warranted. Little or slow progress in the reading/writing skill measured would be expected without specific language instruction and intervention. Focus instruction on language development.

CAUTION: Oral language/achievement discrepancy scores are intended to examine whether a student is performing reading/writing tasks commensurate to their linguistic potential, given their individual pattern of cognitive strengths, weaknesses and functional limitations. The tests of the WJ III “are not sufficient to diagnose a primary

Continued page 32

language disorder, judicious comparisons of test results can provide strong indications as to generalized and specific language problems that would necessitate a referral to a SpeechLanguage Pathologist.” (Mather & Jaffe, 2002 p. 40). The authors of the WJ III do NOT recommend the oral language/achievement option as the sole criterion to diagnose a specific learning disability. Interpret and use derived language scores with caution, as estimates of expected performance in the short-term, not as predictors of student performance over the life span.

“Never regard study as a duty, but as the enviable opportunity to learn to know the liberating influence of beauty in the realm of the spirit for your own personal joy and to the profit of the community to which your later work belongs.” A. Einstein

This is the eighth installment in an ongoing series of articles on the diagnosis, assessment and treatment (intervention) of learning problems in school age children and youth. Abstracts and full past articles are avail-

able online at: <http://www.ulrc.org/specialeducator/collections.html> The opinions and observations expressed are those of the author, and do not necessarily align with or reflect those of the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) as delineated in the Special Education Rules (June 2000). All practitioners are encouraged to consult the USOE Special Education Rules for further legal information and guidelines. Readers with differing viewpoints or perspectives are encouraged to dialogue with the author, and submit rebuttals or articles to the Utah Special Educator to present their perspectives.

Training in the administration and interpretation of the WJ III is available to interested school districts and institutions of higher learning in Utah. A PowerPoint presentation outlining the Oral Language/Achievement procedure of the WJ III is available online on the ULRC website, at: www.ulrc.org/webresources Contact this author (michae1h@ulrc.org) at the Utah Personnel Development Center for further information. ■



INTERPRETING WJ-III ACHIEVEMENT TEST RESULTS.

ORAL LANGUAGE TESTS	WHAT MIGHT LOW SCORES MEAN?
ACHIEVEMENT #3: Story Recall	Look for low scores in Processing Speed, Long-Term Retrieval, Short-Term Memory, Auditory Processing, or Comprehension-Knowledge. Low performance may be a function of limited vocabulary, limited comprehension, poor receptive and/or expressive language, or poor attention and concentration.
ACHIEVEMENT #4: Understanding Directions	Look for low scores in Processing Speed, Short-Term Memory, Auditory Processing, Comprehension-Knowledge or Listening Comprehension. Performance may be affected by vocabulary, comprehension, memory, attention and/or culture.
ACHIEVEMENT #12: Story Recall-Delayed	Look for low scores in Processing Speed, Long-Term Retrieval, Auditory Processing, or Comprehension-Knowledge. Low score may indicate problems with long-term meaningful memory retrieval.
ACHIEVEMENT #14: Picture Vocabulary	Look for low scores in Expressive Language, Processing Speed, Long-Term Retrieval, Auditory Processing, Comprehension-Knowledge or CALP. Low performance may suggest limited vocabulary, cultural differences, or word retrieval difficulties.
ACHIEVEMENT #15: Oral Comprehension	Look for low scores in Listening Comprehension, Processing Speed, Short-Term Memory, Auditory Processing, or Comprehension-Knowledge. Low performance may also be related to limited semantic (meaning) or syntactic (structure) knowledge or poor attention. Compare to WJ-III Ach. Test 9 Passage Comprehension.
ACHIEVEMENT #21: Sound Awareness	Look for low scores in Auditory Processing, Comprehension-Knowledge, Phonetic Awareness or Oral Language. Low performance may be associated with lack of exposure or practice, or less than mastery awareness.

Adapted from Johnson, D. (2002). UPDC

Figure 5



Okay, so I've heard it said too many times to count "We are in the information Age." What does that mean to me as an educator? Until recently, not a whole lot. Having made that public confession, I will now tell you why my view of the information age has changed.

Dr. Dan Morgan, Utah SIGNAL Project, an expert at navigating through information—helped me to see the value in web based information for educators. Truthfully, Dan showed me that much of the stuff that I was trying to create had already been done. Wow, the information age provides times savers? I became a believer!

