

MESSAGE TO TEACHER ASSISTANTS FROM THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

I am privileged to address you on behalf of the Saskatoon Catholic School Division and its administration.

We are called, in Catholic education, to servant leadership. In my view, teacher assistants are among the most visible models of servant leadership. Your faithfulness to the mandate of Catholic education is evidenced in your work with the students with special needs in our schools.

I humbly thank you for your service to our children. As you strive to meet the many challenges of education, remember that Jesus Christ also chose to be present to all.

God Bless,

Jerry Zimmer
Director of Education

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1. SYSTEM PHILOSOPHY

1.1 **Mission Statement and Educational Commitment.**

Please see the included copy of the Saskatoon Catholic School Division's **Mission Statement and Educational Commitment**. Education within Saskatoon Catholic Schools is based upon the principles and teachings of the Catholic Church. It is from these teachings that we model our educational principles and practice of inclusion.

The Mission Statement and the Educational Commitments were developed through a process involving parents, pastors, staff members and others. The purpose of these statements is to emphasize the distinctiveness of Catholic schools, to reinforce the religious dimension of Catholic education, and to stress the importance of serving students' needs in society today.

MISSION STATEMENT

Education in the Catholic tradition is the lifelong process of seeking and coming to know God in the fullness of creation.

The purpose of the Saskatoon Catholic Board of Education is to assist parents and the local Church community in the formation of students in heart, mind, body, and spirit.

Catholic schools strive to provide an atmosphere of love in which students are inspired by hope in Jesus Christ and have their faith strengthened through the power of the Holy Spirit.

"I pray that your inward eyes may be illumined; so that you may know what is the hope to which God calls you."

Ephesians 1:18

EDUCATION COMMITMENT

Catholic schools are distinctive because they draw their inspiration and strength from the gospel of Jesus Christ. The educational commitment of the Board is based on the following principles:

1. COMMUNITIES OF LOVE AND FREEDOM

Catholic schools are to be communities of love, freedom, and service which seek:

- * to exercise the freedom to proclaim and to live the Gospel,
- * to welcome each student,
- * to foster good human relationships,
- * to encourage an active partnership with the local Catholic Church,
- * to assist parents in their Christian responsibility as primary educators of their children,
- * to provide an identifiable Catholic environment.

2. CENTRES OF HOPE AND GROWTH

Catholic schools are to inspire hope by encouraging the growth and affirming the worth of each person:

- * to be attentive to the specific needs of each student,
- * to respect the dignity of each person and to acknowledge the right to education,
- * to offer formation based on the values of Catholic education,
- * to make the school a place of evangelization and pastoral action,
- * to encourage the development of each person's God-given talents,
- * to provide opportunities for spiritual growth through prayer, the sacraments, scriptural study, service and celebration.

3. SPECIAL PLACES OF FAITH AND LEARNING

Catholic schools are to celebrate learning illuminated by faith and informed by Christian wisdom:

- * to help students seek truth as critical learners and to become active in their own education,
- * to recognize the inter-relationship of all knowledge in a world created by a loving God,
- * to enable students to interpret the natural world and human responsibility within it,
- * to encourage harmony of science and technology with God and society,
- * to foster the creative potential of each student,
- * to understand language and to acquire knowledge of human culture.

4. PEOPLE OF JUSTICE

Catholic schools are to assist students to interpret social and human relationships in the light of the social teachings of the Church:

- * to instill love for, and fidelity to, the Catholic Church,
- * to develop understanding and respect for other religious traditions,
- * to inspire students to welcome human life with love from its earliest beginnings to its natural end,
- * to practice stewardship and respect for all of God's creation,
- * to promote peace through equity, just laws, respect for Canada, and global interdependence,
- * to enable students to integrate faith, morality, and culture in their lives.

5. CHRISTIANS OF COMMITMENT

Catholic schools are to encourage the spiritual growth of staff members and foster the gift of eternal spiritual youth. The Board is dedicated:

- * to support staff members as witnesses of their faith to students, each other, and the community,
- * to provide opportunities for each staff member to grow in awareness of the calling to serve,
- * to support staff members and their families in sadness and in joy.

1.2 **Saskatoon Catholic Schools Practice of Inclusion**

1.2.1 Basic Philosophy

The basic philosophy is to provide a quality of life experience that is typically provided for all students in our school division. This is achieved through access to the environments and opportunities that are generally available to all students. A range of placement and program options are provided to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities, including intellectual and/or multiple disabilities. Particular emphasis is placed on maintaining students, regardless of disabling condition, in a regular classroom, with age appropriate peers. It is this experience that is most typical for school aged students in our culture.

1.2.2 Rationale for Inclusion

a) Social and Moral Preparation

If students are to learn the social and moral behavior that is typical of their age group, they have to actively experience that behavior in social contexts that are real and typical. These experiences must take place over a long period of time.

b) Language Development and Cognitive Development

- 1) Language is best developed in situations that are spontaneous and natural, and in which the learner has an opportunity to be an active participant. Appropriate modeling within social contexts is a critical element. This situation is best provided in an inclusive setting.
- 2) Cognitive development is closely associated with language development. Moreover, cognitive development is best fostered within situations and contexts that are stimulating, challenging and natural.

c) Academic Development

Functional academics are learned equally as well within integrated settings as they are in segregated settings, if proper support is provided. It is well documented that most of what students learn through direct teaching is consolidated through social interaction with their peers.

d) School Division Practice

It is the practice of the Saskatoon Catholic School Division that parents/guardians are involved in the placement of their child.

e) Basic Human Needs and Values

Inclusion also provides for the needs and values of all people as “persons”. All people share the same universal need for love and belonging, fun, freedom, and power over one’s own life. All people value the opportunity to:

- i) grow and develop
- ii) build self respect
- iii) feel a sense of belonging
- iv) be a part of a community
- v) have relationships and mutual support
- vi) make decisions and choices
- vii) take risks and make mistakes
- viii) see themselves and be seen by others as unique and valued.

f) Benefits to Students without Disabilities

Being educated along with students with disabilities, can provide valuable social, emotional and personal perspectives for non-disabled students. The inclusion of students with disabilities can provide excellent training for typical students as future leaders, parents, and teachers.

g) Best Practices as Suggested by Research

- i) Chronological Age Placement
- ii) Social Integration
- iii) Functional Curricula
- iv) Systematic Instruction
- v) Community Based Training
- vi) Parental Involvement
- vii) Integrated Service Delivery
- viii) Transition Planning
- ix) Systematic Program Evaluation

Please refer to Appendix A for an expanded explanation of each Best Practice.

1.2.3 What Are We Trying to Achieve?

a) Community

Saskatoon Catholic Schools are an extension of the Christian community of the parishes, in which all children belong.

b) Acceptance of Differences

It is our goal to develop in all our students an awareness, an acceptance and an appreciation of individual differences.

c) Equality of Benefit

Some students may require additional support services to actually benefit from the educational opportunities available. These support services may include consultation services, counseling, equipment and materials, human resources, and program options.

1.2.4 Program Placement

The initial placement of all students is a placement according to chronological age in the student's neighborhood school. Alternative placements are considered an exception and are carried out only after careful consideration. The parents are an integral part of this decision-making process. Should the student attend a school other than his/her neighborhood school, the student is registered in a chronologically age-appropriate regular classroom.

Students receive support through the Learning Assistance Teacher (LAT). The LAT works with the regular classroom teacher to develop the Personal Program Plan, to modify goals and objectives, to assist in adapting instructional strategies, and to provide instruction through individual or small group tutorial.

1.2.5 Eligibility

All students are eligible to register in their neighborhood school. Registrants for the preschool program at St. Augustine must meet designation criteria established by Saskatchewan Education.

1.3 **Safe Positive Schools**

The Saskatoon Catholic Board of Education has developed principles and guidelines regarding the expectation that all Saskatoon Catholic Schools are safe, positive Christian communities. Based on the importance of a positive relationship among parents, staff and students, the guidelines present expectations and responsibilities for the personal and social growth of all students. Please refer to the following **Safe, Positive Schools; Code of Conduct**.

SAFE POSITIVE SCHOOLS - CODE OF CONDUCT

This code of conduct is significant for Saskatoon Catholic Schools for two very important reasons. First, the code expresses clearly the expectations for the personal and social growth of all students. It is a responsibility of Catholic Schools to assist parents and students in developing appropriate forms of personal relationships which they will need in school and in their adult life. Indeed, the focus on respect as the basic expectation for all, makes the Code of Conduct an expression of the religious dimension of our schools.

Second, the development of this code is an example of the most preferred type of partnership among students, staff and parents. The cooperative manner in which the document was developed will give it strength and acceptability in schools, in homes, and in the community. Acknowledgement is given to the creative and sustained leadership of school principals. They saw the need to ensure safe, positive schools and they responded to the need.

The code of conduct emphasizes the importance of an on-going positive relationship among parents, staff and students.

INTRODUCTION

During the 1995/96 school year, the Catholic Board of Education approved a broadly-based consultative process conducted by the Catholic Schools Principals' Association. This process was designed to solicit input and promote dialogue on the theme of developing safe, positive schools. Consultations were conducted during a twelve month period and directly involved over 1000 staff members, parents, and students.

One of the recommendations from the consultation stressed the importance of Saskatoon Catholic Schools developing a school division code of conduct for students. This code would form the basis for school codes of conduct to be communicated to parents and students.

It is envisioned that all parents and students will become aware of this code and that a more specific code will be developed for each Catholic School.

The code is intended to express the expectation that Saskatoon Catholic Schools are safe, positive Christian communities.

THE MISSION STATEMENT AND STUDENT CONDUCT

The Mission Statement commits the Saskatoon Catholic Board of Education to the following principles:

- * Catholic schools are to be communities of love, freedom, and service.
- * Catholic schools are to inspire hope by encouraging the growth and affirming the worth of each person.
- * Catholic schools are to celebrate learning illuminated by faith and informed by Christian wisdom.
- * Catholic schools are to assist students to interpret social and human relationships in the light of the social teachings of the church.
- * Catholic schools are to encourage the spiritual growth of staff members and foster the gift of eternal spiritual youth.

These principles express the vision of Saskatoon Catholic Schools and provide the framework for all policy and practices.

THE SASKATOON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS CODE OF CONDUCT

A Code of Conduct defines the values and vision of the school division in which all relationships are conducted in a respectful and dignified manner. Catholic Schools share with parents the responsibility to develop students' personal and social skills to achieve this vision; consequently,

- * *each person within a school has the right to feel emotionally and physically safe,*
- * *each person has the responsibility to contribute to a safe, positive learning environment,*
- * *each school community has the responsibility to establish a process for developing a school code of conduct.*

EXPECTATIONS

The Saskatoon Catholic Board of Education has the following expectations:

For Students

- * to attend school regularly and conform to the rules of the school,
- * to participate willingly in their learning,
- * to respect others' safety, well being, and property,
- * to be accountable for their behaviour and responsive to reasonable, related, and respectful consequences,
- * to participate in creating a safe, positive environment conducive to learning,
- * to be involved in developing a school code of conduct.

For School Staff

- * to participate in creating a safe, positive environment conducive to learning,
- * to be involved in developing a school code of conduct,
- * to involve their students in developing classroom discipline practices which utilize reasonable, related, and respectful consequences,
- * to model, teach and reinforce appropriate behaviour.

For Parents/Guardians

- * to support their child(ren) in regular and punctual attendance at school,
- * to participate in creating a safe, positive, learning environment at their school,
- * to work and cooperate with the school to resolve concerns involving their child(ren).

STUDENT DISCIPLINE AS A BASIS FOR THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Catholic education is based on the principle of self-discipline. This principle includes exercising good judgement and Christian understanding in personal and social relationships. Saskatoon Catholic Schools support the following as guidelines in the development of a Code of Conduct for each school:

- * Discipline is a set of skills that allows for effective learning; discipline is not punishment.
- * Discipline enhances self-knowledge, self-esteem, and self-confidence.
- * Discipline is part of the total teaching-learning process which promotes the development of integrity, accountability, personal ethics and self-management.
- * Discipline recognizes and respects cultural diversity and individual differences.
- * Discipline policies adhere to generally accepted principles of fairness and equity.
- * Discipline policies guide intervention strategies for students.
- * Discipline policies are dynamic and flexible.

DEVELOPING A SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT

The Saskatoon Catholic Board of Education encourages that each school establish a school code of conduct. This should be done through a consultative process which engages parents, students, and staff in establishing behavioural expectations for students.

The following process is suggested for developing a school code of conduct:

1. Clarifying the Purpose

A school code of conduct becomes the standard against which students' behaviour, school and classroom rules and procedures are evaluated.

2. Developing the Code

School staffs need to work in partnership with parents/guardians in establishing appropriate limits for students and in developing consequences that are **reasonable, related, and respectful**.

The following steps are suggested to guide the development of a code:

- * form a school code of conduct committee involving the school community,
- * establish basic operating principles consistent with the school vision and mission,
- * discuss the operating principles with the larger school community,
- * select the operating principles for the code of conduct based on the expectations expressed by staff, parents and students.

3. Teaching the Code

School staff must make clear the expectations of the code.

- * Discuss with students appropriate and inappropriate behaviours,
- * Clarify student understanding of identified behaviours,
- * Include parents in teaching the code,
- * Establish a minimum number of rules,
- * Establish reasonable, related and respectful consequences.

4. Expressing and Reinforcing the Code

The entire school community shares in reinforcing the code and therefore must be made aware of the expectations expressed in the code. The following will help with this responsibility:

- * Publicize the code to all students and families,
- * Model the code in relationships at school,
- * Acknowledge and reinforce students following the code,
- * Review and refine the code on a regular basis.

5. Enforcing the Code

Parents and students must understand the expectations and the consequences when a student chooses to exceed established limits of behaviour. The following will assist in enforcing the code:

- * Check for understanding,
- * Problem-solve when disagreements occur,
- * Consult with parents.

Consequences may include:

- * discussing, problem solving, reviewing, counselling,
- * loss of privileges, detention, reprimand, action plan,
- * removal from class, suspension, expulsion,
- * referral to Student Services,
- * restitution, community services,
- * alternative programming, alternative placement,
- * referral to community agencies.

When a principal suspends a student, the principal will follow appropriate School Division policies and legislation. A student may be suspended for such behaviour as:

- * intimidation, harassment, or behaviour that threatens the safety of students or staff,
- * possession of illegal drugs or alcohol,
- * theft or damage to school or others' property,
- * overt opposition to authority.

