A Systematic Approach for Supporting Paraeducators in Educational Settings

A Guide for Teachers

Christi R. Carnahan | Pamela Williamson | Laura Clarke | Rena Sorensen

Tami and Nora were chatting at a special education teacher’s staff meeting about the challenges in their classrooms. Despite being veteran teachers with experience with students with significant disabilities, their biggest challenge was in the supervision of the many paraeducators who worked in their classrooms. Although they both felt they had described the paraeducators’ responsibilities, they still weren’t satisfied with how their classrooms were running. They continually found that they had forgotten to tell the paraeducators some critical piece of information or that they had not clearly articulated the rationale for activities throughout the school day. These miscommunications often led to disorganization or worse—the students not having the quality experiences they needed to be prepared for their futures. Both Tami and Nora often felt frustrated or disappointed.

Scenarios like these play out in schools across the country, as teachers work to effectively supervise the increasing number of paraeducators providing daily instruction to students (French, 2003; Giangreco & Broer, 2007; Giangreco, Edelman, Broer, & Doyle, 2001; Pickett, 2008). Paraeducators provide important support and instruction to children in educational settings. See box, “The Roles of Paraeducators in Classroom Settings,” for a description of the roles paraeducators play in many classrooms.

With appropriate supervision, the instruction paraeducators provide to students is both appropriate and effective (French, 2001; Gaylord, Wallace, Pickett, & Likins, 2002). As classroom leaders, general education and special education teachers must provide quality supervision and professional development for the paraeducators working in their classrooms (Pickett, 2008).

Despite the infusion of paraeducators in educational settings over the past several decades, issues continue to exist concerning the supervision and professional development of these individuals in school settings (Chopra & French, 2004; French, 1998; Pickett, 2008). Many teacher education programs emphasize strategies for classroom organization and managing student behavior, but few offer meaningful coursework or guidance to prepare teachers for supervising other roles of paraeducators.
Figure 1. Training Resources
A wide range of training materials for teachers working with paraeducators can be found at http://www.nrcpara.org/training. These resources offer evidence-based strategies for supporting paraeducators in classroom settings.

  www.nrcpara.org
  www.nrcpara.org

Other available resources include:


Supervision of Paraprofessionals
Teachers and paraeducators work to promote the academic and socioemotional well-being of all students, and this work requires a well-organized classroom, including a plan for all adults. Figure 1 offers a list of several resources that incorporate evidence-based strategies and may provide additional information and support to teachers supervising paraeducators. These resources include both online and commercially produced materials.

In our work, we have found that the effective adult plans begin with a collaborative or shared philosophy and effective adult-to-adult communication (Giangreco, Backus, CichoskiKelly,
Sherman, & Mavropoulos, 2003; Giangreco, Edelman, & Broer, 2001). Because adults come to classrooms with different values and beliefs about what is best for children, thinking these things through early helps set the tone for the year.

**Shared Philosophy**

The foundation of effective supervision is rooted in the development of a shared philosophy (Carroll, 2001; Giangreco et al., 1999). Shared philosophies facilitate effective classroom management. In particular, through the use of shared philosophies, teams can agree on and articulate consistent, predictable ways of working in the classroom (Charney, 2002). Giangreco and his colleagues (1999) defined a shared philosophy as “a statement of what is aspired to, rather than necessarily what currently is” (p. 2). The shared philosophy should be a summary of the team’s values, goals, and desires for the school year.

Developing a shared commitment and philosophy with a new team or unfamiliar students can be time-consuming, so it may be helpful for teachers to draft a basic framework on which the team can provide feedback. Team feedback can lead to a greater understanding of each individual person’s values and can strengthen shared commitment. Once the team agrees on a set of values or commitments, it is helpful to create observable, measurable statements that depict how individuals make the values real on a daily basis. In Figure 2, an example of a shared classroom philosophy lays out the beliefs and expectations one team developed to help them better serve their students.