We created the recently released "ED/BD CD (Beta Version)." Dan provided the material and vision for the CD, the tech guy put it on a disk and I picked the colors!

Joking aside, the CD (Beta Version) has many valuable attributes. In addition to over 2,600 pages of empirically sound information for educators, administrators, preschool providers and parents, the CD provides numerous links to fabulous websites. Some examples of the information included on the CD are:

- How to Implement School Wide Systems of Behavior Support
- IDEA Guidelines

- Suggestions for Classroom Positive Reinforcers and Consequences
- Academic Interventions

The following pilot groups received a copy of the Beta Version on September 27th.

1. District Behavior Experts
2. Utah Behavior Initiatives School Teams
3. CCBD attendees

Since Beta Version means, "We aren't sure it works and know it has some glitches"—CDs will not be available until the pilot groups have reviewed and reported on the content and workings of the CD.

Then we will burn "The ED/BD CD Version 1.0." When the 1.0 version is ready, the information on how to get a copy will be included in this publication.

Who knows, maybe you'll find valuable time saving features in the information age, too! ■



Paraeducators:

What Would We Do Without Them? How Can We Keep Them?

Preschool



Any teacher can tell you that a good paraeducator is worth their weight in gold. The problem is that we are losing them in droves and there doesn't appear to be enough gold in the public school coffers to keep them.

The preschool program in Uintah School District consists of four classrooms, with five early childhood special education teachers and eleven paraprofessionals. The teachers have 87 years experience between them, and 125 years experience among the preschool paraeducators. Related service personnel also use paraeducators to assist them in providing services. It is obvious that we can't throw away that much effort and experience.

An informal survey of our preschool paras revealed some interesting information:

- The feeling of making a contribution in the life of a child ranked higher in importance than salary and benefits.
- They appreciate training opportunities.
- They want to have meaningful responsibility.
- They value planning time with their assigned teacher(s), and want to feel part of the team.
- 63% felt they had more to offer than their current responsibility allowed.

While special educators may have little influence over state and local funding to help our paras earn the salary they deserve,

Gayle Drollinger, Preschool Coordinator • Uintah School District

there are many things we CAN do to help them enjoy their jobs and improve retention.

This year we have had Terri Mitchell, Program Specialist, Utah Personnel Development Center, provide on-site training in educating young children using integrated developmentally appropriate practices. Ms. Mitchell met with our entire staff for two days in July, then another three days in mid-August. Our paras were learning right along with our teachers. We have recently moved to a new facility where our Vernal area classrooms are new in the same building. The extra help in getting rooms set up and starting the new year with a renewed effort to facilitate the active learning of our preschoolers was both timely and pertinent.

Our teaching assistants are an integral part of the success of our preschools. They wholeheartedly support early childhood programs and work hard to make our preschool team successful.

As teachers, we have made deliberate efforts to include the expertise of our teaching assistants in every phase of planning, preparing and facilitating learning. Some of our core beliefs and practices are:

- Copying and cutting is kept to a minimum, and if it has to be done, we all take turns doing it rather than delegating these menial tasks to our paraeducators.
- Data collection is done by everyone.
- Paraeducators assist with the evaluation screening process to determine eligibility. They are an active part of the decision of whether or not a child needs to be referred for more in-depth professional evaluation in areas of suspected delay.
- Paraeducators interact with the child's family. In our program positive communication with parents is encouraged. We provide staff training on respecting confidentiality and what kind of feedback is appropriate, and then encourage our teaching assistants to talk to families and the community about the good things that happen at preschool.

When we examine the typical training offered to paraeducators, it is easy to understand why they often feel abandoned and unsure of their responsibilities. Districts generally have a one-shot session where new paras are given information on district policy and procedures. Additional training opportunities may or may not be available to them.

There are several good training programs on the market. One of my favorite is Para Pro, Supporting the Instructional Process by Randy Sprick, Mickey Garrison and Lisa Howard, available from Sopris West. This

approach pairs the teacher and can immediately apply it to their unique situation. Together, they learn about the hierarchy of their school, how to deal with disagreements productively, how to deal effectively with student behavior, supervising common areas, working with small groups, and working with individual students.