CONCLUSION

This code of conduct is intended to assist students, staffs and parents/guardians in establishing appropriate expectations for personal and social conduct. This will happen if all individuals accept personal responsibility for their attitudes and actions. In Catholic Schools this intention is guided by the gospel message which forms part of the Mission Statement:

“I pray that your inward eyes may be illumined; so that you may know what is the hope to which God calls you.”

Ephesians 1:18

2. THE TEACHER ASSISTANT POSITION

2.1 Under the supervision of the school Principal, the Teacher Assistant is assigned to the Classroom Teacher(s) to assist with the inclusion of a student, or students, with special needs in typical school, classroom, and community activities. It is very common to have more than one student with special needs in a particular school. In such cases the programming is coordinated through the Learning Assistance program under the direction of the Learning Assistance Teacher. Teacher Assistants are assigned to work with more than one teacher and, therefore, more than one student. Typically, the Classroom Teacher(s) collaborates with the Learning Assistance Teacher to develop an individual program for the student(s) with special needs. The precise role of the Teacher Assistant within each student's development is part of that collaboration. The daily specifics of each Teacher Assistant assignment is at the discretion of the Principal or a person designated by the Principal.

2.2 **Role Communication**

It is important that all members of the instructional team have a clear understanding of their respective roles within the inclusion process. Please refer to the following **Roles Within Inclusion** for a description of the Learning Assistance Teacher's, the Classroom Teacher's, and the Principal's role.

2.2.1 **Roles Within Inclusion**

i) Learning Assistance Teachers (LAT)

- coordinate the Learning Assistance program;
- communicate directly with parents regarding student development;
- coordinate the development of the Personal Program Plans (P3);
- conduct the actual writing of the P3;
- coordinate modifications to classroom program. This may include:
 - a) direct application of modifications and
 - b) monitoring those made by the Teacher Assistant (TA);
- provide support to the classroom teacher through sharing expertise, team teaching, etc.;
- provide individual tutorial instruction for students with special needs;
- coordinate Work Education/Community Experience;
- liaise with outside agencies;
- coordinate collaboration with the instructional team;
- conduct positive public relations on behalf of the school system;
- initiate and coordinate transition planning.

ii) Classroom Teacher

- accept students with disabilities as equal members of the class;
- collaborate regarding P3 development;
- be aware of overall goals for students with special needs as stated in the P3;
- dialogue with LAT and TA regarding course outline and activities for future lessons;
- develop modifications where reasonable and monitor those made by the Teacher Assistants;
- collaborate with the instructional team regarding student evaluation. The evaluation is to be:
 - based on the individual goals established in the P3;
 - structured by the LAT; and
 - subjective in nature
- communicate with parents regarding student development;
- be an integral part of on-going collaboration within the instructional team.

iii) Principal

- supervise the total "Inclusion" process;
- designate the roles and responsibilities within the "Inclusion" process.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TEACHER ASSISTANT

3.1 Job Function

Teacher Assistants work under the direction and guidance of professional staff.

3.1.1 Part of a Collaborative Team

The Teacher Assistant works within a cooperative, collaborative “team” concept under the direction and guidance of professional staff. The Teacher Assistant is an integral part of the school based team.

3.1.2 Reinforcement of Skills

The Teacher Assistant is directly responsible to the professional staff to reinforce the skills taught by the teacher and the overall objectives stated in the students’ Personal Program Plan. This includes input regarding student Personal Program Plans and student evaluation. Teacher Assistants implement lesson plans and make adaptations to regular classroom lesson plans developed by professional staff.

3.1.3 Behavior Management

The Teacher Assistant assists the professional staff with behavior intervention strategies.

3.1.4 Personal Care of Student

The Teacher Assistant assists the professional staff by facilitating personal care for students with special needs when required. This includes toileting, medication, personal hygiene, and dressing. All personal care of students is to be carried out in accordance with the guidelines suggested in the **Student Health and Safety Policies**.

Please refer to Appendix B for the complete Student Health and Safety Policies.

3.1.5 Community Experience

The Teacher Assistant assists the professional staff by facilitating community experience for students with special needs when required. This includes field trips, work education, and life skills development.

If a student is injured during a community experience, the Teacher Assistant is not held liable. All liability is covered by the Saskatoon Catholic School System through insurance policies.

Although the Teacher Assistant is required to accompany students for community experience, the Teacher Assistant is not required to transport the student in a (the Teacher Assistant's) personal vehicle. The Teacher Assistant may use a personal vehicle if he or she wishes to (by mutual consent), and would be compensated on a per kilometer payment. Before agreeing to use a personal vehicle the Teacher Assistant is to be informed of the personal implications for insurance policies.

3.1.6 Communication

Communication between home and school is the direct responsibility of the professional staff. The Teacher Assistant assists in this process by providing information to the professional staff.

Communication among the members of the instructional team is also a concern. It is essential that there be a clear understanding of the Teacher Assistant's specific role within team communication. The school team must determine the specific tasks for which the Teacher Assistant will be responsible. It is essential that the Teacher Assistant understand the lines of authority within the school and the person to whom he/she is responsible.

3.2 Role of the Teacher Assistant

Various factors influence the specific responsibilities assigned to Teacher Assistants. These include the characteristics and personalities of teachers, Teacher Assistants and students, the interpersonal skills of teachers and Teacher Assistants, the skill level of the Teacher Assistants, and the physical environment of the classroom. Individual teachers may vary the responsibilities of the Teacher Assistant to enhance the program. The following list illustrates duties which could be assigned to the Teacher Assistant:

- Assist individual students in performing activities initiated by the teacher.
- Supervise children in the hallway, lunchroom, and playground.
- Assist in monitoring supplementary work and independent study.
- Reinforce learning in small groups or with individuals, while the teacher works with other students.
- Provide assistance with individualized program materials.
- Assist the teacher in observing, recording, and charting behaviour.

- Assist the teacher with crisis problems and behavior management.
- Assist in preparation/production of instructional materials and modifications.
- Carry out instructional programs designed by the teacher.
- Work with the teacher to develop classroom schedules.
- Carry out tutoring activities designed by the teacher.
- Assist the classroom teacher to involve the student with special needs in classroom and extra-curricular activities.
- Assist in the observation and assessment of students as requested by the teacher/supervisor.
- Maintain records relative to specific programming and student performance as requested by teacher/supervisor.
- Assist in related duties which may be assigned because of specific needs (the maintenance and/or preparation of instructional and life skills materials, for example).
- Participate in parent-teacher conferences and assist with parent communication on request.
- Supervise and/or participate with students in community-based programming when requested.
- Assist the teacher to provide program adjustments that are suitable to the student's behavioral and emotional make-up.
- Assist the teacher(s) in following tasks of effective behavioral management.
- Perform occupational and physio-therapy exercises under the direction of professional staff.
- Assist with student dressing and feeding.
- Assist with sensory integration programming as outlined by the teacher.
- Administer medication and chart its distribution.
- Assist with toileting and toilet training programs.
- Assist with a student's daily hygiene.
- Work directly with students in different settings where a teacher is not available at the site (work experience placement, for example).
- Support students in their participation in activities in the community.
- Support and train students in work placements.
- Reinforce social and personal skills to ensure the successful inclusion of the student with special needs.
- Attend professional development programs related to needs of students in the program.
- Assist with communication development, under the direction of the teacher and/or Speech and Language Pathologist.

Instructional duties the Teacher Assistant **should not perform:**

1. Be solely responsible for a classroom or a professional service.
2. Be responsible for the diagnostic functions of the classroom.
3. Be responsible for preparing lesson plans and initiating instruction.
4. Be responsible for assigning grades to students.
5. Be used as a substitute for certified teachers unless he or she possesses the appropriate teacher certificate and is hired as a substitute. The Teacher Assistant may be left alone in the classroom for short periods of time when the teacher is called away. The teacher, however, continues to maintain responsibility for the classroom.
6. Assume full responsibility for supervising assemblies or field trips.

Non-Instructional duties the Teacher Assistant **should not perform:**

1. Assume full responsibility for supervising and planning activities.
2. Take children to clinic, dental, or medical appointments unless permission is granted by authorized personnel.
3. Prescribe new educational activities and materials for children.
4. Grade subjective or essay tests.
5. Regulate pupil behavior by corporal punishment or similar means.

To further assist with the clarity of understanding each Teacher Assistant's specific assignment, it is highly recommended that each instructional team complete the Teacher Assistant Role Perception Activity. Please see Appendix C.

3.3 Performance Expectations

3.3.1 Suggested Code of Conduct

- i) With regard to accepting responsibilities, the Teacher Assistant is advised to:
 - Engage only in non-instructional and instructional activities to which they are assigned. Some tasks require specific training. Before a Teacher Assistant is assigned to such tasks the specific training must be provided.
 - Communicate progress or concerns about students to parents only if directed to do so by the teacher(s) or supervisor.
 - Refer concerns expressed by parents, students, or others to teacher(s) or supervisor.

- Recognize that the supervisor has the ultimate responsibility for the instruction and behavior management of children and follow the directions prescribed by him/her.
- ii) With regard to relationships with student and parents the Teacher Assistant is advised to:
- Discuss a child's progress, limitations, and/or educational program only with the supervising teacher in the appropriate setting. If contacted directly by a parent the Teacher Assistant should refer the parent to the teacher or principal.
 - Discuss school problems and confidential matters only with appropriate personnel, and only when students are not present.
 - Refrain from engaging in discriminatory practices based on a student's handicap, race, sex, cultural background or religion.
 - Respect the dignity, privacy, and individuality of all students, parents, and staff members.
 - Present themselves as a positive adult role model.
- iii) With regard to relationships with teachers, the Teacher Assistant is advised to:
- Recognize the role of the teacher as supervisor.
 - Express differences of opinion only when students are not present.
 - Establish communication and a positive relationship with the teacher.
 - Discuss concerns about the teacher or teaching methods directly with the teacher.
 - Discuss concerns only with the teacher's supervisor if issues are not resolved.
 - Avoid discussing teacher problems with students, other teachers, Teacher Assistants or parents.
- iv) With regard to the relationship with the school, the Teacher Assistant is advised to:
- Accept a personal responsibility for continued skill improvement.
 - Become familiar with school policies and procedures.
 - Represent the school and its programs in a positive manner.
 - Utilize proper grievance procedures when problems cannot be resolved.

- Refrain from:
 - a) discussing school problems and confidential matters, including personalities, outside of school circles;
 - b) discussing administrative, interdepartmental and interschool problems in the presence of pupils; and
 - c) discussing problems with those who cannot assist in the solution.

3.3.2 Team Work

Teacher Assistants are allocated to schools or programs, not to students. While some Teacher Assistants may be scheduled to work with specific students, they are required to work where the school administrator(s), or his or her designate, assigns them. In school situations where there are particularly challenging students and more than one Teacher Assistant is assigned to a program, it is expected that they will share in the provision of services for each student.

The Teacher Assistant works as part of a collaborative team, and must accept the responsibility of a positive team member. All special education programming is developed by the classroom or Learning Assistance Teacher; however, parents, Teacher Assistants and other involved personnel shall be given the opportunity to have input into the program. Teacher Assistants are not to be responsible for devising or changing a program for students. They assist teachers in providing education service.

3.3.3 Student Self Concept

All students have one important common need, the need to earn approval and encouragement. It is necessary to establish educational programs in such a way that students may experience success at small, sequential tasks. In order that students recognize this growth, it is necessary that they be praised. As the student gains self-confidence, so will she/he gain as a learner.

It is often difficult for the teacher to notice the little successes of each student. The Teacher Assistant can provide an invaluable service by providing encouragement and praise, and reinforcing all learning.

3.3.4 Student Advocacy

“A little knowledge that acts is worth infinitely more than much knowledge that is idle”. Kahil Gibran

The Teacher Assistant should see herself/himself as an advocate for the rights of all students, and, in particular, those students with disabilities. The rights of all students should be promoted. All students have the right to an appropriate education and equality of benefit from the school division. All students have the right to a fair assessment. Students with disabilities have the right to Personal Program Plans and the right to an inclusive placement in school.

It is generally held that the ideal for each student is to be able to self-advocate and handle most life situations as independently as possible. Students with disabilities, however, may benefit from assistance as they try to become independent. Such help may come from persons (Teachers and Teacher Assistants, for example) who may act as advocates and speak out on their behalf.

Should a Teacher Assistant think that a particular student is being denied her/his due rights as a student in Saskatoon Catholic Schools, the Teacher Assistant should approach her/his supervisor in this regard.

3.3.5 Working with the Entire Staff

Although Teacher Assistants may work with only a few classroom teachers and students, they are encouraged to get to know the entire school staff. The Teacher Assistant is also encouraged to view the school staff as a larger unified team and to interact, at some point, with each staff member, if only informally through staff functions. There are many benefits to being part of a unified staff.

3.3.6 Working with Outside Agencies

Many students with special needs require the school to liaise with outside agencies (for example, The Alvin Buckwold Child Development Centre, The Royal University Hospital, Social Services, and Radius Tutoring among many others). Although the Teacher Assistant should be aware of which outside agencies are involved with their students, it is the Teacher's responsibility to make contact with the particular agency and conduct the formal communication.

3.3.7 Student Assessment

The formal assessment of each student is the responsibility of the teacher. It is often the Teacher Assistant who works most closely with the student with special needs, however, and the valuable knowledge gained through this relationship is invaluable. Teacher Assistants should, indeed, be part of the assessment process, and assist the teacher with gathering the necessary information. Each Teacher should discuss with his or her Teacher Assistants a plan for student assessment, and precisely how the data will be gathered. Please see Appendix D for possible assessment methods.

3.3.8 Behavior Management

Many students with special needs require an effective plan for behavior management. It is the Saskatoon Catholic School Division's practice that all behavior management be carried out in a non-aversive manner that respects the rights and personhood of the student. Formation of the behavior management plan is the responsibility of the classroom teacher. It is recommended that the behavior plan be formed through a collaborative problem solving process. All who are involved with the student's program should take part in developing the behavior plan. The Teacher Assistant, because of the usual close working relationship with his or her students, is usually in a position to offer valuable knowledge.

Once the behavior plan has been completed, it is the Teacher Assistant's responsibility to interact with students according to the process outlined in the behavior plan. All behavior plans should be given an appropriate chance to succeed. Deviation from the prescribed plan typically results in disjointed, inconsistent and, ultimately, ineffective behavior management.