Shared philosophies should include commitments to specific actions such as positive verbal and nonverbal supports. Sprick, Garrison, and Howard (1998) recommend framing a shared philosophy in “brief phrases that describe the attitudes, traits and characteristics you hope to instill in your students” (p. 13). They also recommend posting guidelines in a prominent place so everyone can see them. For example, one team we observed set an expectation that they would strive to use explicit praise with students that captured the essence of what students were doing right (e.g., “You followed your visual schedule by sitting in the wait chair. Nice job!”). The team agreed to post a praise framework (i.e., “You [state the observed correct behavior]. Nice job!”) under the clock in the classroom. Another educator explained that through her team’s shared philosophy, the team agreed not to hold the hands of the secondary students as they walked through the hall, because it was no longer age-appropriate for the students.

**Effective Communication**

Effective supervision begins with effective communication (Gaylord et al., 2002; Wallace et al., 2001). How adults speak to one another in the classroom matters. When working with other adults, a nonemotional communication approach promotes productive adult-to-adult interactions. Nonemotional communication features the use of (a) written protocols; (b) explicit, concrete language; (c) examples and nonexamples; (d) modeling; and (e) checking for understanding.

**Using Written Protocols.** Written teaching protocols provide paraeducators with specific guidelines for what needs to be accomplished and the steps to achieving identified goals. As teachers prepare written protocols, it is helpful to consider the training and background of paraprofessionals working with students. For samples of paraeducator training manuals, refer to Vasa, Steckelberg, and Ulrich-Ronning’s (1983) “Guide for Effective Utilization

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**Figure 2. A Shared Philosophy for the Classroom: A Specific Example**

We believe in and are committed to:

- The development of independence for all children based on structured teaching strategies. We believe that we have done our job when the students no longer need us.
- The creation of an environment in which all children have the opportunity to be contributing members of their school community.
- The use of visual and physical supports to create an atmosphere of working and learning.
- Respecting all students enough to expect high achievement and success. We believe that these expectations foster a sense of dignity and self-respect.

To maintain these beliefs, we will maintain an environment conducive to learning by:

- Arriving on time and preparing all materials for the school day.
- Refraining from adult conversation in front of students during the school day.
- Allowing or teaching students to walk through the school building independently. We will not hold hands with the children as we walk through the school building.
- Using a minimal and direct language approach.
- Paying close attention to student learning and expanding our language as students demonstrate readiness.
- Being consistent in our management of academics and behavior. We will be firm and direct while providing meaningful praise.
- Representing our program in a positive manner that is reflective of our thoughts, actions, and words as a team.

_Signed:_

_____________________

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Effective supervision begins with effective communication.

Explicit, Concrete Language. When teachers use explicit language, they provide paraeducators with detailed descriptions of all relevant information. Friend and Cook (2007) note that there is a continuum of communication that ranges from abstract (e.g., She has behavior difficulties) to concrete (e.g., She was out of her seat four times during independent work). Avoiding the use of abstract or imprecise language promotes effective communication (Friend & Cook), which is particularly important when paraeducators work directly with students. Information provided to paraeducators regarding student work should include (a) explanations of desired outcomes, (b) explicit strategies for verbal and physical interaction with students, and (c) strategies for reinforcing appropriate or desired behaviors. Because paraeducators come with differing background knowledge, one strategy to ensure coherence in classroom practice is to create teaching protocols for working with students. These protocols are naturally explicit and contain all of the information mentioned here.

Examples and Nonexamples. In addition to explicit language, examples help paraeducators define and envision appropriate interventions for behaviors, and nonexamples help paraeducators understand the range or extent of interventions they can use. When possible, teachers should draw examples and nonexamples from actual happenings in the classroom. Drawing on examples from classroom activities supports the ability of staff to implement the strategies the teacher describes. By giving an example of how to use and not to use the strategy with the child, a connection is made to the paraeducators' actual experience, making it easier to understand, internalize, and later implement. When describing a new strategy for practicing a math concept such as one-to-one correspondence, it is important to describe how you might use the strategy with an actual student from the class. For example, the teacher might describe a variety of generalization strategies such as having a student place one piece of paper in each student’s mailbox at the end of the day, passing out one marker to each student during art class, or placing one piece of candy in each snack bag. The teacher then describes nonexamples such as rote counting drills or using a calculator to complete addition problems.