As educators, perhaps we should listen more carefully to our capable paraeducators. While they are worth their weight in gold, what they are really asking from us is an opportunity to share their talents and skills. In the meantime, let's remember that it never hurts to recognize their individual efforts, provide additional training, and include them as a full member of the educational team. ■



TECH TIPS

Update On The Utah Special Educator Online

In the last issue I announced that *The Utah Special Educator* was available online and that articles could be found listed under topical categories in the “Special Collections” area. Well, this month we have added an exciting improvement! The Utah Special Educator is now fully searchable. Articles between the years 2000-2002 can be found by doing a search on topic, author, and/or keyword. (We will be adding 1999 articles into the database shortly and will continue to add all the new issues as they are published.)

Check out this new feature by visiting the Utah Personnel Development Center Web site at www.ulrc.org

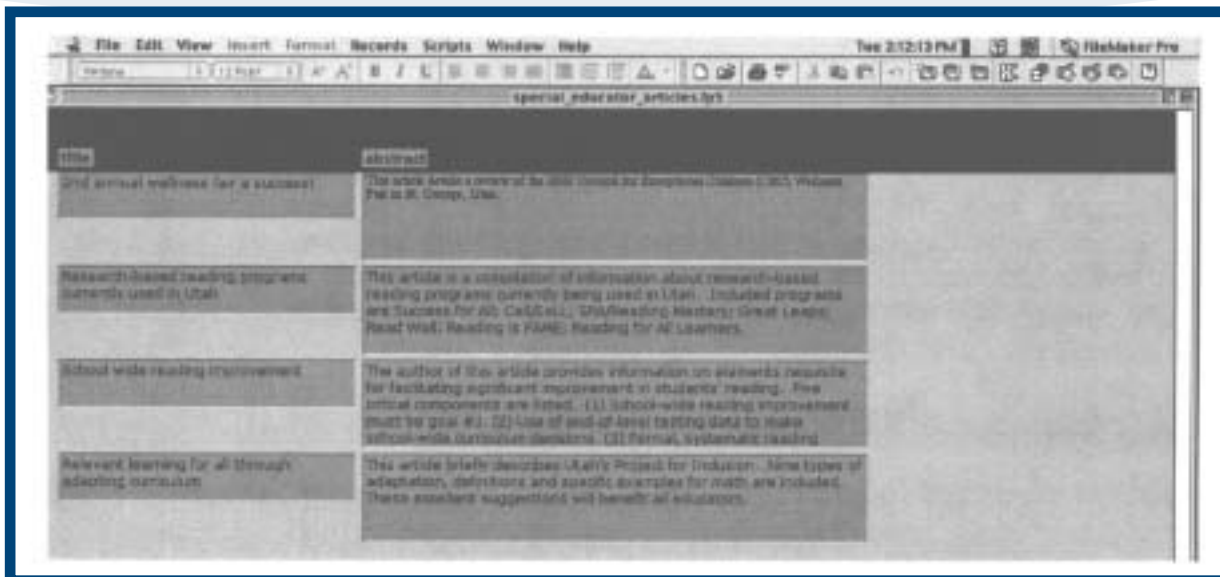
Go to the “Special Educator” area and click on “Search the Utah Special Educator.”