It is to the Teacher Assistant's advantage to have formal training in non-aversive behavior management (Non Violent Crisis Intervention Training). The Saskatoon Catholic School Division regularly offers training in the principles and methods of non-aversive crisis management. This is a very practical and effective workshop, and highly recommended.

3.3.9 Liability

If a student is injured while under the care of a Teacher Assistant during an in-school or community experience, the Teacher Assistant will not be held liable for the injury. All liability is covered through the Saskatoon Catholic School Division's insurance policies.

3.3.10 Abuse

A close working and trust relationship often develops between a Teacher Assistant and student. Because of this trust a student may disclose information regarding abuse, sexual, physical, or otherwise. The Teacher Assistant should make herself/himself aware of the Abuse Protocol that is followed by employees of the Saskatoon Catholic School System. This protocol is available through the school Principal.

The Teacher Assistant should also take care to not place herself/himself in situations where she/he could be falsely accused of abuse. It is recommended that the Teacher Assistant discuss with her/his supervisor and, if necessary, the parents any concerns she/he has regarding this issue.

3.3.11 Student Independence

Teacher Assistants must guard against the tendency to perform tasks for the student that the student is able to do for herself/himself. It must be understood that independence is a necessary prerequisite to eventual self determination and self advocacy.

It is necessary to allow the student to persevere in a task if the student is to be successful and gain the self-esteem and feeling of independence which this success brings.

The student, however, must not be allowed to experience prolonged and repeated frustration. Should this happen, it may be necessary to look at partial participation, peer coaching or restructuring the task.

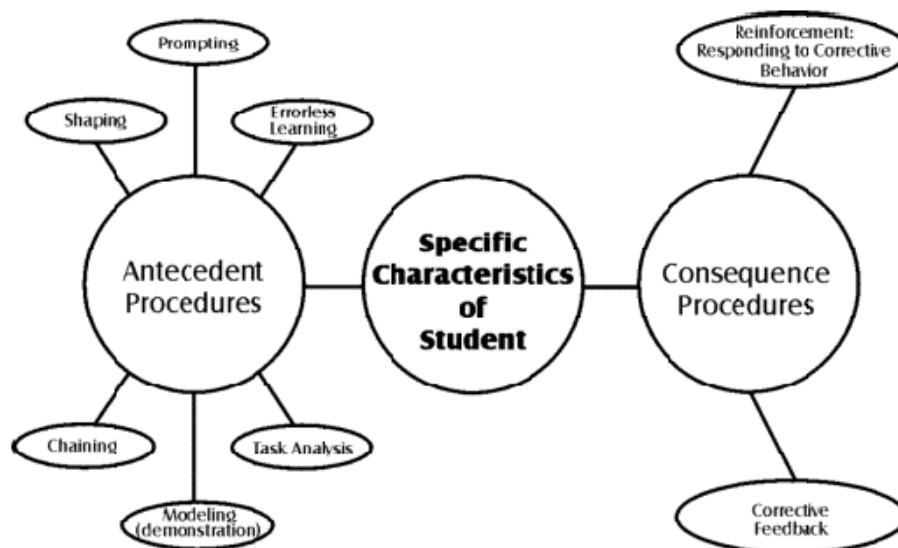
4. INSTRUCTION

4.1 Teaching the Student With Special Needs: Techniques for Direct Instruction

Often the student with special needs will respond to the teaching methods that are effective for students without disability. These methods include modelling, demonstrating, discussing and debating, practising, guided discovery, experiments, field trips, using technology, question and answer sessions, concrete manipulations, educational games, giving positive and negative examples, and individual and small group research.

If the student with special needs does not respond sufficiently to one or more of the above methods, the instructional team has to be prepared to accentuate instruction with specific techniques. These specific techniques can be organized into two broad categories; **1) antecedent procedures**, which are procedures that occur before the student responds, and are designed to increase the possibility that the desired response(s) will occur, and **2) consequence procedures**, which occur after the student responds and are designed to reinforce correct responses and/or to give corrective feedback to incorrect responses.

All instruction can be viewed as a form of stimulus control. Stimulus control occurs when a specific response consistently occurs after the presentation of a particular stimulus. In this manner, learning can be either promoted or discouraged.



4.1.1 Antecedent Procedures

The most commonly used instructional procedures that occur before the student responds include *prompting, shaping, modelling (demonstration) task analysis, chaining, and errorless learning*. Often a combination of these procedures is used.

i) Prompting

There are three basic types of prompting: a) *auditory prompting*, which includes verbal instructions and sound signals (eg., a timer buzzer or beeper), b) *visual prompting* (eg., gestures, demonstrations, hand signs, pictures, drawings, schedules, highlighted words, etc) and c) *physical prompting* (eg., lightly tapping a student's arm to gain attention, hand-over- hand guidance, manual assistance, etc.)

All
Prompts
are
Faded

The basic principle for prompting students is to *give as little assistance as possible*. Assistance is increased or decreased according to the need. The ultimate goal for all instruction is for the student to perform as independently as possible. It is important to remember that when a specific prompt is chosen for a student, *there should also be a plan for how the prompt will be gradually reduced*. This process is called *fading*.

Procedures
for
Prompting

Deciding on the prompts to use will depend on how the student best learns and on the demands of the given task. The general procedures for prompting usually include one or more of the following methods:

- increasing assistance

Also called *least prompts or least-to-most prompts*, the activity is begun with giving as little support as possible and increasing according to requirements.

- decreasing assistance

Also called *most-to-least prompts* the activity begins by giving as much information as possible and gradually decreasing as the activity proceeds

- graduated guidance

Graduated guidance involves adjusting the level of prompting from moment to moment according to the student's performance. There are four parts to this technique, a) *full guidance*, b) *partial guidance*, c) *shadowing* and d) *spatial fading*. All four steps can be used within a single activity.

With *full guidance*, the instructor's hands are in full contact with the student's throughout the exercise. *Partial guidance* involves the instructor's hands being in contact with the student's as much as needed. With *shadowing* the instructor's hands are placed within a one or two centimetre proximity of the student's. *Spatial fading* involves moving the physical contact from the hand to wrist, then gradually to the shoulder, to the back, then not at all.

The following are recommended procedures for using guidance:

- exert no more force than is needed to move the student's hand in a desired direction
- at the start of each trial, use the minimum force needed (a touch), building slowly until the student's hand starts moving
- decrease guidance when movement begins, continue decreasing as long as movement continues
- if movement stops, increase force gradually until it begins again
- if student resists or pulls away, apply just enough pressure to keep the hand motionless - when resistance ceases, gradually apply enough pressure to guide the hand
- provide verbal praise during guidance only when the student is actively participating, not when the student is resistant or passive
- follow the task through to completion, do not quit or interrupt before the final step
- use either shadowing or spatial fading once guidance has been reduced to a touch.

The
Importance
of
Time
Delay

It is also important that the student is given a specific amount of time to respond after a prompt is given. Providing a delay before giving a prompt gives the student an opportunity to form an independent response, and prevents the development of patterned responses.

The most commonly used methods of time delay are:

- constant time delay

During an activity the initial prompts are given at the same time as the material/concept to be taught is presented (0-second delay, also called *simultaneous prompting*). All other prompts are given at a predetermined delay interval (e.g., 5 seconds)

For example, a student is required to read the word 'Mom'. Initially, the student is shown a card on which 'Mom' is written. Simultaneous (0-second delay) to showing the student the card the instructor prompts the student by saying, "This word is 'Mom', say Mom". After a few trials the instructor shows the card then waits 5 seconds before giving the prompt.

- progressive time delay

During an activity the initial prompts are given at the same time as the material/concept to be taught (0-second delay). As the exercise progresses, the amount of time given to respond to the material/concept is gradually increased (e.g., gradual increments of 2 seconds).

ii) Shaping

Shaping involves accepting *approximations* of a desired response, ultimately leading the student closer and closer to the *complete desired response*. Shaping is a very widely used practice, and occurs across classrooms, grade levels and extra curricular activities. Accepting a student's initial mispronunciations of words that she/he is learning to speak ('ha', then 'hap', then 'happy'), accepting attempts to decode words as reading is being learned, accepting "invented spelling" that approximate correct spellings, and accepting attempts at motor planning tasks, are examples of shaping.

Although it is important to encourage attempts at tasks as the student works toward goals, it is crucial to the process of shaping that instructors are aware of the progress a student is making with each goal. It is important *not to reinforce earlier approximations*. For example, the student who has progressed to saying 'hap' should not be praised for saying 'ha'.

The possibility of student regression should be acknowledged, however. If after a time the student is not able to respond with a previously attained approximation it would be appropriate to reward a previous level. For example, after 3 days of not using 'hap', drop back to reinforcing 'ha'.

iii) Modelling (demonstration)

Modelling is when an instructor demonstrates the desired response for a student. It provides for the student a 'picture' of what the desired response looks like. Modelling can be used alone or with prompting.

The basic procedure for using modelling is:

- get the student's attention
- ask the student to demonstrate the desired behaviour
- if the student cannot perform the behaviour, model it
- give a controlled, clear presentation, teaching the strategy the student will be asked to use
- give explicit instructions for each step
- have the student try to imitate the model
- reinforce appropriate imitation (it need not be perfect)

Cognitive modelling is 'self-talk' paired with modelling. The basic process for cognitive modelling is:

- a) the instructor states the steps of a procedure/routine while modelling it
- b) the student and instructor then verbalize the steps as the student performs the routine with the instructor's assistance (verbal and physical prompting)
- c) the student goes through the routine saying the steps aloud while the instructor fades any verbal and/or physical prompts
- d) the student goes through the routine unassisted, whispering or repeating the steps inaudibly

iv) Task analysis

Task analysis is the process of breaking down a specific task into its individually sequenced component steps. Students with special needs often require numerous opportunities to learn a desired skill. Breaking down the steps into 'small skills' that are taught individually may be required. The 'smaller' tasks may then be more manageable.

v) Chaining

Chaining is often used in conjunction with task analysis. Chaining involves the sequential linking of the 'smaller tasks' identified in the task analysis, gradually building the competence to complete the entire task.

Forward chaining involves beginning with the first step of the analysed task and gradually learning each step, working forward towards the task completion.

Backward chaining involves learning the last step first, then the step prior to the last step, and so on. Each newly learned step is *completed in a forward sequence*. For example, in a 5 step process the student is initially taught step 5. When asked to perform the task the student is assisted through steps 1 to 4, and does step 5 independently. The student is then taught step 4. When asked to perform the task the student is assisted through steps 1 to 3, then does steps 4 and 5 independently.

Backward chaining is often the process of choice because it can provide the student with the feeling of *task completion*.

vi) Errorless learning

With errorless learning the student is presented with tasks that can be successfully completed, or guided through tasks by using sufficient prompts so that success can be achieved.

4.1.2 Consequence Procedures

The most commonly used instructional procedures that occur after the student responds include *reinforcement and corrective feedback*

i) Reinforcement: responding to correct behaviour

The
Purpose

The two most basic rules about reinforcement include **a)** behaviour that is followed by a pleasant experience is more likely to occur again, and **b)** behaviour that is followed by an unpleasant experience is less likely to occur again. With respect to systematic instruction, the purpose of reinforcement is to motivate and maintain desired responses by presenting a consequence (a response) that encourages and rewards the appropriate performance. If a student will work to attain a reinforcement and the desired response is maintained or increased because of it, then the reinforcement is considered effective.

When choosing a reinforcement procedure there are three critical points to consider: **a)** reinforcement is unique to the individual, what works for one student will not necessarily work for another; **b)** reinforcement is dynamic and can change from moment to moment; and **c)** external and contrived reinforcements must be eventually faded to natural and self-reinforcement.

Types
of
Reinforcers

There are four types of reinforcers: edible, physical, material (activities, objects, tokens) and social. The choice of reinforcers must be made with care as there are advantages and disadvantages to each type of reinforcer at each stage of learning.

Note: Physical, material, and edible reinforcers should always be paired with a social reinforcer.

- Edible Reinforcers

Edible reinforcers can be very powerful. They are often used when starting to teach a new activity or when working with a student who is new to the instructor. It is important to have a large variety of reinforcers to prevent loss of interest. When a student no longer responds to a reinforcer, satiation has occurred. This is usually a temporary effect and occurs after a high rate of reinforcement using the same reinforcer. To reduce the effects of satiation it helps to increase the number of edibles the student will work for and to eventually switch the student to other types of reinforcers.

- Physical Reinforcers

Physical reinforcers involve appropriate contact. This reinforcement includes contact such as a gentle touch or hug.

- Material Reinforcers

Material reinforcers are activities or objects given to a student after successfully completing an activity.

- Social Reinforcers

Social reinforcers are the most naturally occurring. They include praise, smiles, attention and friendly remarks. Many of our behaviours are maintained by social reinforcers. They are the most convenient to use and most acceptable. They make students less dependent on outside objects and sources. Social reinforcers should be delivered every time another type of reinforcer is used.

Selecting Reinforcers

Selecting reinforcers takes careful thought and planning. Some of the basic guidelines are:

- reinforcers should be easy or convenient to deliver
- reinforcers should not have the potential to interfere with other scheduled activities; for example, do not promise a walk when the task is completed if this will coincide with lunch
- to assure the effectiveness of reinforcers, monitor their use and make sure that others working with the student know what reinforcers you are using (avoid using the same reinforcers for different behaviours, as this will diminish their effect)
- in some cases it is important to change your reinforcer on a regular basis; if this is not possible, give smaller amounts of the same reinforcer
- choose only those reinforcers that are age-appropriate and thus improve the image of the student
- when a student is acquiring a new behaviour, reinforcers should immediately follow the desired behaviour, so the student clearly associates the reinforcer with the behaviour

The Importance of Fading

If you have used artificial reinforcers each time a student responds appropriately, it is important to help move the student to more natural reinforcers and schedules of reinforcement. This can be accomplished by:

- changing the schedule of reinforcement from continuous to one nearer the schedule that occurs in the environment where the behaviour will be used
 - linking behaviours to activities the student already finds reinforcing, thus taking advantage of sources of reinforcement that already exist (for example, Johnny loved to listen to the Walkman, so when he completed an assignment ahead of time, he was allowed to listen to the Walkman for 5 minutes)
- always pair tangible reinforcers with a social reinforcer, then gradually fade the tangible reinforcers

ii) Corrective feedback

When a student provides an incorrect or inappropriate response, corrective feedback is necessary so that the response can be changed to what is desired. Corrective

feedback is given through verbally stating the mistake that was made and asking to try again, pointing out where the mistake was made, providing the correct response, and/or guiding the correct response. Corrective feedback can also be given through task interruption and/or physical guidance. In this manner, corrective feedback tends to be similar to the antecedent support (guidance) that was previously described.