Modeling. Effective teacher modeling is one way for paraeducators to understand classroom expectations. Paraeducators may naturally look to teachers for cues on classroom conduct. For example, paraeducators implicitly learn from teachers such things as how to use proximity and nonverbal cues to manage student behaviors, or how to use a quiet voice to provide feedback to individual students. In addition, teachers should consider explicitly modeling new techniques, such as a new instructional strategy, for paraeducators prior to requiring them to implement those techniques.

Checking for Understanding. Finally, effective communication involves checking for understanding. This improves the likelihood that paraeducators will be successful. Teachers should assume that paraeducators will have questions (e.g., What questions do you have about this strategy?), and take time to answer all of their questions fully. Other strategies to check for understanding include asking the paraeducator to (a) paraphrase what they learned, (b) teach the strategy back to the teacher, or (c) describe what they observed the teacher doing with the student. When teachers take time to check for the paraeducator’s understanding, they enhance the possibility of paraeducator success.

Systematic Steps for Supervising Classroom Staff

Once a shared philosophy is established and effective communication is in place, it is important for teachers to maintain an effective classroom environment. Keys for maintaining effective classroom environments include (a) conducting regularly scheduled staff meetings, (b) assessing paraeducator performance, (c) providing ongoing learning opportunities, and (d) providing opportunities for problem solving.

Regularly Scheduled Staff Meetings

Although it is important to communicate daily to address issues such as changes to schedules, a key factor in supervising staff involves regularly scheduled meetings to discuss important but less time-sensitive topics (Carroll, 2001; French, 1998, 2001; Gaylord et al., 2002). These meetings provide opportunities for effective communication and allow teachers to clarify the roles and responsibilities of team members (Giangreco, 2003; Riggs, 2004). Scheduling regular team meetings is difficult given the intense requirements of a classroom; however, regular meetings that are highly organized and productive serve to increase teacher time and effectiveness by facilitating team collaboration (Carroll, 2001).

Regular meetings should be scheduled for 30 to 40 minutes one time per week. If the team cannot find a solid block of time each week, consider discussing one point at the start or end of school each day. Agendas should be created ahead of meetings. To ensure that salient topics are addressed, consider posting a call for agenda items in a private, central location. This would allow everyone to have input and would keep important issues from being forgotten. The number of agenda items should be limited. This affords time for in-depth discussions around important topics.

Assessing Staff Knowledge and Experience

Effective supervision involves formal and informal assessment and monitor-
Figure 3. Questions to Guide Informal Assessment of Staff

Initial Assessment/Interview

1. Describe your past experiences working with students with special needs.
2. What did you like or dislike about other classrooms in which you have worked?
3. What are your strengths in working with children or within a classroom?
4. What are areas of difficulty with working with children or within a classroom?
5. What activities have you enjoyed the most in past experiences?
6. What activities have you enjoyed the least?
7. Describe your past experiences with providing systematic instruction, delivering reinforcement, and collecting data.
8. Describe past experiences with children with (specific issues within your classroom, i.e., behavior problems, medically fragile, etc.).

Questions to Guide the Observation Process

The questions below may guide pre- and postobservation discussions, and be useful for ongoing feedback.

1. What skills are you teaching? Describe a correct response.
2. Describe the specific teaching plan.
3. What materials do you need? How do you keep your materials organized?
4. What do you do when the student responds correctly?
5. What do you do if the student responds incorrectly?
6. What is the plan to handle interfering/inappropriate behavior when teaching?
7. What items should be placed out of sight or out of the teaching area?