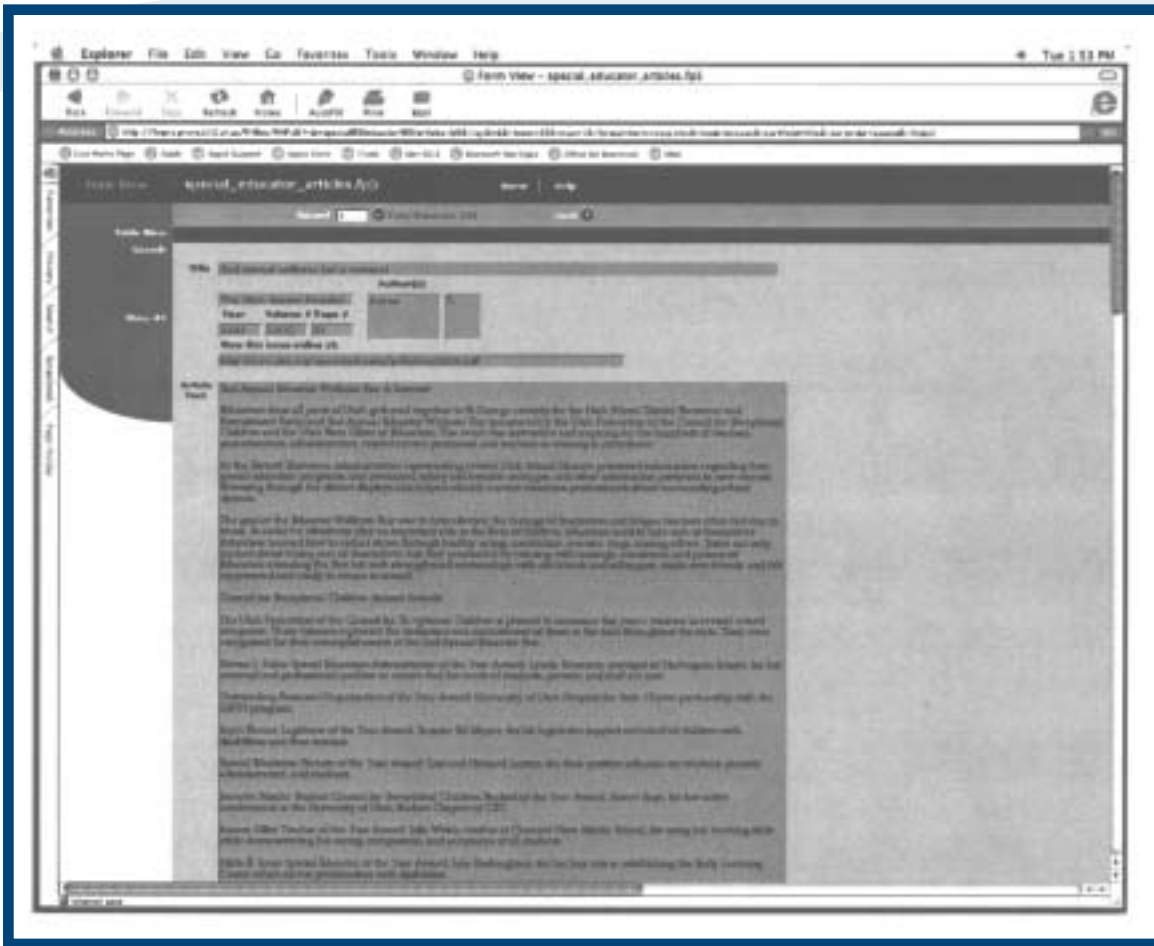
Once you enter the database you can select one of three pages: Search, Page View and Form View. (Depending upon your web browser and version these views may look slightly different than the ones shown below.)

The **SEARCH** page allows you to enter the specific topic, author or keyword you are looking for.



TABLE view (depending on your browser) generally contains only the title and the abstract of each article. From here, you can click on the specific article you want to view in full.





FORM view contains complete information including the full text of the article (in most cases). If the full text is not available you are given the reference for the article as well as the web address for the article in PDF format (this is the online original of the magazine).

You should be able to print a hard copy of any of these pages using your web browser.

Also by clicking on “Help” you can find additional instructions for using *The Utah Special Educator Online*.

We hope you enjoy this new feature! If you have questions or suggestions about searching The Utah Special Educator online please contact me.

loydeneb@provo.k12.ut.us
1-800-662-6624 (or SLC 272-3431)



The Utah Paraeducator Consortium provides information specific to Utah paraeducators and links to a variety of additional resources.
<http://www.utahpara.org/>

National Resource Center for Paraeducators is a comprehensive web site including a wide variety of information and resources for paraeducators.

<http://www.nrpara.org/>



Check out UEN’s (Utah Education Network) new Rubric Tool. Search for rubrics or create your own customized rubrics here.

<http://www.uen.org/rubric/>

Teacher Vision: A comprehensive web site for educators that includes an area focused on special needs. Sign up for “Special Needs Monthly” - a free email newsletter that provides information on working with students who have exceptional needs.

<http://www.teachervision.com/>



Loydene Berg • Utah Personnel Development Center



“The best way to predict the future is to invent it.” This quote by John Sculley is powerful and can be applied to many aspects of life. It even applies to money matters. If we want to have a secure financial future, we must take steps today to “invent” that reality for times to come.

Simple Secret

Wise money management can be a problem for anyone at any income level. The simple key to successful financial management is to spend less than you earn.

Education is the gateway to increasing earning ability. If financial aid for education is needed, look into grants first. This is money that doesn't have to be paid back. The Internet is a great place to find these. There are many free listings. Be cautious of sites that require a fee. If you aren't eligible for grants, low interest student loans are available. Shop around. There are special loans for people pursuing more schooling in the field of education and some medical careers. These loans can essentially be worked off in lieu of paying them back. Check with the Financial Aid Office in the school you are planning to attend. They can get you started. Resist the urge to borrow more than you need. Know the deferment periods and be sure you make payments on time. A default on a student loan can cause financial headaches for years.