It is important that all correct feedback be given in a positive and supportive tone and manner. It is also important that the *least amount of assistance possible is given*.

Corrective feedback is given immediately after the incorrect response, or by actually interrupting the incorrect procedure. This will increase the probability of the student being able to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate responses. It will also reduce the risk of inappropriate behaviours becoming patterned responses.

4.2 Individual Tutoring

4.2.1 Preparing for Tutoring

To be prepared to conduct tutoring activities, the teacher and Teacher Assistant need to develop a systematic training plan. The implementation of this plan, followed by teacher supervision, can maximize the effectiveness of the tutoring experience.

Based on the tutoring plan, the necessary materials need to be gathered and arranged. A well-organized system will allow for easy access to materials with little disruption of the instructional activities.

Equipment and materials should be examined prior to the tutoring to assure that they are ready for use.

4.2.2 Lesson Plan

To insure that the tutor and teacher have the same purpose for the tutoring session, a basic lesson plan should be developed by the teacher or under the teacher's supervision. The lesson plan should include:

- a statement of the objective
- an outline of activities and a description of specific instructional procedures to be used

- a list of needed materials
- a plan for reinforcement
- procedures for record keeping

4.2.3 Getting to Know the Student

The Teacher Assistant may have the chance to work with numerous students throughout the school day on an individual basis, in a small group situation, or in a large group setting. Part of working successfully “is knowing the students”. The more you discover about a student, the easier it becomes to work with him or her.

There are many ways to learn more about the student. It is important to remember that you are in a role where the student will look up to you and may consider you a friend. You should be friendly with the student, but not become so close that you lose the student’s respect as an authority figure and are unable to be firm when necessary. The relationship should be one that communicates respect and caring. Specific techniques which encourage positive interaction include:

- using student’s first name
- establishing eye contact
- discussing the student’s interests

The following ideas may be used to learn more about the student:

i) Student Characteristics and Interests

a) Observe the Student

Observe the student in the classroom situation, by him/her self. Try to discover what types of activities seem to motivate the student.

b) Open Conversation with the Student

- ask about their day, family
- ask what they enjoy during free time
- discover their interests and activities
- tell about yourself

c) Be Approachable

- give students your undivided attention
- listen carefully to questions and concerns
- understand the student’s world, relate to events of interest to the student

ii) The Student's Ability Level

a) Student's Skill Level

- It is important to be aware of the student's skill level in the subject in which you will be tutoring. If you do not know this from prior experience with this student, be sure to ask the teacher.

b) Strengths and Weaknesses

- Note student strengths as well as the areas where they need assistance. Build on successes and report any frustrations the student experiences to the teacher.

c) Instructional Strategies

- Talk with the classroom teacher about which instructional strategies they have found to work well with the student(s). For instance, the student may read best orally when alternating pages are read with another student.

4.2.4 Establishing and Maintaining Rapport

Establishing and maintaining rapport is an important element in determining the success of a tutoring session. The interaction between the student and the Teacher Assistant is important because of the amount of time the Teacher Assistant spends with the individual student.

i) Before You Begin a Lesson

Before beginning a lesson it is important to make the student aware of the instructional plan. You may accomplish this by:

- discussing the lesson objectives with the student
- outlining the lesson
- asking the student if he/she has any questions before you begin

ii) Encouraging the Student

The more trust the student has in the Teacher Assistant, the easier it is to encourage the student to master learning in areas they might be reluctant to try. As students develop confidence in their skills, the Teacher Assistant can encourage independence in using those skills. Specific techniques which encourage students are:

- meet the student in a relaxed, friendly manner
- set an example by being courteous and respectful
- be supportive and provide encouragement
- communicate that learning is an important and worthwhile task
- maintain a sense of humour

iii) Conducting a Lesson

Maintaining rapport during a lesson is important to ensure the success of the lesson. Some of this will depend upon the Teacher Assistant making decisions on the spot, such as taking a break if a child appears tired or frustrated. There are other techniques which may be used throughout a lesson. These include:

- read verbal, eye, hand, and posture cues of the learner
- provide encouragement and praise throughout the lesson

4.2.5 Establishing and Maintaining Attention

Before beginning instruction with students, it is crucial to make sure they are paying attention. The following are some suggestions to consider:

- Excite the student(s) about learning. Try to make the activity fun and explain the activity in an enthusiastic manner.
- When directions are being given, make sure that the student is listening to what you are saying; ask the student to repeat back those directions; have her/him summarize what he/she are supposed to do before starting the activity.
- To help a student pay attention, say the student's name, and move closer to the student, or gently touch his or her arm.
- A signal, such as a raised hand, may work as an *attention getter* for a group of students who are talking and not paying attention.
- If you explain to students the objective of the lesson, or why they need to know something, they will understand the importance of the lesson.
- Use reinforcement; if students know they will be reinforced for learning something, they may be more motivated to pay attention.
- Ask teacher and other staff what they have tried with students to establish and maintain attention.

It is important to realize that some days are better than others as far as student attention is concerned. Events outside of school may affect a student's ability to pay attention. Though there are many tips for establishing attention, the best knowledge comes from experience.

4.2.6 Giving Directions

The objective is to give clear, concise verbal directions that are appropriate for the individual student. The Teacher Assistant may practice giving directions with the teacher, who can provide feedback on how easy or difficult the directions are to understand. Techniques to keep in mind include:

- insuring that the student is attending
- selecting vocabulary that is appropriate for the student
- explaining the purpose of the lesson
- presenting only one set of directions at a time

4.2.7 Questioning Procedures

When it is appropriate to ask questions during the tutoring session, the Teacher Assistant needs to use effective "questioning procedures". The purpose of questioning is to determine the student's level of mastery in order to proceed with new instructional activities. Good questioning practices involve:

- asking open-ended questions, these require more than a "yes" or "no" answer
- ordering questions sequentially to guide a student toward the conclusion
- varying the levels of questions
- helping organize ideas into generalizations

There are different levels of questioning which may be used in determining a child's understanding of materials:

- literal questions ask for specific information
- interpretative questions require a student to use their own opinions and thoughts
- analytical questions are the highest level, and require a student to synthesize and apply information in an abstract way

4.2.8 Requests for Help

The way in which “Requests for Help” are dealt with can enhance rapport with students and affect learning outcomes. Helping at the appropriate time prevents a student from becoming frustrated with an activity, but additional direction sometimes distracts the student from the task. The Teacher Assistant needs to understand the difference between providing the answer for the student and effectively guiding the student to find the answer independently.

4.2.9 Terminating a Lesson

Learning increases when lessons are concluded in a manner that helps students organize and remember the point of the lesson. Activities used to conclude a lesson are often referred to as “closure”.

i) Purposes of Closure

- draws attention to the end of the lesson
- helps students organize their learning
- reinforces the major points of the lesson
- allows students to practice what is learned
- provides opportunity for feedback and review

Each lesson should have its own conclusion, based on the type of material being studied and the type of learning activities being used in lesson.

ii) Examples

- summarize the high points of the lesson
- ask students to summarize certain points in the lesson
- ask questions of students about the lesson
- allow students to ask questions about the lesson
- connect the lesson with previous activities and provide information about what will come next

iii) Sample Statements Used to Provide Closure

- “Before moving on, let’s review the main points that we’ve already covered.”
- “Kevin, could you please summarize what we’ve talked about up to this point?”
- “Joann, what were the main points we discussed today?”

4.2.10 Deviating from the Lesson Plan

The lesson which the teacher planned for 20 minutes is completed in 10 minutes. What should you do?

The lesson prepared is clearly not working. The student is very frustrated. What should you do?

At times it may be necessary to conclude a lesson before it is finished or before the scheduled time is up.

When should a Teacher Assistant deviate from a lesson plan?

- a student does not appear to have the basic skills necessary to complete the activity
- a student is too upset to continue the lesson
- the student completes the lesson in less than the allotted time
- the student is making errors on every problem
- the student's behaviour does not allow you to continue
- the child stops and refuses to do anything else
- the child shows obvious frustration with the lesson
- another event or emergency in the classroom requires your immediate attention

To address these situations, the educational team has to prepare alternatives. Examples of alternative plans might be:

- a folder for each child, with work in it that could be used
- review previous lessons that you have completed with the student
- the student may work on any homework they have acquired
- the student may do independent reading
- a set of educational games/activities that have been pre-approved by the teacher

i) Reporting Problems to the Teacher

If there are difficulties with a lesson the Teacher Assistant should report the problem to the supervising teacher. The supervising teacher needs to know what is going wrong and why. The teacher assistant should note the types of mistakes the student is making and the student's behaviour that contributes to the difficulties in completing the lesson. This information helps the teacher plan more effective lessons in the future.

ii) Cautions

Students can become adept at finding reasons to delay or terminate a lesson. Teacher Assistants do not want to be in the position of having to terminate a lesson frequently. If there are problems with a lesson, adjustments should be made prior to the next lesson. The Teacher Assistant should try to motivate the student, clarify directions, and provide assistance and examples before deciding to terminate the lesson.

4.2.11 Observing and Recording Student Progress

There are a variety of methods to record a student's response and performance. *The teacher should select the procedures to be used.* The goal is to choose a simple recording system that does not distract from the tutoring activities, and relates directly to the objectives in the lesson plan. The teacher should explain the purpose of the record keeping system and demonstrate the procedures to be used in maintaining appropriate records.

The format used for record keeping should lend itself to planning future instructional activities.

i) When Record Keeping the Teacher Assistant Should:

- maintain accurate records of the student's performance if not on each session then frequently
- report any concerns or observations to the teacher
- respect confidential information about the student

ii) Observing Student Progress

Accurate observation of a student's performance is important to ensure that records are correct. A few things to keep in mind when observing include:

- maintain careful attention to the task observed
- make recordings discreetly
- observe specific behaviours
- offer general observations about the environment and student behaviour

iii) Recording Progress

There are various ways of recording student progress, and the teacher may identify a specific technique to be used within a lesson. If the Teacher Assistant encounters a specific task which seems to present difficulty for a student, it would help to keep a record of it. The Teacher Assistant may be asked to make recordings according to:

- percentage
- frequency
- rate
- duration
- interval recording
- time sampling
- anecdotal records

Please refer to Appendix D for detail regarding these methods.

4.2.12 Evaluating the Tutoring Session

Teacher Assistants can assess their own skills using self-evaluation. The following questions can help Teacher Assistants identify areas where they were successful or where additional training is needed.

- “Was I prepared adequately for the tutoring session?”
- “Did I follow the lesson plan and understand the goals?”
- “Did I maintain accurate records and comments about the session?”
- “Did I establish rapport with the student?”

4.2.13 Communication with Students

Effective and open communication promotes an awareness of others interests and needs. Being aware of the necessary skills that will encourage open communication is important when working with others.

i) 12 Roadblocks to Communication

There are thousands of messages that we can send to students by how we communicate with them. They can be grouped into twelve categories, each of which tends to slow or completely stop existing communication.

Some typical responses that communicate unacceptance are:

- a) Ordering, commanding, directing.
Example: "Stop whining and get back to work."
- b) Warning, threatening.
Example: "You had better get your act together if you expect to pass."
- c) Moralizing, preaching, giving "shoulds" and oughts".
Example: "You should leave your personal problems out of the classroom."
- d) Advising, offering solutions or suggestions.
Example: "I think you need to get a daily planner so you can organize your time better to get your homework finished."
- e) Teaching, lecturing, giving logical arguments.
Example: "You better remember you only have 10 minutes to complete this work."

These next responses tend to communicate inadequacies and faults:

- f) Judging, criticizing, disagreeing, blaming.
Example: "You are such a lazy kid. You never do what you say you will."
- g) Name-calling, stereotyping, labelling.
Example: "Act your age. You are not a kindergartner."
- h) Interpreting, analysing, diagnosing.
Example: "You are avoiding facing this assignment because you missed the directions due to talking."

Other messages try to make the student feel better or deny there is a problem:

- i) Praising, agreeing, giving positive evaluations.
Example: "You are a smart kid. You can figure out a way to finish this assignment."
- j) Reassuring, sympathizing, consoling, supporting.
Example: "I know exactly how you are feeling. If you just begin, it won't seem so bad."

This response tends to try to solve the problem for the student:

- k) Questioning, probing, interrogating, cross-examining.
Example: "Why did you wait so long to ask for assistance?
What was so hard about this worksheet?"

These messages tend to divert the student or avoid the student altogether.

- l) Withdrawing, distracting, being sarcastic, humouring, diverting.
Example: "Seems like you got up on the wrong side of the bed today."

Many people are unaware that they respond to students in one of these twelve ways. It is important that we know alternative ways of responding. Many of the above responses have hidden messages when the student hears them. They may hear you saying that they are to blame or that they can't do anything right, when your intention for the message was quite different.

ii) Active Listening

As an alternative to the roadblocks discussed above, active listening can be used to promote communication. Communication has several avenues that can get crossed if the speaker is not clear with the message or the listener decodes it incorrectly. When we use our own words to repeat back what we think the student has just communicated, we are clarifying their message and acknowledging their feelings. This "feedback" is called **active listening**. For example:

Student: I don't like this school as much as my old one. People are not very nice."

TA: I see that you are feeling sad. Are you unhappy at this school?

Student: Yeah. I haven't made any good friends. No one includes me.

TA: You feel left out here?

Student: Yeah. I wish I knew more people.

The Teacher Assistant is verbalizing what he/she thinks the student

is saying. This lets the student affirm what the Teacher Assistant said or explain their meaning in a different way.

Active listening can be a powerful tool to help Teacher Assistants communicate more productively with students. Active listening helps understand what the student is saying, and helps the student articulate their concerns.