Inservice Strategies

Introducing a New Teaching Strategy

Introducing the new strategy within an instructional context should begin with a written document, typically a lesson plan or teaching protocol, created by the teacher (French, 1998; Giangreco, 2003). These plans can be created by subject, day, week, or skill. Plans should address individual-student and/or student-shared goals and objectives. It should include a clear overview of the expectations, goals, objectives, and teaching methods the staff will use during the activity (Carroll, 2001; French). Methods should be written to ensure consistency no matter who implements the plan. Plans should include objectives that clearly state what you expect students to be learning and doing, so paraeducators can assess whether students have met lesson objectives. For example, if the goal of the reading lesson is for the student to create five “at” words using letter tiles, the paraeducator can assess how many words the student generated, as well as how much prompting the student needed. It is also important that the plans incorporate evidence-based teaching strategies and the components of systematic instruction. For detailed discussion of evidence-based practice and systematic instruction, see Gartn and Murdick (2008) and Munk and Van Laarhoven (2008). Figures 5, 6, and 7 include examples of specific teaching protocols that educators can use to communicate instructional plans with paraeducators.

Figure 5 is a written plan highlighting the salient information for several different activities, including the activity, visual supports needed, and objectives for individual students as well as goals for the entire group. Figure 6 provides step-by-step details for teaching, reinforcing and collecting data on specific skills. Figure 7 shows step-by-step instructions for what both the paraeducator and student should be doing during morning check-in. All of these examples can be tailored to accommodate specific context, student, and teacher factors.

Once plans are created, it is important to discuss them with paraeducators, perhaps during a regularly scheduled meeting at which all team members are present. As information is presented, staff should have the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification (Giangreco et al., 1999). This is all part of ensuring effective communication.

Review and Practice. Once the written plan is discussed, teachers should consider modeling the strategy through role playing. For example, if the procedure involves student arrival and unpacking, the teacher and paraeducators could go to bus circle, where one of the paraeducators acts as the student. The teacher should think aloud


Figure 4. Sample Evaluation Form

The Kelly O’Leary Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal #</th>
<th>Materials ready</th>
<th>Data book open/updated</th>
<th>Knows training steps</th>
<th>Provides correct discriminative stimulus (SD)</th>
<th>Displays appropriate materials</th>
<th>Uses appropriate prompts</th>
<th>Demonstrates prompt fading</th>
<th>Uses differential reinforcement</th>
<th>Reinforces quickly</th>
<th>Uses varied reinforcement/offers choices</th>
<th>Keeps adequate pace of instruction</th>
<th>Uses mixed trials (when appropriate)</th>
<th>Responds appropriately to disruptive behavior</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

Overall Session Comments:

1) Breaks timed/appropriate length
2) Interacts appropriately with parent
3) Interactions with student
4) General comments

Feedback Provided: ___ Yes ___ No

Supervisee Signature Date Evaluator Signature Date

as each step is performed. In addition, the teacher should call specific attention to the use of prompts, as well as data collection activities, included in the procedure. If time allows, each paraeducator should be offered the opportunity to take a turn role playing the teaching strategy.

Model. After reviewing and practicing the specific teaching strategies with each other, staff members should see the teacher implement the strategies with individual and small groups of students (Gaylord et al., 2002; Pickett, 1999). Modeling should include each step in the teaching sequence, specific reinforcement strategies, and data collection procedures.

Observations. After paraeducators have become comfortable with the new
### Figure 5. Written Plan for Organizing Group Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Visual Support Needed</th>
<th>General Group Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For all groups</td>
<td>Wait card</td>
<td>• Active engagement: eyes in the direction of the topic, use materials appropriately,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raise hand picture</td>
<td>hands in own space, feet on the floor, facing the speaker or topic, actively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My turn picture</td>
<td>participate at appropriate times: singing, vocalizing while others sing and stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Look and sit pictures</td>
<td>when others stop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar</td>
<td>Use calendar binder</td>
<td>• Raise hand to request a turn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wait and raise hand pictures</td>
<td>• Clean up from the group independently and move to the directed area with no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>Snack pictures binder</td>
<td>prompting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Can I have?” pictures</td>
<td>• Request an item independently using pictures or words; pair vocalizations with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language groups</td>
<td>My turn picture</td>
<td>pictures (e.g., “Thank you for telling me what you want; now I want to hear you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other unit-based pictures</td>
<td>say it.”).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project</td>
<td>Use art binder</td>
<td>• Comment to other children; engage in appropriate table talk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I want,” “I need,” and “Can I have?” pictures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objectives for individual children during snack:**