Making the Most of Your Money

Simple Secrets

Easier said than done, right? Maybe, but if we really want financial security, we have to find a way.

Eliminate Debt

The first step is to eliminate debt. If you don't have much debt currently, congratulations! Keep up the good work! Debt is a ruthless taskmaster. Get rid of it. Cut up credit cards. Pay off and cancel any department store cards/accounts and the like. It is probably wise, in today's world, to keep one major credit card for emergencies or reimbursable work expenses. Get one with as low a credit limit as is reasonable for your circumstances. Don't be tempted by cards with high credit limits. If you can't afford to pay the entire balance off each month under normal circumstances, the credit limit is probably too high. If you can't pay off the entire balance, at least pay more than the minimum amount due. Another tip for debt elimination is as you pay off one card or account balance take the money from that payment and apply it to another balance to reduce debt more quickly. Then, when you have paid off your debts, begin saving that money. You have been living without it anyway. Use it to pay yourself.

Secondly, don't buy things until you can pay cash for them. In most cases, the only exceptions to this rule are a home, a car, and education. Reasonable indebtedness is acceptable in these instances, but even here caution is required. Avoid buying more home than you can reasonably afford. Housing costs including mortgage, taxes, insurance should generally be no more than 25% -28% of your income. Lenders are often anxious to loan more and each situation is different, but be careful as you determine how much house you really need and can afford.

Buy a reliable car that meets your travel and space needs. Most of the time you don't really need all the “extras”. If money is tight, carefully determine what is a need and what options would be considered luxuries on your budget. Remember the cheapest car is not always the best buy. Do some research to find out what car will give you the best value for the money. Remember to consider fuel, insurance, maintenance and repair costs as well. Some cars are more expensive with regard to these areas.

Reduce Spending

The best tip for reducing unnecessary spending is to take care of yourself physically and emotionally. It seems too simple, doesn't it? Interesting studies have been conducted that show people who go shopping when they are tired, sick, or stressed spend more money through impulse buying. Tired or stressed people eat out or order take out food more often. This can really add up. Other great tidbits of advice are to stay away from stores when hungry and leave the kids at home. Another wise suggestion is to create meal menus and shopping lists then stick to them.

Save

Another great quote is, “Wealth is created not by how much you earn, but by how much you save.” Always pay yourself first. It has been suggested that you pay yourself at least 10% of your income each month. If your budget is too tight for that right now, at least save something, even if it is \$10.00 per month. This will help you get in the habit and moving in the right direction. As you get debts paid off and employ other money saving techniques, save more. Don't touch your savings unless you absolutely have to. Setting up an automatic deposit for savings dollars is an easy way to help you discipline yourself to save.

The Key

The thread running through all of this is the ability to determine needs from wants. As those who have “several” years of life experience will attest, the trick is having the self-discipline to put off wants until you can actually afford them. We welcome any money management ideas you have. E-mail ideas to: DianeJo@ulrc.org.

Helpful Internet resources:

ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Bonehead_Finance

www.betterbudgeting.com

www.thedollarstretcher.com

www.frugalconer.com

Popular Budgeting Software: Quicken by Intuit and Microsoft Money. ■

Art Access/VSA Arts of Utah To Reward Special Education Teachers

Art Access/VSA arts of Utah, with support from the State Office of Education: Special Education Unit, is pleased to announce the availability of six Educator Incentive Awards, each in the amount of \$400. These awards are intended to reward educators who develop innovative ways to implement and adapt the State Office of Education Art Core Curriculum in order to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Application Deadline: February 1, 2003.

To apply for an Educator Incentive Award, teachers submit a one-page application form with a short written proposal. Teachers receiving an award will be required to document their work and provide evidence of how they shared their newly developed art lesson plans, curriculum, or project with other educators. One copy of the adapted art lessons, such as lesson plans, curriculum, or details of the art project developed, will be given to Art Access/VSA arts of Utah to place in the Teacher Resource Library at Art Access. These lesson plans are available to other special educators and artists.

To help get you thinking of what you may want to propose to work on for an award, here are the 2002 Educator Incentive Award Recipients and a synopsis of their projects:

Mrs. Cynthia Feenstra

Northridge High School Special Education, 10th Grade I.D. Unit

Quilt-making: By using traditional quilt-making techniques, students will learn to identify structure and function in art, discover the use of symbolism, and learn the history of quilt-making as an art form. Fine motor skills used in quilt stitching individual blocks will lead to group completion when all of the blocks are stitched together.