Active listening can:

- help students deal with and “defuse” strong feelings
- help students understand their own emotions
- facilitate problem solving
- keep the responsibility with the student
- make students more willing to listen to others
- promote a closer, more meaningful relationship between the Teacher Assistant and student

iii) Talking with Students

It is important that when we talk with students we are engaging in certain behaviours that facilitate openness and acceptance. When we actively use the recommendations listed below, students tend to be more receptive to listening and communicating. Some suggestions to use while communicating with students are:

a) Posture

Try to make your posture mirror that of the students. It is helpful to have your shoulders squared with the student's and on about the same level so you are face-to-face. It is also helpful to have a slightly forward lean toward the student.

b) Eye Contact

Eye contact with students shows that you are interested in what they have to say.

c) Facial Expression

What is shown on your face should match what is on the child's. Smiling when the child is obviously sad would be an example of an incongruent facial expression.

d) Distance

Distance from the child shouldn't be too close or too distant; about one metre is the average. Standing too close can make the student uncomfortable, while standing too far away can

indicate that you are disinterested in what the student is saying.

e) Distracting Behaviours

Distracting behaviours, such as playing with your hands, staring out the window, or doing something else while listening should be eliminated when talking to students or staff members.

f) Voice Quality

Your tone should match the child's. It would be inappropriate to be loud if the child is in a quiet mood.

A few more helpful hints are:

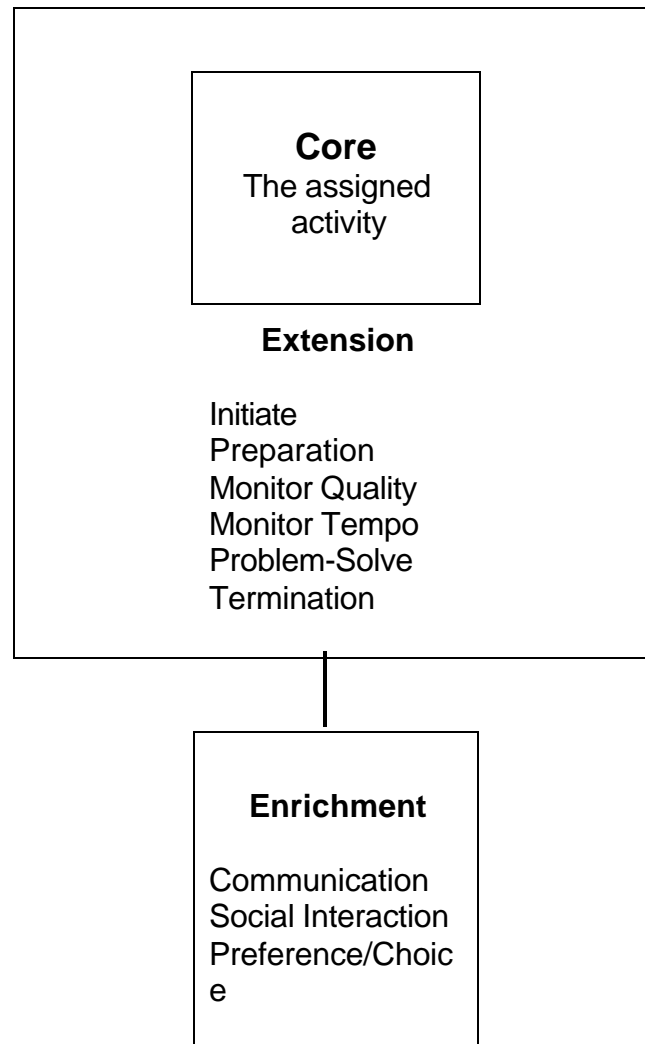
- establish a positive relationship with the students (respect, courtesy, friendship)
- try to encourage students rather than to control
- be positive in speaking to the student, avoid “putting them down.”
- when possible, organize ahead of time and think before speaking
- use the student's name
- when giving directions, get the student's attention first
- speak in a calm manner
- try to maintain eye contact with the student
- minimize distractions
- let them know why the topic is important
- let them know that you are talking to them for their benefit
- use questions to involve the student and monitor understanding
- include examples from the student's experience
- avoid discussing a student's personal problems when you feel uncomfortable about it
- if frustration, anger, or boredom occurs, stop
- reinforce and support students for listening

iv) Accepting Language

A language of acceptance can make students feel more comfortable and at ease. When they know they will be accepted, students will respond more openly and growth is more likely to be seen.

4.3 The Functional Task Analysis: Meaningful Participation in a Regular Classroom Activity

Meaningful Participation in a Functional Activity



(From Brown, F., Evans, I., Weed, K., & Owen, V., (1987) Delineating Functional Competencies: A Component Model. *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps*.

Every task that is assigned to and carried out by a student with intellectual or multiple disability can be *meaningful* if the instructors (teachers and Teacher Assistants) plan and facilitate the task through a functional tasks analysis (Brown et al, 1987). In addition to the core activities, a functional analysis attempts to both extend and enrich the task through the parameters described below. The procedures can be followed independently or prompted by the instructor. If prompting is given it is important that a plan is made to fade the assistance, and progress toward independence.

The core activity of the task is extended through:

4.3.1 Initiating

The student listens to directions from the instructor or observes natural cues in the environment.

Examples:

Social Studies (SS): The teacher assigns the class a mapping exercise. On a map provided, the students are to distinguish the provinces of Canada by colouring each province a different colour, and to locate and plot the capital cities of each province according to their longitude and latitude co-ordinates. The student carefully listens to the teacher for instructions and observes the other students for what they are doing regarding preparation for the task.

Journal Writing (JW): The teacher instructs the class to write a recount of a field trip that they were on the previous day. The student carefully listens to the teacher for instructions and observes the other students for what they are doing regarding preparation for the task

4.3.2 Preparation

The student gets ready to work by assembling what ever materials are necessary, preparing to receive further instructions, and beginning the task as instructed.

Examples:

Social Studies (SS): The student assembles map, pencil crayons, and pencil.

Journal Writing (JW): The student assembles journal and pen.

4.3.3 Monitoring Quality

The student frequently checks her/his work to see if it is being done well, and according to the instructions given.

Social Studies (SS): Is each province coloured neatly, within the lines, and in a different colour? Is each capital city labelled and spelled correctly? Is each capital city correctly plotted? Is everything neat?

Journal Writing (JW): Have all the major areas of detail been covered: sequence of events, information learned, personal feelings and emotions about the event, likes and dislikes, etc.? Has enough detail been written? What about spelling, grammar, and overall neatness?

4.3.4 Monitoring Tempo

The student checks to make sure she/he is working quickly enough and that a certain amount of work will be completed within a reasonable amount of time.

4.3.5 Problem Solving

Should a problem be encountered along the way the student thinks of ways in which it may be solved.

Social Studies (SS): The student can't remember the names of some of the capital cities, so uses an atlas to assist.

Journal Writing (JW): The student can't remember everything that happened, so asks a peer for assistance.

4.3.6 Terminating Appropriately

The student realizes when the task has been completed, and successfully according to the instructions given.

Social Studies (SS): Are all provinces coloured? Are all provinces coloured a different colour? Does each province have a capital city plotted?

Journal Writing (JW): Have all events in the field trip been covered? Have I given a good opinion?

The task can be enriched further through:

4.3.7 Communicating

The student talks to the instructors, parents and peers about the tasks, describing the sequence of steps involved, the strategies that may be used, how problems may be solved, whether or not it is enjoyable, etc.

4.3.8 Social Interaction

The student may be working with a buddy, or in a cooperative group.

4.3.9 Preference/Choice

Whenever it is possible, the student demonstrates preferences and makes independent choices regarding the task.

Social Studies (SS): The student chooses the colours used to distinguish each province.

Journal Writing (JW): The student forms a personal opinion about her/his like and dislikes with regard to the field trip.

4.4 Promoting Student Independence

All members of the instructional team should want to provide a high quality of support for the student with intellectual or multiple disability. Part of high quality support is fostering the independence necessary for decision making and self determination. The manner of interaction between the student and the Teacher Assistant and the actual proximity of the Teacher Assistant to the student is crucial to eventual independence.

Over supporting and staying too close to a student can have very negative effects in the long term. “Too close” might include:

- maintaining physical contact with the student (eg: shoulder, back, arms, hands) on a near constant basis
- sitting in a chair immediately next to the student on a near constant basis
- the student sitting on the Teacher Assistant’s lap while the classmates are sitting on the floor
- the Teacher Assistant accompanying the student to virtually every place the student goes within the classroom, school building and school grounds

As teachers and Teacher Assistants collaborate on a day-to-day basis, the student's eventual independence should always be an objective.

The possible long term negative effects of staying "too close" include:

- interference of ownership and responsibility by regular classroom teachers
- separation from classmates
- dependence on adults
- interference with peer interactions
- limited opportunities for instruction from other teachers
- loss of student's personal control
- loss of gender identity; this is most commonly observed when a male student is taken into the women's bathroom by a female Teacher Assistant (boys should use the boy's washroom)
- interference with instruction of others; at times, classmates are disrupted more by the Teacher Assistant doing different activities than by the "noise" of the student with a disability

The Need to Balance Time Among All Students & Promoting Peer

Bearing in mind the need to develop student independence and to encourage membership within the classroom's social network, the Teacher Assistant's assignment becomes a matter of balance among all students in the class. An ideal inclusive environment is one where all students have the support of each other, of the teacher, and of the Teacher Assistant. Support that is too individual and too intrusive can interfere with potential connections among students. The Teacher Assistant's role may be expanded to include:

- providing small group instruction. The small group could possibly include the student with a disability; in which case, peer interdependence can be nurtured
- assisting the teacher with supervising cooperative learning or other peer collaboration groups
- working, at some point, with all students in the class
- working with the large class group while the teacher spends individual time with the student with a disability

The Need to Share Effective Teaching Strategies

The inclusive classroom relies on support and assistance from a variety of personnel. It is important that those who interact most often with the student with a disability are continually made aware of the most effective methods of instruction. This is accomplished through the sharing of ideas and expertise among the team members.

5. **STAFF DEVELOPMENT / FACILITATING PERSONAL GROWTH**

5.1 Inservice Opportunities

Teacher Assistants are encouraged to continually seek professional development and self improvement. A wide variety of professional development opportunities are provided by, and available through, the Saskatoon Catholic School Division. Workshops specific to students with special needs are provided by Student Services. Teacher Assistants are more than welcome to attend these inservices.

A **Saskatoon Catholic Schools Teacher Assistant Conference** is held annually. This conference is coordinated through Student Services but planned and organized by a committee of Teacher Assistants.

Teacher Assistants also have access to the Support Staff Professional Development Fund. This fund assists those who wish to attend professional development activities held outside of our school division. The Professional Development Fund is accessed by application. Application forms are available at each school. Please see the Administrative Service Manual, Section 6, Form AP-6.

5.2 Competency Checklist

Please see appendix E for the Teacher Assistant Competency Profile. Please note that the Teacher Assistant Competency Profile is a self evaluation instrument, to be used by Teacher Assistants as a means for self improvement.

6. SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

6.1 The Principal is responsible for the supervision and evaluation of Teacher Assistants (See policy GKB, Appendix F). There is an initial probationary period of 90 calendar days from the date of hire. This probationary period may be extended. Please see the Collective Agreement, Article 12, for details (Appendix G). Evaluations typically take place during the middle and just before the end of the probationary period. Please see the attached **Employee Performance Evaluation** for the specific evaluation criteria/indicators of performance. After successful completion of the probationary period a performance evaluation may be initiated at any time at the request of either the Teacher Assistant, the Principal, or the Superintendent.

7. UNION MEMBERSHIP

- 7.1 Each teacher assistant is a member of the **Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Local #2268**. Membership in CUPE provides many benefits. Each Teacher Assistant is encouraged to familiarize themselves with the organizational structure of their union's local #2268 and the benefits that can be derived through membership. This information is available through the current agreement and/or by contacting the shop steward.

8. BOARD POLICIES

8.1 Please see Appendix H for the Saskatoon Catholic School Division's Policies that pertain to the Teacher Assistant position.

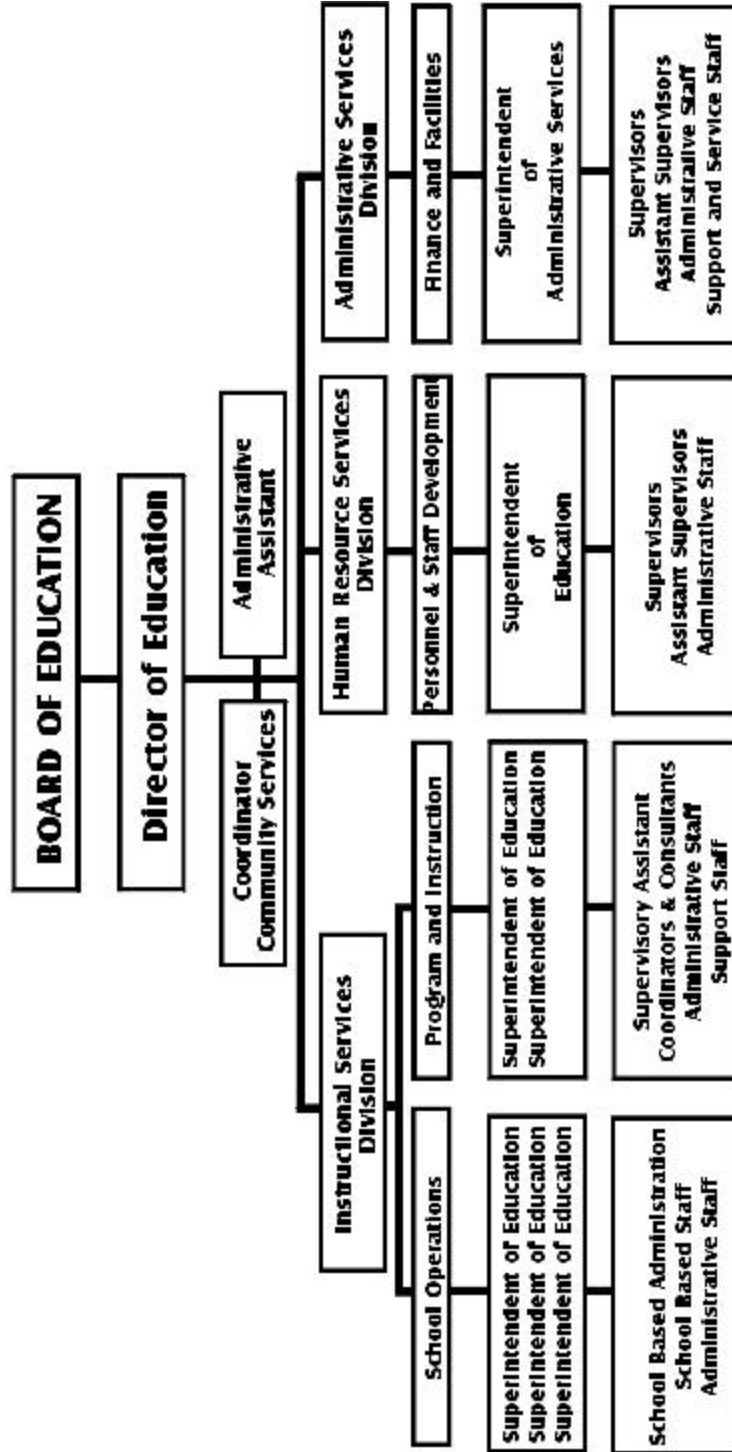
9. WORK SCHEDULE

- 9.1 The Teacher Assistant's work schedule is determined by the Principal or the Principal's designate. Please refer to the Collective Agreement for scheduling guidelines. Work schedules beyond that suggested by the guidelines may be arranged through mutual agreement between the Teacher Assistant and the Principal.
- 9.2 Teacher Assistant attendance at staff meetings is at the discretion of the Principal. It is important that Teacher Assistants be aware of and involved in the general operation and activities of the school. It is recommended that each Teacher Assistant discuss with his or her Principal whether or not attendance at staff meetings will be required and/or the circumstances under which attendance will take place.
- 9.3 Each Teacher Assistant should discuss with his or her Principal or Principal's designate the procedure to follow regarding work absence.

