Pivoting Parapro Supports for Current Learning Environments

Monday
November 9, 2020
3:30 PM – 4:30 PM EST
NDSC Connection to TIES Center

- Ricki Sabia, NDSC’s Senior Education Policy Advisor, is the Parent Liaison for the TIES Center on Inclusive Practices and Policies for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

- Ricki’s role:
  - Co-authoring parent briefs
  - Reviewing other technical assistance documents
  - Participating in Partner meetings
  - Co-presenter on some TIES webinars

- NDSC disseminates resources from the TIES Center
Distance Learning Early Problems

- New school and new team
- Unfamiliar with technology
- Lack of communication with paraeducator
- Very few modifications to general ed content
Distance Learning Solutions: Team & Technology

- Get-to-know-you Zoom sessions between Leah & paraeducator
- Intensive technology assistance to become independent
  - Screen sharing demonstrations
  - Large print, visually accessible Zoom numbers
  - Whole class & small group focus on technology
DL Solutions: Communication & Modifications

• Needed REAL TIME communication between Leah and paraeducator
• Exchanged cell phone numbers – regularly text questions, prompts, encouragement
• Request to go to breakout room
  • Shared Google Doc for Assignments – updated by para daily, can write notes & questions for each other
  • SpEd and GenEd team working more closely on modifications
• Extra tutoring sessions/check-ins added for GenEd classes
Pivoting Between Paraprofessional Support in Inclusive Schools & Distance Learning
Gail Ghere and Jennifer Sommerness
National Down Syndrome Congress Webinar
November 9, 2020
Introductions

Gail Ghere

Jennifer Sommerness

National technical assistance center on inclusive practices and policies with a focus on students with significant cognitive disabilities.

www.tiescenter.org
Getting to know each other. Who is in the audience?

- In the Chat Room, please add
  - Your name,
  - Your role and
  - Where you are from.
Today’s Outcomes

- Introduce the TIES Center and its work in inclusive education with a specific focus on students with significant cognitive disabilities.
- Focus on the three Learning Components as a framework for student programs and their relation to paraprofessional roles.
- Consider the knowledge and skills needed and the roles of paraprofessionals both at school and during distance learning.
- Provide and unpack a variety of student examples for application across instruction at school and home.
National Technical Assistance Center on Inclusive Practices and Policies for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities
Time (T)  
- Increasing the number of students included in grade-level general education classrooms majority (at least 80%) of school day

Instructional Effectiveness (I)  
- Collaboration across educators and specialized instructional support personnel to provide curriculum and instruction in general education classroom

Engagement (E)  
- Engagement with general education curriculum AND age-grade peers

Support (S)  
- Support at both state and district level and shared ethic of thinking inclusion first
What is your current reality regarding planning effective inclusive education for students (at school, home or hybrid) and including paraprofessional support?

- It’s messy. School and home are not coordinated. The use of paraprofessional support is not well integrated.

- About half of the time, we are coordinated including how the paraprofessional supports instruction, but many challenges remain.

- We are well coordinated. Paraprofessional support flows at school and home. Goals and instruction are aligned to meet the student’s needs.

- So-so. We are minimally coordinated. Paraprofessional support has improved some, but it is not great a lot of the time.

- We are more much coordinated and creative in how we are using paraprofessional support than previously. Goals and instruction are better focused.
Where to start?

Let’s start with the students’ programs and the Learning Components.
Participating in Routines and Transitions

Engaging in Grade Level Academics and Other Essential Skills

Interacting with Others
The “1000 Teachable Moments” in a day

Maximize learning throughout the day

We all learn how to participate in routines and transitions

Important for participation in inclusive opportunities

Embedded instruction-

- Taught through direct instruction
- Taught through implicit instruction (modelling)
What could this look like for students?

- joining a group online;
- creating and following a personal schedule;
- beginning, sustaining and ending activities appropriately;
- going from one area of a building to another;
- greater independence in self-care
Engaging in Grade Level Academic and Other Essential Skills

- Access and engaging in Grade level academics is an “essential skill”
- Other essential skills
  - Communication (i.e., expressing choice, ideas, feelings, questions)
  - Organization
  - Positive Behavior
  - Technology
What could this look like for the student?