Mrs. Christina Johnson

Jordan Valley School Music Therapist, Special Education

Music/Movement: Write curriculum for the use of a "Big Foot" keyboard by physically and mentally impaired students. Students working on walking will gain self-confidence as sounds are made while walking from key to key. Students who are permanently

paralyzed can either lie on the keyboard or use their wheelchairs to make sounds. Several students can work together to play a song.

Mrs. Cheryl Lindsay

Provo Canyon School

Kaleidoscope: Working with youth-in-custody, construct kaleidoscopes to discuss color schemes and collage as well as geometric design. Reinforce the self-esteem gained in task-completion.

Mrs. Donna Murdock

Riley School 2nd Grade Classroom

Art Cabinet: Working with at-risk and special education students. Document the steps in setting up a basic art supply cabinet for classroom art projects and compile 2nd grade art curriculum.

Mrs. Lynnette Pond

Jewish Community Center Early Childhood Special Education Classroom

Music/Sound: Working with students whose diagnoses include Autism and Cerebral Palsy. Use music and sound to improve listening skills, tolerating and possibly enjoying novel or stimulating sounds and using rhythm to connect sounds and movement together to improve positive behavior and motor skills.

If you are interested in receiving an application for the 2003 Educator Incentive Awards, checking-out the above lesson plans, or receiving a copy of *The Sky Is Green:*

True Stories of Artists and Teachers of Children With Disabilities, which contains art project curriculum, please contact Art Access/VSA arts of Utah at (801) 328-0703 or visit us at the Art Access Gallery, 339 West Pierpont (240 South), Salt Lake City. ■



Julie Newland, Programming Coordinator • Art Access/VSA arts of Utah

Picks of the Month

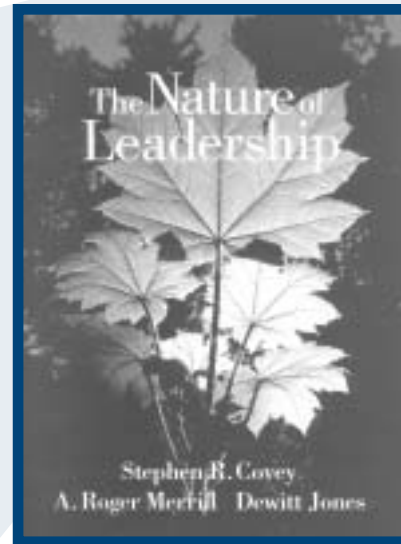
Book Review

By Cheryl Hostetter, UPDC

The Nature of Leadership

by Covey, Merrill & Jones

- **Audience:** Behavior, reading, etc.
All who are interested in leadership growth.
- **Who Would Benefit:**
EL, SLL, ELL, Teachers, Administrators, All.
- **Cost:** \$37.95
- **ISBN#:** 1-883219-90-6
- **Publisher/Source:**
Franklin Covey web site: www.franklincovey.com
- **Abstract:**
Based on the leadership principles taught by Franklin Covey, Inc. DeWitt Jones incorporates his beautiful photographs to illustrate and enhance the stories and examples of leaders from all walks of life.
- **Evaluation or Critique:**
Since the UPDC started using videos produced by DeWitt Jones to illustrate specific concepts for training, there has been a huge demand for his work. This book is another example of the profound personal and professional impact a picture can have on an individual. Covey's principles are simple and timeless and need to be revisited often. This book not only affects the intellect but also the soul. ■



"One Person Can Make A Difference, Be The One!"

Announcing The 8th Annual Utah Paraeducator Conference

**November 22nd & 23rd, 2002
Ogden Egyptian Center
2415 Washington Blvd., Ogden, Utah**

**Three pre-sessions will be held
Friday Evening from 4:00-5:30 p.m.**

**Registration Fee:
Paraeducators - \$35.00
Paraeducator/Teacher Team - \$45.00**

**On-Site Registration will be an
additional \$10.00**

**Utah State University Credit and
Relicensure Points will be available.**

More information will be forthcoming

**On-site Registration will begin at
3:00 p.m. on Friday, November 22nd
and 7:30 a.m. on Saturday, November 23rd**

**If you have any questions, contact
Marilyn Likins at 801-599-8708**

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Service Directory.....