10. SYSTEM ORGANIZATION

10.1 Flow Chart of Structure

**St. Paul's Roman Catholic Separate School Division
Administrative Organization**



APPENDIX A

BEST PRACTICES FOR THE EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY OR MULTIPLE DISABILITY

Educating students with intellectual or multiple disability can be successful only through a committed and well planned effort. The entire process, particularly in inclusive situations, is multi-dimensional. Research and documented reports of success have indicated the following to be the characteristics of successful programs:

1. **Family Involvement**

The benefits of family involvement have been well documented. Schools that work closely with families tend to have higher morale among staff and develop higher achievement and more positive attitudes and behaviours among students. Moreover, these schools are seen by the community at large to be more progressive and to do a better job than schools which do not work well with families.

2. **Age Appropriate Placement in Neighborhood Schools**

Students are placed in regular classrooms in their local neighborhood school. The actual grade placement corresponds appropriately with the students chronological age, plus or minus two years.

3. **Planned Social Interaction**

Within the classroom, the student with intellectual disability or multiple disability is supported regarding participation with his or her peers and with establishing a sense of belonging and social membership. In addition, a number of other age-appropriate school and community environments are identified for present and/or future access. A plan for participation in these environments is addressed.

4. **Functional Curricula**

A functional curricula is a curricula that is specific to an individual student and reflects the particular needs of that student. A functional curricula is also futuristic and purports outcome based education. The curricula, then, takes into account the individual's cultural background, community resources, and family values, and it attempts to achieve goals that are seen as present and future priorities within this context. The curricula indicates the demands of the student's life by focusing on activities that are of immediate usefulness to the student and/or will be needed in domestic, community, work, academic, and social settings.

5. Systematic Instruction

Systematic instruction implies a well planned and diverse approach. It entails the use of functional and age-appropriate materials and settings, and suggests the use of a variety of approaches such as;

- whole class instruction,
- small group instruction,
- one-to-one instruction,
- maintenance and generalization of skills,
- functional task analysis,
- reinforcement and prompt strategies,
- the embedding of social, motor, communication, and life skills into relevant activities (an interdisciplinary approach),
- adaptations to regular classroom instruction,
- a holistic approach to instruction,
- integrated themes (units) of study,
- constructivist learning - instruction is facilitated in a manner that allows students to construct their own learning,
- multiple intelligence learning - instruction that extends beyond the traditional emphasis on language and logical problem solving skills to include mathematics, body kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, and intra-personal skills,
- teaching acceptance and appreciation of differences, responsibility and peace making, and using cooperative learning and other peer mediated processes.

Systematic instruction, too, applies to behaviour management.

"Successful teachers use classroom management techniques based on systematic instruction. Systematic instruction provides a structure for determining behaviours in need of change and designing behaviour management interventions empirically validated for individuals with (intellectual) disabilities. Specifically, this approach focuses on changing significant observable behaviours that are clearly defined. Through systematically manipulating environmental factors, such as instructional setting, for example, targeted responses are changed, shaped, increased or decreased." (Huntington, in Hilton and Ringlaben, 1998, p255)

Systematic instruction also involves '**looking inside**' the current practices to critically examine instructional strengths and weaknesses and to discover any potential barriers to effective teaching. Systematic instruction also conveys '**looking outside**' currently used methods to see if there are any social, cultural, or educational trends that may be of benefit. Furthermore, systematic instruction is **collaborative** in nature, it **monitors change and student progress**, it **puts**

action plans into writing, and it involves a continual **revisiting the vision** that has been set for instructional efficacy.

6. Community Reference (Based) Instruction

Community referenced education expounds the virtues of context specific instruction and the importance of ensured generalization of skills. The premise behind this approach is that all students need an education that prepares them to live and work as part of an adult community; all students need to achieve functional outcomes. Students with intellectual disability or multiple disability may easily learn an activity or skill within a classroom but have difficulty in performing the same activity outside of the classroom in a functional context. To ensure that students are equipped for life outside of the classroom, that skills can adequately be performed in real life situations, some of these skills should be taught in the actual environment where they will be needed. The community can also be used "concurrently" with the classroom to check for the application of skills learned in classroom settings.

7. Integrated Service Delivery

Many students with intellectual disability or multiple disability require related services to benefit from their educational programs. Examples of related services may include physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, behaviour management, psychological services, music therapy, program consultants, nursing care, teacher assistants, and many others. With the possibility of many different disciplines being involved, it is important that the services are properly coordinated. All services have to effectively integrate to form one functional and constructive personal program plan. All professional input, then, has to complement the one unified program; the individual parts cannot be disjointed and contradictory.

The process has to be cooperative, collaborative and **trans-disciplinary** in nature. Typically it is the classroom teacher, special education teacher, parents, and teacher assistant that form the **core educational team**. The coordination, or case management, of the program is best done by the teachers at the school, simply because they have the most frequent contact with the student. Moreover, for various reasons (time constraints, staff shortages, location restraints, etc.) it may not be possible to have direct therapy provided on a regular basis by the related service professionals. These professionals, then, act as consultants to the core team by providing methods and materials and monitoring progress. The actual program is administered by the core team. This process has been termed "**role release**".

8. **Transition Planning**

Transition planning is the planning that precedes and follows moves between programs. Major transitions occur as the infant moves from:

- a home-based program to a pre-school program,
- a pre-school program to an elementary school program,
- an elementary school program to a high school program, and
- a high school program to a post secondary or vocational situation.

A major transition may also occur if a family moves to another school or community.

A more minor, but still very important transition, occurs when a student moves from one grade to the next while remaining in the same school.

The planning process facilitates the transfer from the known to the unknown through the development of a transition plan that establishes timelines, and identifies the participants and the expectations of the next environment. Transition planning is crucial to the success of personal programs in general. It requires well coordinated communication between the student's family and the support personnel.

9. **Systematic Program Evaluation**

Systematic program evaluation is the evaluation of the students personal program in terms of its quality, the number of successful practices it demonstrates, and its effectiveness in meeting stated goals. The evaluation should extend well beyond the quality of the student outcomes achieved. The philosophical foundation and overall vision of the program must continually be scrutinized, as should the degree of communication and collaboration that takes place.

APPENDIX B

Please refer to:

http://www.scs.sk.ca/instructional_services/tahandbook/

for links to relevant Board policies.

APPENDIX C

ROLE PERCEPTION ACTIVITY

Please read each task listed below and determine whether the task is one done by the teacher, the Teacher Assistant, or whether it can be a shared task. Place a check in the appropriate space.

	Teacher	Teacher Assistant	Shared	Sp. Ed.
Helping child get reading to leave				
Evaluating individual lesson plans				
Planning group lessons				
Cleaning up after art				
Planning individual daily lessons				
Duplicating materials				
Supervising playground activities				
Evaluating inservice training activities				
Asking parents about child's behavior at home				
Planning weekly schedule				
Informing parents of meetings				
Seeing that students stay at the lunch table				
Assigning duties to volunteers				
Planning activities for entire class				
Helping student feed himself				
Charting students performance				
Carrying out lesson plans				
Discarding instructional materials as inappropriate				
Directing an art activity				
Accompanying student to special activities				
Maintaining public relations with parents				

Answering observers' questions				
Correcting papers				
Conducting inventory of classroom materials				
Constructing instructional materials				
Planning room arrangements				
Administering test to entire class				
Writing progress reports to parents				
Teaching an individual lesson				
Teaching group lessons				
Keeping daily attendance				
Recording student grades				
Planning inservice activities				
Supervising student teachers				
Ordering supplies				
Developing Personal Program Plans				
Determining objectives				
Controlling students on a field trip				
Organization of materials in storage areas				
Consulting with professionals regarding a child's problem				
Seeking assistance from school supervisors				
Selecting field trip sites				
Planning behavior management strategies				
Attending parent meetings				
Handling conflict with another teacher				
Toileting				
Giving medication				

Adapted from: Teacher/Paraprofessional Role Perception Activity, Project PARA, University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

APPENDIX C
TEACHER/TEACHER ASSISTANT ROLE PERCEPTION ACTIVITY

This instrument is designed to assist the teacher and the Teacher Assistant in determining areas in which they may have differing perceptions of their respective roles. Both the teacher and the paraeducator should independently examine each particular task listed and determine whether the task is one done by both the teacher and the Teacher Assistant or is done primarily by either the teacher or the Teacher Assistant. Indicate your response by circling the corresponding number. If the item does not apply to your situation, leave the item blank. After completing the items, transfer your responses to the score sheet for a comparison response.

	Exclusively Teacher	Primarily Teacher	Shared Responsibility	Primarily Teacher Assistant	Exclusively Teacher Assistant
1. Evaluating individual lesson plans.					
2. Planning group lesson.					
3. Cleaning up after art lesson.					
4. Getting students ready for activity.					
5. Duplicating materials.					
6. Supervising playground/recreational activities.					
7. Asking parents about student's behavior at home.					
8. Informing parents of meetings.					
9. Seeing that students stay at the lunch table.					
10. Charting student performance.					
11. Correcting papers.					
12. Constructing instructional materials.					
13. Conducting an individual lesson.					
14. Assessing the value of instructional materials.					
15. Conducting group lessons.					
16. Keeping daily attendance.					
17. Ordering instructional materials.					
18. Selecting field trip sites.					
19. Planning behavior management strategies.					
20. Handling a conflict with another classroom teacher.					

ROLE PERCEPTION SCORE SHEET

Directions: Following each item, record the number corresponding to both the teacher's and the Teacher Assistants response. In the third column, record the value obtained from subtracting the Teacher Assistants response from the teacher's response. Record the sign as well as the value of the difference.

	Teacher Response	Teacher Assistant Response	Difference (+ or -)
1. Evaluating individual lesson plans			
2. Planning group lesson			
3. Cleaning up after an art lesson			
4. Getting students ready for an activity			
5. Duplicating materials			
6. Supervising playground/recreational activities			
7. Asking parents about student's behavior at home			
8. Informing parents of meetings			
9. Seeing that students stay at the lunch table			
10. Charting student's performance			
11. Correcting papers			
12. Constructing instructional materials			
13. Conducting an individual lesson			
14. Assessing the value of instructional materials			
15. Conducting group lessons			
16. Keeping daily attendance			
17. Ordering instructional materials			
18. Selecting field trip sites			
19. Planning behavior management strategies			
20. Handling a conflict with another classroom teacher			

APPENDIX C

INVENTORY OF TEACHER ASSISTANT SKILLS AND TEACHER NEEDS

Name _____ Date _____

Directions: Listed below are a number of tasks which a Teacher Assistant may perform. If you are a Teacher Assistant, mark with a "TA" those activities/duties which you feel you could conduct. If you are a teacher, mark with a "T" those areas in which you intend to use a Teacher Assistant.

Instructional Support

1. _____ Reinforce concepts already presented by the teacher, by assisting students in reading, math, spelling, articulation, vocabulary development, signing, mobility, and/or self-care.
2. _____ Listen to student read.
3. _____ Reading to students.
4. _____ Supervise independent or small group work.
5. _____ Modify written materials, eg. tape record stories, rewrite to lower level.
6. _____ Help students with work on projects or assignments.
7. _____ Help students select library books
8. _____ Assist physically disabled students, eg. feeding, positioning.
9. _____ Help student explore careers and special interests.
10. _____ Practice vocabulary with non-English speaking students.
- _____ Other. Please describe.

Behavior Management

11. _____ Provide and/or supervise earned reinforcement.
12. _____ Supervise time out.
13. _____ Be a resource for students who are experiencing stress.
14. _____ Monitor progress on contracts.
15. _____ Enhance students' self-concept by providing positive feedback.
- _____ Other. Please describe.

Diagnostic Support

16. _____ Correct and grade assigned activities.
17. _____ Observe and record academic behavior and progress, eg., math facts learned, vocabulary growth, reading rate.
18. _____ Observe and record social behavior(s).
19. _____ Administer informal assessments, eg., unit tests and criterion-referenced measures.
- _____ Other. Please describe.

Classroom Organization

20. _____ Make instructional games.
21. _____ Develop and manage learning centers.
22. _____ Prepare displays.
23. _____ Locate instructional materials.
24. _____ Assist in daily planning.
25. _____ Make bulletin boards.
- _____ Other. Please describe.

Clerical Support

26. _____ Type.
27. _____ Duplicate materials.
28. _____ Take attendance.
29. _____ Record grades.
- _____ Other. Please describe.

APPENDIX D

STUDENT OBSERVATION AND RECORDING

One of the problems associated with observing and evaluating student behavior is the accuracy of the results. In order to be accurate the observation procedure must be established so that it remains consistent from one observation time to another and from one observer to another. A key element in making the observations consistent is the definition of the exact behaviors being observed. The accuracy of the observation is improved if the behaviors being observed are defined so that they are observable and measurable. This allows the observer to accurately count the number of times a behavior occurs or determine when a behavior begins and ends. Without specifying exactly the behavior being observed it is difficult to be consistent and the meaning of the observation may vary.

Observable Behavior

Observable behavior is behavior which can be noted through one of the senses (seen, heard, tasted, smelled, or felt). Observable behaviors are usually described by action words such as touching, walking, saying, or writing. These do not include feelings or intentions which are inferred from other behaviors.