- engaging in universally designed grade-level instruction with additional modifications or adaptations as necessary;
- using technology with increased independence;
- increasing self-advocacy skills;
- anticipating and managing behavior when frustrated
Interacting with Others

- Have meaningful relationships with other grade appropriate students
- Have meaningful relationships with the adults in their lives, at school, at home and in the community
- Be part of the threads of the community, not a visitor to the community
What could this look like for the student?

- participating in small and large group instruction with peers;
- staying in touch with/creating community with others;
- using an AAC device to ask questions, or offer prepared answers within the moment;
- maintaining conversational turns.
What if we considered paraprofessional roles and responsibilities through the same lens?
Supporting Participating in Routines and Transitions

Paraprofessional Knowledge and Skills

- Understand the importance of the multiple learning opportunities and teachable moments that exist across the day for all students so students with significant cognitive disabilities can be specifically taught within these general education routines and transitions through the use of embedded instruction.
- Know that students with disabilities require opportunities to practice new skills during general education routines and activities to increase their generalization, maintain their skills, and increase their independence in a variety of environments.
- Understand the impact that inclusive environments can have on learning and how students benefit from being present and being part of activities, even when they only partially participate (this allows a student to build a repertoire of experiences and understanding that they can then apply in different opportunities).
- Know how to support students to attend to and follow ongoing routines and transitions that naturally occur in the environment by using wait time, prompting, and fading support.
- Know the specific goals and strategies that are outlined in IEPs for the students they support.

Paraprofessional Responsibilities

- Teach students to observe, follow, initiate, and end general education class and school routines.
- Provide many opportunities for students to make choices and problem-solve new situations.
- Assist students to advocate for themselves by asking for help from other people (especially their peers) when needed.
- Be aware of the level of prompts, waits, and fades being utilized within and across learning situations, and providing these supports in individualized ways to increase independence across the day.
- Instructing students in such a way that they learn how to be as independent as possible across various settings and people.
- Overemphasize, gesture, or prompt students to recognize natural cues within the environment, and teach what they mean to increase understanding and independence.

With in school instruction, paraprofessional support might look like: [click to expand]

With distance learning, paraprofessional support might also look like: [click to expand]
Paraprofessional Capacity Building--

Knowledge and Skills

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities

Knowledge and Skills
Planning instruction during distance learning and hybrid learning
The 5C Process

**Focus on hybrid model**

**Meaningful life outcomes**

**Family voice key in the planning**

**Instructional continuity between school and home**
# 5C Process Learning Matrix: Middle School at Home

**Student Name:** Josie J  
**Grade:** 6  
**Date Created:** September 2020

**Through the day:** Yes. The student experiencing membership  
Yes. The student is actively participating.  
Yes. The student is learning general education curriculum.

## DAILY SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Component</th>
<th>IEP Goals</th>
<th>Wake up</th>
<th>Before School Activities</th>
<th>Breakfast</th>
<th>English Language Arts</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Lunch</th>
<th>Choice Time</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Dinner</th>
<th>Family Time</th>
<th>Night Routines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interact with Others</td>
<td>Initiates greetings and responds to greetings from others</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in Transitions and Routines</td>
<td>Follow three-step instructions across her day with use of visuals and AAC device</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in Grade-level Academics</td>
<td>Choose and apply the correct math operation for simple word problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interact with Others</td>
<td>Maintains interactions for 3 or more turns with peers and adults</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in Grade-level Academics</td>
<td>Increasing reading comprehension by focusing on different purposes for reading across multiple reading of the same text</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Essential Skills</td>
<td>Manage personal belongings and use them appropriately</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose a learning component</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Data collection for "Interacting with Others" will be twice/week: Tues & Fri. All other data will be 1 day/week: Wed.  
Distance Learning/ Hybrid-- Two key questions--

1. What is the specific purpose that a child has paraprofessional support for during an activity? Can the same purpose be achieved whether the paraprofessional is providing support in-person or virtually? Can the same support be provided by a peer (or sibling)?