Utah State Office of Education

Special Education Services

- Karl Wilson • Director of Special Education538-7711 • kawilson@usoe.k12.ut.us
- Nan Gray • Coordinator of Special Education.....538-7757 • ngray@usoe.k12.ut.us
- Pat Beckman • Specialist, Access to the General Curriculum.....538-7716 • pbeckman@usoe.k12.ut.us
- Brenda Broadbent • Specialist, State and Federal Compliance, Preschool.538-7708 • bbroadbe@usoe.k12.ut.us
- Karen Kowalski • Specialist, Emotional Disturbance/Mental Health538-7568 • kkowalsk@usoe.k12.ut.us
- Susan Loving • Specialist, Transition.....538-7645 • sloving@usoe.k12.ut.us
- Cal Newbold • Specialist, Fiscal and Data Issues, Charter Schools.....538-7724 • cnewbold@usoe.k12.ut.us
- Bruce Schroeder • Specialist, Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD)
.....538-7580 • bschroed@usoe.k12.ut.us
- Jocelyn Taylor • Specialist, OHI, TBI, Autism538-7726 • jtaylor@usoe.k12.ut.us
- Tom Burchett • Specialist, Assesment, Finance538-7639 • tburchet@usoe.k12.ut.us
- Cheralyn Creer • Specialist, Severe Disabilities, Deaf/Blind.....538-7576 • ccreer@usoe.k12.ut.us

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- Jim Curtice.....jimc@ulrc.org
- Ginny Eggen.....ginnye@ulrc.org
- Michael Herbert.....michaelh@ulrc.org
- Cheryl Hostetter.....cherylh@ulrc.org
- Loydene Hubbard Berg.....loydeneb@ulrc.org
- Diane Johnson.....dianejo@ulrc.org
- Terri Mitchell.....terrim@ulrc.org
- Connie Nink.....connien@ulrc.org
- Hollie Pettersson.....hollipe@ulrc.org

Utah SIGNAL Project

2290 East 4500 South #265, Salt Lake City, Utah 84117 • 272-3431 or 800-662-6624

- Bruce Schroeder, Project Director.....bruces@utahsignal.org
- Monica Ferguson.....monicaf@utahsignal.org
- Dan Morgan.....danm@utahsignal.org
- Sharon Neyme.....sharonne@utahsignal.org

Utah Parent Center

2290 East 4500 South, #110, Salt Lake City, Utah 84117 • 272-1051

- Helen Post, Director.....upc@inconnect.com

On The Back Cover:

Track 17 Mentors at Utah Mentor Teacher Academy collaborate on a new advertising campaign to recruit Mentor Teachers for their district.

Utah Professional Development

Calendar 2002-2003*

November 2002

- 1 Consortium, Larry H. Miller Entrepreneurship Training Center, 9750 S 300 W, Sandy, UT. Contact UPDC, 801-272-3431 or 800-662-6624.
- 8 Behavior Elementary Model Site Training Follow-Up, Valley View, Weber School District. Contact Hollie Pettersson 801-272-3431.
- 14-15 Foundations of Autism. Contact Jocelyn Taylor, 801-538-7726.
- 15 Behavior Elementary Model Site Training Follow-Up, Edgemont Elementary, Jordan District. Contact Hollie Pettersson 801-272-3431.
- 21-22 Utah Mentor Academy, Provo Marriott, Provo. Contact Jim Curtice, 801-272-3431 or 800-662-6624
- 22 Transition Round Table. Carbon School District. Contact Susan Loving 801-538-7645.
- 22-23 8th Annual Paraeducator Conference. Ogden Egyptian Center, Ogden, UT. Contact Marilyn Likins, 801-273-1843.

December 2002

- 2 PECS Training, West Coast Hotel, Salt Lake City. Contact Jocelyn Taylor, 538-7726.
- 3 Transition Round Table. Iron County School District. Susan Loving 801-538-7645.
- 5-8 DEC National Conference, New York
Contact Barbara at 303-556-3328 or view online at DEC Conferences.(www.dec-sped.org/conference.html)
- 6 Behavior Elementary Model Site Training Follow-Up, Valley View, Weber School District. Contact Hollie Pettersson 801-272-3431.
- 10 Transition Round Table. Utah State Office of Education, Susan Loving 801-538-7645.
- 11-14 2002 TASH Conference, Sheraton Boston & Hynes Conference Center, Boston, MA. .Contact www.tash.org
- 13 Consortium , Larry H. Miller Entrepreneurship Training Center, 9750 S 300 W, Sandy, UT. Contact UPDC, 801-272-3431 or 800-662-6624.
- 18 The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and Section 504, Radisson Inn Airport, 2177 West North Temple, Salt Lake City. Contact www.lorman.com