Measurable Behavior

In order to be measurable a behavior must first be observable. In addition, an observer must be able to clearly determine whether the behavior is occurring, count the occurrences of the behavior and/or time the duration of the behavior. Behaviors which have a discrete beginning and ending are the easiest to measure.

Even though the teacher may be interested in complex behavior problems or in students' feelings or attitudes, such as anger or sadness, these concepts are difficult to define and measure. By identifying specific observable and measurable behaviors associated with feelings, the teacher can more easily and accurately measure and record progress.

Examples: Johnny talks to other students during silent reading.

This is both observable and measurable. We can hear and see Johnny talking and we can count the number of times Johnny talks or time the length of time that he spends talking.

Johnny has poor attitude toward school.

It is not possible to determine exactly what Johnny is thinking. The teacher must rather identify exact behaviors which only infer Johnny's feelings about school.

Observation Techniques

There are several observation techniques that are used within the schools to record students performance or behavior.

- Examples include:
- Frequency
 - Rate
 - Duration
 - Interval Recording
 - Time Sampling
 - Anecdotal Records

All of these techniques rely on precisely identifying the behaviors in observable and measurable performance terms to make the results meaningful and reliable.

The Teacher Assistant's Role in Observations

As long as the planning for observation has been done by a teacher, anyone that is able to make accurate observations can perform the actual observation of the behavior. This can include Teacher Assistants with training in the observation technique and also a knowledge of the behavior being observed.

The Observations

When developing an observation period, the following considerations are taken into account. A Teacher Assistant should be aware of these considerations in order to make consistent and accurate measurements during the observation.

Defining the Behavior

The target behavior will need to be defined in a way that it is observable and measurable to anyone who may be observing that student. It is possible that both the teacher and the Teacher Assistant could observe the same student at the same time and note different behaviors. Clearly identifying specific behaviors being observed makes communicating and interpreting the results of the observation more accurate.

The teacher should be the one to identify and define the behavior. However, the Teacher Assistant needs to have a clear understanding of the specific behavior.

Where the Observation is to Take Place

Certain behaviors occur in specific locations throughout the day. It is up to the teacher to determine where behaviors are occurring so that the time observations take place will coincide with the behavior. If a student is kicking other students on the playground, then observing them in the classroom will not provide an accurate observation. However, if a student is acting out in class, the classroom would be an appropriate location. The teacher needs to establish the location in order for the observer to collect accurate information.

When the Observation is to Take Place

The target behavior will also determine the time of the observation. The teacher should schedule the observation during a time in which the behavior is likely to occur and for a length of time that will allow opportunity for the behavior to occur.

What Observation Technique is to be Used

In determining the observation technique to use, the teacher will take into consideration the specific behavior and the information that they will want to gather from the observation. A Teacher Assistant will need to have an understanding of these techniques and practice them before they can be used in an observation.

Observation Techniques

Frequency

Frequency counts are a record of the number of times a specific behavior occurs within a specific time period. Frequency counts are useful for recording behaviors which have a clear beginning and ending, are of relatively short duration, and tend to occur a number of times during the specified time period.

In order to perform a frequency count, the following are required:

- a specific time period,
- a specific behavior, and
- a method for tallying the number of events.

A tally sheet is usually used to identify the behavior being observed and to record the frequency or the number of times which the behavior occurs. Below is an example of a tally sheet and how the frequency of a behavior might be recorded.

Student: Billy Smith				
Behavior: Leaving seat during science class				
Date	Time Start/Stop		Tally of Observations	Total Count
35474	10:50 a.m.	11:50 a.m.	XXXXXXXXXX XXXX	15

Some examples of a frequency count could be the number of math problems completed on a math worksheet within 15 minutes, the number of times a preschooler intentionally communicates in an hour, the number of times a student raises their hand during a 10 minutes class discussion, and the number of times a student leaves their seat during science class are all examples of frequency counts.

A frequency count would NOT be used for those behaviors that occur at a high rate, such as tapping a pencil on a desk, or when the behavior occurs for an extended period of time, such as when a student sucks their thumb.

Rate

Rate is very similar to frequency. Recording rates of behavior includes gathering information on both the frequency of the observed behavior and the length of the observation time. Rate is the ratio of the number of times a behavior occurs within a specific time period AND the length of the time period. The ratio is computed by dividing the number of events by the number of minutes, hours, or days that the observation occurred. The frequency or number of times a student leaves their seat during math class may be reported as a rate of the length of the class or the length of the observation period is known.

The rate of a behavior can also be averaged across a number of observation periods to report an average rate. From a series of observations it may be determined that a student’s average rate of “out of seat” behavior may be twelve times per hour.

For example, if the list contains 20 words and the student requires five minutes to write the list, the rate would be four words per minute.

An example follows of how one might record “out of seat” behavior as rate.

Student: Billy Smith				
Behavior: Leaving seat during science class				
Date	Time Start/Stop		Tally of Observations	Total Count
35474	10:50 a.m.	11:50 a.m.	XXXXXXXXXX XXXX	15
Rate (count/Length of time) = 15/1 hour = 15 times per hour				

Duration

Recording the duration of a behavior is done by recording the starting and ending time of a behavior and computing the length of time that the behavior occurs. This technique is usually used to observed behavior which occurs less frequently and continues for a period of time.

An example of duration recording could be for a student who has crying episodes in class. Every time the student cries in class, you would record the beginning and ending times, and then calculate the duration of the crying episode. A few other examples of when duration recording could be used include how long it takes a student to finish a math assignment, the length of time a student takes cleaning up, or how long a student spends continuously tapping their pencil on the desk.

Tally Sheet for Duration of Behavior	
Student Name	
Date of Observation	
Observed Behavior	
Starting Time	
Ending Time	
Duration	

Interval Recording

Interval recording is a technique that measures whether or not a behavior occurs within a specific time interval. The total observation time is divided into smaller intervals, and the observer records whether or not the behavior occurs within that interval. By using the interval recording technique, the teacher can get an estimate of both the frequency and duration of the behavior. The observer marks only once whether the behavior occurred any anytime within that interval. Interval recording requires the observer's undivided attention, since the observation is continuous for a set period of time.

An example of interval recording could be for a child who throws their toys during free-time. If the free-time last for 15 minutes, then that time could be broken into 1 minute intervals. If in the first minute, the child throws the toy the interval is marked. If in the next minutes, they don't throw a toy then the interval is not marked. However, it in the third minute, the child throws three different toys, the interval is only marked once again.

Interval Recording	
Student Name	
Date of Observation	
Observed Behavior	
Starting Time	
Ending Time	
Total of Observed Time	

Other examples of when interval recording may be used include, a student who talks to other students around them during work time, the amount of socializing that a student does at recess, or if a student is attending to a book during personal reading time.

Interval recording will work for any behaviors that can be observed, however, there is a strong time demand upon the observer which may make this technique inappropriate or undesirable to use.

Time Sampling

Time sampling is similar to interval recording in that the observation time is divided into intervals; however, in time sampling, the behavior is recorded only if it occurs at the end of the time period. When the specified amount of time has expired, the observer looks at the student and determines whether or not the behavior is occurring. In general, this technique is used for behaviors which are longer in duration.

For example, if the behavior is identified as “being out of seat”, the observation time might be 15 minutes with intervals of 1 minute. The Teacher Assistant would mark at one minute intervals whether the student being observed was out of his or her seat.

Since the time sampling the observation is done intermittently, the observer, such as the teacher or Teacher Assistant, is able to observe a behavior without having to set an amount of time aside to observe continually. Thus time sampling is a practical way of getting an estimation of the overall occurrence of a behavior.

Some other examples of behaviors that time sampling can be used with include, a student reading a book, nail biting, participation in a game during recess, or working on math assignments.

Time sampling would generally NOT be used with behaviors with a short duration such as hitting, kicking or spitting. If the behavior does not have a long enough duration, then it may not be observed at the specified intervals.

The observer may utilize a timer or a tape recorder with beeps to determine when to record if the behavior is occurring. In a variation of this technique, tapes with random beeps are sometimes use to record observations at random times during the observation period. With this variation the observer and the student do not know ahead of time when the recording will occur.

Anecdotal Records

Anecdotal records are written notes describing events or incidents that occur. These notes usually become part of a student’s file. Anecdotal records may be used to document:

- a significant event which occurs unexpectedly or infrequently;
- the settings or conditions in which a behavior occurred;
- the antecedents (what happens before) and the consequences (what happens after) of a problem behavior; or
- a conversation with parents.

If a Teacher Assistant is working with the student at the time of the incident, they may be asked to assist in completing the anecdotal record.

Effective Anecdotal Records

The purpose of the anecdotal record is to document the event as clearly and accurately as possible. The following guidelines should be observed when writing the record:

1. Record observation at the time behavior is observed rather than at a later time.
2. Utilize a standardized anecdotal record form to record the information to help insure that all relevant information is included.
3. Record what is actually observed rather than your feelings about the incident.
4. Use performance terms to describe behavior.
5. Be careful about including information about other students (by name) in the record.
6. Be aware that parents and other professionals will have access to the record.

What should be included in an anecdotal record?

Anecdotal records are usually recorded on preprinted forms to insure that all relevant information is included. These anecdotal records usually include the following:

1. Name of the observer.
2. Date of the incident.
3. Time when the incident occurred.
4. Name of the student involved.
5. A description of the incident.
6. Location/setting where the incident occurred.
7. Notes/Recommendations/Actions taken.
8. Signature.

Anecdotal Record Form

St. _____ Elementary School Anecdotal Recording Form		
Observer _____	Observation Date Observation Time	_____ _____
Student Name _____		
Description of the incident:		
_____ _____ _____ _____ _____		
Description of the location/setting:		
_____ _____ _____		
Notes/Recommendations/Actions:		
_____ _____ _____		
Signature _____		

Reporting Information

The following are not specific techniques for observing behaviors; however, they do allow the observer to interpret the information that is gathered during the observation. By calculating the percentage and average, a large amount of information about the behavior's occurrence can be summarized briefly.

Percentage

Percentage is the ratio of the number of times an event occurs to the number of possibilities for that event to occur times 100. For example, if we are interested in determining the percent of math problems a student does correctly while completing a math worksheet, and the student gets fifteen of twenty items on the sheet correct, then the percentage would be the ratio of the number correct (15) and the number possible (20), times 100 or 75 percent.

You may be familiar with using percentage in recording academic work, but percentages are also used with observing behaviors. Following are some of the observation techniques presented in this lesson, and how a percentage can be calculated with the information gathered in the observation.

Time Sampling Reported as Percentage

Time sampling is a technique which relies on observing behavior at specific intervals during a pre-determined time period. A specific time period such as ten minutes might be divided into 10 equal intervals of one minute. At the end of each one minute interval the Teacher Assistant would record whether a specific identified behavior was occurring. At the end of the ten minute period the number of intervals at which the behavior was occurring divided by the total number of intervals times 100 will give the percentage of time that the behavior was occurring. Using the same "being out of seat" behavior, the Teacher Assistant would mark on a recording sheet at each one minute interval whether the student being observed was in her/his seat or out of his/her seat. If the student was out of their seat at six intervals during the ten observations then it would be determined that the student was "out of seat" 60 percent of the time.

Percentage may also be determined when observing behaviors of longer duration. If we observed a student for ten minutes and record whether the behavior is occurring at each minute, we can compute the percentage of observations (out of a possible ten) that the behavior occurs. This is discussed further in Time Sampling. Percentage might be a more effective method for reporting the extent of behaviors which are of a longer duration, such as writing, thumb-sucking, or crying.

Duration Reported as Percentage

If the observation using a duration technique is done during a specific period of time, the percentage of time that the behavior occurs may also be computed. All occurrences and length of time the behavior occurred are recorded. For example, if the behavior being observed was "being out of seat", the Teacher Assistant could use a stop watch to

measure the number of minutes and seconds during a 30 minute period in which the student was out of his/her seat. If the number of minutes and seconds is divided by 30 minutes and taken times 100, the percentage of time that the student was out of his/her seat can be determined.

Again, recording the percentage requires that the observer record the number of possible attempts or opportunities divided by the number of times that the student meets the criteria. The result is then taken times 100.

Average

Averaging Frequency/Rate

The frequency/rate of behaviors can be averaged across a number of observation periods to determine the average. For example, if one looks at the student who calls out without raising his/her hand during a class for a week, we can calculate an average rate. If on Monday one tallies 17 times, 5 times on Tuesday, 8 times for Wednesday, 9 times on Thursday, and on Friday one tallies 11 times, then the average frequency is calculated as follows:

Average Frequency = $17+5+8+9+11 = 50$ times total

$50 \text{ times} / 5 \text{ observations} = \text{an average of } 10 \text{ times per observation}$

The following form can also be used for recording and computing the average rate of behavior over a number of observation periods.

	Observations					
	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Count						
Length						
Rate (count/length)						
						Average Rate Total Count/Total Length

Average Duration

The duration of behaviors can be averaged across a number of observation periods to determine the average. For example, if we look at the student who sucks his or her thumb during school for a day, we can calculate the average duration for the time they are observed, as follows:

If the student sucks their thumb for 10 minutes, 7 minutes, 4 minutes, 3 minutes, then one calculates the average duration of thumb sucking as follows:

Average Duration = $10+7+4+3 = 24$ minutes total

Divide 24 minutes / 4 individually observed incidences = an average of 6 minutes

One can summarize that she or he sucks their thumb on the average of six minutes at a time.

Summary

Although the techniques and strategies for recording behavior are not difficult, carefully developed procedures and practices are essential in gathering accurate data. The following guidelines may be helpful:

1. Describe as precisely as possible the behavior you are recording before you begin to record it. Discuss examples of the behavior to make sure that you have the same understanding of the behavior as the teacher.
2. Prepare the recording technique ahead of time. Make sure you are familiar with the form and the method for recording.
3. Carefully observe the time limits and time intervals used in recording.
4. Try to prepare so that you need to make the fewest judgements while recording. Record the behavior every time it occurs, regardless of how much it occurs. For example, if you are recording how often a student touches other students, you should record all touches whether they are gentle or hard. If you can't tell whether a behavior fits the criteria you and the teacher need to further refine the criteria so that it matches the intent of the observation and is observable and measurable.

APPENDIX E

TEACHER ASSISTANT COMPETENCY PROFILE

The Teacher Assistant Competency Profile is to be used as a guideline for Teacher Assistant's to self-evaluate their job performance. Specific job functions are listed under seven categories. A five-point rating scale (1 indicating low, 5 indicating high performance, and N/A indicating no applicable) is given for each job function. For each job function, circle the number which most appropriately rates the teacher associate's job performance. Criteria are given at the beginning of each category to assist in rating the job functions in that category.

A. PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

1	3	5
Requires constant supervision to complete tasks. Depends on others to identify needs and solutions. Low interest in training. Does not follow established procedures and policies.	Requires little supervision to complete assigned tasks. Engages in activities with students. Accepts constructive advice and direction. Willing to participate in training sessions.	Is aware of assigned tasks in an independent fashion. Demonstrates behavior that respects boundaries of supervision. On-going self-evaluation. Actively seeks and obtains appropriate resources and training. Follows policies and procedures set by school or division. Dependable attendance and provides as much notice as possible in the event of illness.

Job Function	Rating Scale					
1. Promotes an atmosphere of respect for children and adults.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
2. Demonstrates ethical and confidential behavior.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
3. Demonstrates an appropriate and independent use of time.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
4. Demonstrates responsible towards attendance and work schedule.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
5. Addresses conflicts with teachers at the classroom level first, school level second, and school division level third.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
6. Participates in school, division, and provincial inservice activities.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
7. Makes a positive contribution to the school's functions and activities.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

B. RAPPORT WITH STUDENTS

1	3	5
Lacks interest in students. Appears bored. Does not listen to students. Becomes irritated when students fail. Demonstrates dominant behavior over students. Does not allow student to attempt activities with independence.	Is as responsive to students at the end of the day as at the beginning. Facilitates opportunities for student success. Communicates encouragement, not frustration or impatience.	Exhibits an established rapport with children and keeps communication open and active. When working with students, shows enthusiasm, patience, understanding, and humor. Facilitates appropriate self-generated behaviors in students.

Job Function	Rating Scale					
1. Shows enthusiasm when working with students.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
2. Shows patience and understanding toward students.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
3. Demonstrates an understanding of fostering independence within special needs students.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
4. Treats students in a respectful, responsible and fair manner with due consideration of the students' physical, social, and psychological development.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
5. Maintains effective and co-operative relationships with students.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
6. Demonstrates appropriate responses to student-initiated interactions.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
7. Provides a positive role model for students.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

C. TEAM SUPPORT

1	3	5
A negative or nonprofessional relationship exists. Avoids other staff. Responds defensively to new ideas. Critical of other staff or administration. Does not use the established communication system.	A relationship exists, but it may be tenuous due to inadequate communication. In general, the quality of the professional relationship is positive. Uses established communication system.	Effectively exhibits positive interactions with team members, other staff and administration. Uses effective and appropriate communication skills. Attends meetings and makes a positive contribution.

Job Function	Rating Scale					
1. Participates co-operatively whenever acting as a member of the school-based team.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
2. Demonstrates effective and appropriate communication skills with teachers, other support personnel, and school administrators.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
3. Shares relevant information for team meetings, case conferences, and parent-teacher interviews.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
4. Uses established communication systems with teachers through documentation (eg. communication book, log book) and regular meetings for collaborative monitoring and discussion.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
5. Communicates with parents as directed by the classroom teacher.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

D. INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

1	3	5
Focuses on one student. Not aware of other students in group. Little or no reinforcement given to students.	Is aware of group needs but may require a lot of direction from classroom teacher for group management. Provides some opportunity to practice learned skills outside classroom. Is able to attend to group or student requiring assistance, but only able to deal with one situation at a time.	Demonstrates skill in anticipating needs of a group. Requires minimal direction from classroom teacher in group management. Spontaneously gives attention where needed. Looks for opportunities for transfer of skills learned throughout the day. Easily adapts to situation at hand.

Job Function	Rating Scale					
1. Helps students complete assigned tasks and classwork, reinforcing concepts presented by the teacher.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
2. Monitors independent or small-group work.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
3. Listens to students read.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
4. Reads to students.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
5. Demonstrates a sense of when either the teacher or a student needs assistance.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
6. Adapts materials as planned and directed by the teacher.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
7. Acts as a note-taker or scribe, if required.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
8. Assists students in meeting their assigned goals within community settings, when this is applicable.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
9. Records required information on student activities, as directed by the teacher.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
10. Provides for a safe and comfortable environment.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

E. IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PLANS

1	3	5
Does not follow planned activities. Little follow-through in carrying out recommendations of consultants. Little or no reinforcement given.	Assists in planning or activities when appropriate. Organizes materials in advance. Follows teacher's plans including objectives, materials and procedures. Usually responds co-operatively to requests by consultants but may need to be reminded or assisted. Positive reinforcement is evident.	Assists teaches in presenting appropriate materials and tasks. Assists teachers in adjusting task difficulty to meet the needs of the students. Adapts quickly to changes. Uses materials as directed by the teacher to meet developmental and instructional objectives. Co-operates fully with careful implementation of recommendations of consultants. Student independence is promoted and teacher associate's expectations are appropriate.

Job Function	Rating Scale					
1. Carries out teacher-directed activities to reach the student's established goals on an individual basis or within a group.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
2. Assists with the preparation of specialized teaching aids and materials as planned by the teacher.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
3. After appropriate training, carries out the recommendations provided by consultants (eg. occupational therapist, physiotherapist, speech/language pathologist).	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
4. Uses appropriate reinforcement strategies such as prompting, modeling, and shaping.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
5. Provides modeling and guidance when implementing activities that integrate children with special needs.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

F. SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT

1	3	5
Does not follow planned activities. Little follow-through in carrying out recommendations of consultants. Little or no reinforcement given.	Assists in planning of activities when appropriate. Organizes materials in advance. Follows teacher's plans including objectives, materials and procedures. Usually responds co-operatively to requests by consultants but may need to be reminded or assisted. Positive reinforcement is evident.	Assists teachers in presenting appropriate materials and tasks. Assists teachers in adjusting task difficulty to meet the needs of the students. Adapts quickly to changes. Uses materials as directed by the teacher to meet developmental and instructional objectives. Co-operates fully with careful implementation of recommendations of consultants. Student independence is promoted and teacher associate's expectations are appropriate.

Job Function	Rating Scale					
1. Uses a consistent behavior support system when working with students.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
2. Provides each student with feedback and reinforcement on the student's performance consistent with the teacher's behavior management plan.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
3. Helps build students' self-esteem.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
4. Redirects inappropriate and detrimental behaviors in a positive manner.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
5. Reinforces and encourages appropriate behavior in a group and among individuals.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
6. Monitors students within and outside the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
7. Monitors time out.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
8. Observes and records student behavior and progress in accordance with the teacher's plan.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
9. Encourages caring and helping behaviors among students.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
10. Provides opportunities and activities for students to participate with peers.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
11. Demonstrates skill in providing group management strategies during classroom instruction and transition periods.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

G. NON-INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

1	3	5
Requires constant supervision to carry out preparation of materials, clerical duties, or supervision. Does not consider assisting students with physical needs and/or medical procedures as a job function or is reluctant and complains about carrying out these duties.	Follows teacher's directions in making, locating, and displaying instructional materials. Assists with supervision, physical and medical needs of students.	Is eager and creative in making instructional materials. Quickly understands their use and appropriateness. Performs clerical duties and anticipates their need. Assists students with physical and medical needs with care, understanding, and dignity.

Job Function	Rating Scale					
1. Locates and displays instructional materials.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
2. Assists with school supervision duties (eg. busing, yard, lunch, work site)	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
3. Assists individual students with physical needs (eg. feeding, lifting, mobility, exercising, cleaning, dressing, toileting, or any other documented physical requirements).	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
4. Gives medication and records appropriately according to school division policy.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
5. After appropriate training, performs specific medical procedures (eg. catheterization, taking blood pressure, administering hypodermic needles, or any other documented medical procedures).	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

APPENDIX E
Part II - Alternate Form
Teacher Assistant Skills/Confidence Inventory

Directions for the Teacher Assistant:

Complete this form by considering your own skills and confidence to perform each task. Decide how well-prepared and confident you feel on each of the tasks/duties. Scores may range from 1 to 5. Circle 1 if you are unprepared to do the task and want/need training in order to begin. Circling 2 indicates that you may begin doing the task but need further instruction on how to do it well. Circling 3 or 4 indicates that you are confident enough to do the task but want to improve your skills. Circle 5 if you feel well-prepared and highly skilled to perform that task.

Delivery of Instruction	Unprepared		Highly Skilled		
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Observe and record student progress in academic areas.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Help students in drill and practice lessons. (eg. vocabulary, math facts)	1	2	3	4	5
3. Read/repeat tests or directions to students.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Listen to students read orally.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Help students with workbooks/other written assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Assist students to compose original work (eg. stories, essays, reports).	1	2	3	4	5
7. Tape-record stories, lessons, assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Modify instructional materials according to directions (eg. lesson plan, 3P's).	1	2	3	4	5
9. Read to students (specify _____).	1	2	3	4	5
10. Help students work on individual projects.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Facilitate students' active participation in cooperative groups.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Help students select library books/reference materials.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Help students use computers (specify purpose _____).	1	2	3	4	5
14. Translate instruction/student responses (eg. sign or other languages).	1	2	3	4	5
15. Translate teacher-made materials/text materials into another language.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Explain/re-teach concepts to students in less complex language.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Carry out lessons in community-based settings (travel training, job shadowing).	1	2	3	4	5
18. Monitor student performance in community-based settings.	1	2	3	4	5

Activity Preparation/Follow-up	Unprepared		Highly Skilled		
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Find/arrange materials/equipment (eg. mix paints, lab materials)	1	2	3	4	5
2. Modify or adapt materials/equipment for particular student.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Construct learning material.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Prepare classroom displays.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Order materials and supplies.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Organize classroom supplies and materials.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Operate equipment (eg. tape recorders, VCR's, overhead projectors).	1	2	3	4	5
8. Make audio and/or visual aids (transparencies, written notes, voice notes, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
9. Schedule guest speakers/visitors as directed.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Help prepare and clean up snacks.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Help students clean up after themselves.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Distribute supplies/materials/books to students.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Collect completed work from students.	1	2	3	4	5

Supervision of Groups of Students	Unprepared		Highly Skilled		
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Supervise groups of students on arrival or departure.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Supervise groups of students during lunch.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Supervise groups of students during recess.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Supervise groups of students loading/unloading buses.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Escort groups of students to the bathroom, library, gym, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Accompany students to therapy sessions, individual appointments.	1	2	3	4	5

Behavior Management	Unprepared		Highly Skilled		
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Supervise time-out/in-school suspension.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Observe and chart individual student behavior.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Give positive reinforcement and support as directed by plans/3 P's.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Mediate interpersonal conflicts between students.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Provide instruction to students on how to mediate their own conflicts.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Provide cues, prompts to students who are mediating conflicts.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Provide physical proximity for students with behavior problems.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Circulate in classroom to provide behavioral supports where needed.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Enforce school and class rules.	1	2	3	4	5

10. Assist students who are self-managing behavior (eg. provide cues, prompts).	1	2	3	4	5
11. Help students develop/self-monitor organizational skills.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Provide cues, prompts to students to use impulse/anger control strategies.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Provide cues, prompts to students to employ specific pro-social skills.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Teach pro-social skill lessons.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Facilitate appropriate social interactions among students.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Assist other students in coping with the behaviors of specific students.	1	2	3	4	5

Personal Attention to Students	Unprepared		Highly Skilled		
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Help student(s) get dressed/undressed.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Help a student eat/obtain nourishment.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Help a student with toileting/change diapers.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Help a student physically get to other locations.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Assist a student with grooming, cleanliness.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Provides health-related needs as delegated by a health care worker.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Administer medications as prescribed by doctor and delegated by nurse.	1	2	3	4	5

Ethics	Unprepared		Highly Skilled		
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Maintain confidentiality of all information regarding students.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Protect the privacy of students during personal care.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Respect the dignity and rights of every child at all times.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Report suspected child abuse according to the law, policies and procedures.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Abide by the school division policies, school rules, and standards in all areas.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Communicate with parents and families as indicated by the team.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Provide accurate information about the student with all those who have the right to know.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Carry out all assigned duties, responsibilities, in a timely manner.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Protect the welfare and safety of students at all times.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Maintain composure/emotional control while working with students.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Demonstrate punctuality, good attendance, handle absences appropriately.	1	2	3	4	5

Team Participation/Membership	Unprepared		Highly Skilled		
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Meet with team as scheduled/directed.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Participate in team meeting by contributing appropriate information, ideas, and assistance.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Participate in team meetings by listening carefully to the ideas of others.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Engage in appropriate problem-solving steps to resolve problems.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Engage in mature conflict management steps/processes.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Use appropriate communicative actions in adult-adult interactions.	1	2	3	4	5

Clerical Work	Unprepared		Highly Skilled		
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Take attendance.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Type reports, tests, seat work, 3 P's, assessment reports.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Make copies.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Sort and file student papers.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Record grades.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Collect fees.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Correct assigned student-lessons/homework.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Grade tests.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Help with paperwork to facilitate parent-teacher appointments.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Inventory materials and fill out routine forms.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Make arrangement for field trips.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Maintain files for 3 P's, assessment reports, other program materials.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Maintain databases of student information.	1	2	3	4	5

Other	Unprepared		Highly Skilled		
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Attend 3P meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Attend parent-teacher conferences.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Communication with families (Specify _____).	1	2	3	4	5
4. Contribute unique skills and talents (Specify _____).	1	2	3	4	5

French, N. (1997). Management of Paraeducators. In Picket, A. and Gerlach, K. (Eds.), Supervising Paraeducators in School Settings Austin, Texas: Pro-Ed., Inc.

APPENDIX F

Please refer to:

http://www.scs.sk.ca/instructional_services/tahandbook/

for links to relevant Board policies.

APPENDIX G

ARTICLE 12 - PROBATIONARY PERIOD

- 12.01 Probation shall be for the first (90) ninety calendar days of service by an employee with the Board. During the period an employee is on probation, the employee shall be entitled to all rights and privileges of this Agreement except with regard to dismissal.
- 12.02 After completion of the Probationary Period, seniority shall date from the original date of employment.
- 12.03 Notwithstanding the above provision, it is agreed that the Probationary Period for an employee may be extended for an additional one-hundred-eighty (180) calendar days by mutual consent between the Board and the Union. Such extension is to take the form of two 90 day extensions. Application for the first extension may be given at any time by either party prior to the completion of the original ninety (90) days of probation.

APPENDIX H

Please refer to:

http://www.scs.sk.ca/instructional_services/tahandbook/

for links to relevant Board policies.