2. Is there a specific instructional need where adding paraprofessional support would enhance access and engagement during inclusive distance learning?
In-school Paraprofessional Support

Participating in Routines and Transitions

Engaging in Grade Level Academics and Other Essential Skills

Interacting with Others
Preparing for a Return to Distance Learning
Brain Review Questions

1. What is the biggest part of the brain?

2. What does the brain do?
# October 26 - October 30 Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Workshop</th>
<th>Marketing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday - Friday</td>
<td>Wednesday-Thursday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Slides Week #9</td>
<td>Marketing Slides</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASL</th>
<th>Anatomy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday-Thursday</td>
<td>Monday-Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASL Slides</td>
<td>Respiratory System Slides</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strength Training</th>
<th>Communication/Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday-Tuesday</td>
<td>Monday-Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workout Tracker</td>
<td>Math Slides Week #9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Typing Club</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In-school Paraprofessional Support

- Participating in Routines and Transitions
- Engaging in Grade Level Academics and Other Essential Skills
- Interacting with Others
What Distance Learning Looks Like
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participating in Routines and Transitions</th>
<th>At-School</th>
<th>At Home in Distance Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Calling attention to matching actions to peers (“What is everyone else doing?”)</td>
<td>● Modeling the use of signing, gesturing, or comment feature on virtual platforms with all students during virtual lessons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Using the same mantras or songs that are available for all students (class clean-up song, language teachers use to keep students motivated)</td>
<td>● Reminding students to set a timer on their device or provide a visual timer during virtual lessons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Encouraging a student to ask a peer for assistance before offering adult support.</td>
<td>● Creating picture schedules that are matched to a student’s independence level, as well as family’s routines, to share with the student and family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Placing a star on the ceiling or floor so the student knows where their body should be during movement breaks</td>
<td>● Explicitly teaching students the steps to learn different software programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging in Grade Level Academics and Other Essential Skills</td>
<td>At-School</td>
<td>At Home in Distance Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Joining a small group and facilitating student participation and communication towards the group activity</td>
<td>● Anticipating when a student needs a break, having options that are educationally relevant and in alignment with the grade-level content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Sharing a document (for example, a Google Doc) as support without sitting next to them</td>
<td>● Staying calm when challenging behaviors occur, considering what the student might be trying to communicate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Using an app, such as Clever, to pre-load all of the login and password information</td>
<td>● Using technology (screencaster, document camera, Flipgrid) to record how students are working through their assignments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Using technology (screencaster, document camera, Flipgrid) to record how students are working through their assignments</td>
<td>● Being proactive to prevent interfering behaviors from emerging.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Being proactive to prevent interfering behaviors from emerging.</td>
<td>● Making available and modeling core word and fringe vocabulary within inclusive virtual lessons, and small groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TIES Center
**At-School**

- Highlighting similarities, favorites, dislikes and interests in common in a natural way
- Sharing with the teachers naturally occurring relationships or supports
- Facilitating groups in such a way that enhance the back and forth of communication
- Coaching peers about and modeling the use of AAC systems, sign language or other non-verbal communication supports.

**At Home in Distance Learning**

- Make a large color photo (and sending it home) of a peer support that will be partnered during a small group virtual session
- Being aware of, encouraging, and supporting participation in activities that are not regularly scheduled
- Setting up individual “check-in” and “check-out” meetings to learn how the student is feeling on virtual learning days
- Daily log of observational notes, data collection on specific goals, or accommodations
Let’s Chat…

What questions, comments, or advice do you have?
Thank you and a call to further action in support of learning for ALL!

• Please share the TIES Center website: tiescenter.org and resources with colleagues and families. Check out our Facebook page!

• Interested in providing feedback or contributing to the inclusive Distance Learning Series for students with significant cognitive disabilities? Please contact: tiescenter@umn.edu