2003

January 2003

- 8 Behavior Institute. Location to be announced. Contact Hollie Pettersson 801-272-3431.
- 14-15 TEACCH with Roger Cox. Contact Jocelyn Taylor, 801-538-7726.
- 16-17 Utah Mentor Conference, Provo Marriott, Provo, Utah, Contact UPDC, 801-272-3431 or 800-662-6624.

February 2003

- 7 Consortium, Larry H. Miller Entrepreneurship Training Center, 9750 S 300 W, Sandy, UT. Contact UPDC, 801-272-3431 or 800-662-6624.
- 20-21 Utah Mentor Teacher Academy, Provo Marriott, Provo. Contact Jim Curtice, 801-272-3431 or 800-662-6624.
- 20-21 UAAACT Conference. Ogden Marriott Hotel, Ogden, UT. Contact Jocelyn Taylor 801-538-7726
- 26 Behavior Institute. Location to be announced. Contact Hollie Pettersson 801-272-3431.

March 2003

- 13-14 Utah Mentor Teacher Academy, Provo Marriott, Provo. Contact Jim Curtice, 801-272-3431 or 800-662-6624.
- 20-21 National ACRES Conference. Contact Sharon Neyme, 801-272-3431 or 800-662-6624
- 27-28 English Language Learners Conference. Location to be announced. Contact Jocelyn Taylor 801-538-7726.

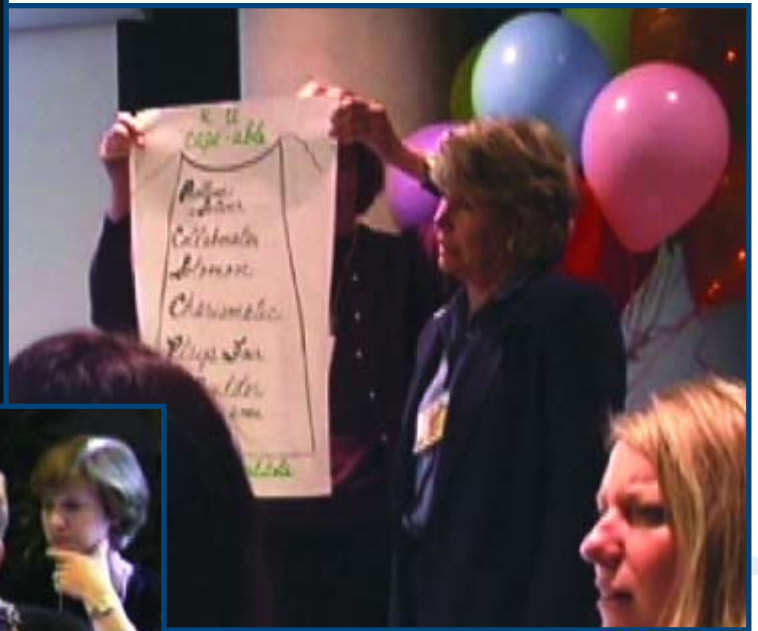
April 2003

- 2 PECS Training, Washington District Office, St. George. Contact Jocelyn Taylor, 538-7726.
- 9-13 National CEC Conference, Seattle, Washington.,
- 14-19 SARS Week in St. George (?)
- 24-25 Utah Mentor Teacher Academy, Provo Marriott, Provo. Contact Jim Curtice, 801-272-3431 or 800-662-6624
- 30 Behavior Institute. Location to be announced. Contact Hollie Pettersson 801-272-3431.

May 2003

- 9 Consortium, Larry H. Miller Entrepreneurship Training Center, 9750 S 300 W, Sandy, UT. Contact UPDC, 801-272-3431 or 800-662-6624.

*This information is provided as a service. We believe it to be accurate, but it is important to confirm with the contact listed. To obtain additional information and to supply important upcoming dates, please contact us at the number below. Current information is also available at the ULRC web site www.ulrc.org



Stories from the road! (See Page 42)

**Utah Personnel Development Center
2290 East 4500 South
Suite 220
Salt Lake City, UT 84117-3431**

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