1. Jack – initiate a request, use device to create a three-word phrase. Pair vocalizations with each request—one sound for each word.
2. Kristen – raise hand, two word phrases such as “want water” with no prompting, clear articulation, hands in own space.
3. Alex – use pictures to make a request, pair pictures with vocalizations, sit appropriately, hands in own space.
4. Rachel – pair words with pictures (i.e., pictures act as the prompt), sit appropriately.
5. Christian – accept handing picture exchange communication system (PECS) strip as his request, pair vocalizations with pictures, hands in own space, sit appropriately.

Strategy or procedure, teachers should formally observe the paraeducators. Generally, a mix of planned and unplanned observations is desirable. Planning observations helps ensure that the observations will occur. These observations also provide a scheduled time for the teacher and staff member to discuss the instructional technique and make necessary adjustments.

Unplanned observations may afford a more natural view of how paraeducators work with students.

**Coaching and Follow-up.** Coaching should follow observations (Gaylord et al., 2002; Giangreco et al., 1999; Marks, Schrader, & Levine, 1999), perhaps through a video review. To conduct a video review, paraeducators are videotaped during a specific activity or time during the school day. (Note: Be sure to check school videotaping policies). Next, the teacher and staff member(s) watch the video together. During this time, teachers and paraeducators can discuss what occurred, including what the paraeducator was thinking about at the time. Feedback should follow the same nonemotional principles described earlier and should include concrete feedback of what the paraeducator did right (e.g., “Nice use of redirection when the student was getting off task.”). This ensures that paraedu-

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### Figure 6. Written Plans for Teaching a Specific Skill: Example 1

**Skill:** Labeling

**Teacher:** Show picture, say “What is it?”

**Response:** Student will name the picture

**Criteria for Acquired Targets:** 2 consecutive days correct on 1st trial probe data

**Prompting:** Use the least prompt necessary to get the correct response.

**Prompt Fading:** Echoic prompt, partial echoic prompt, model the beginning mouth formation to independent

**Reinforcement:** Praise and edibles for each correct response during initial training. Fade to edibles, toys, and breaks for several correct responses.

**Data collection:** 1st and last trial probe data and session log. Plus a description of additional teaching procedures
**Figure 7. Written Plans for Teaching a Specific Skill: Example 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Actions</th>
<th>Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Tell Stevie (S) to check his schedule by handing him his check schedule card and say, “Check your schedule.”</td>
<td>• Obtain the check schedule card from his teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wait 5 seconds.</td>
<td>• Walk to his schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If no response, use a gesture prompt (point) to lead S to his schedule.</td>
<td>• Match name card to the top of schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If no response, use physical prompt to guide S to his schedule.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Stand 5 feet from student.</td>
<td>• Take top icon from the schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If S does not take the next icon, use gesture (point) to cue him to take the next icon.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If S takes the incorrect picture, replace the picture and start the process again by handing him his name card and verbally cuing him to check schedule. Provide physical prompts to guide him through the process.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. If S runs,</td>
<td>• Walk to the corresponding area indicated on the picture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use a physical cue to stop him (i.e., step in front of him).</td>
<td>• Match the card to the large icon in the corresponding area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide the verbal prompt paired with the sign for “stop.”</td>
<td>• Sit down at the desk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use a gesture to point him in the right direction.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. When S sits in the chair, say, “Nice checking your schedule.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you for coming over.” Use deep pressure (squeeze) to reinforce.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

tutors feel valued and appreciated (Giangreco, 2003; Giangreco et al., 1999).

**Other Considerations.** Paraeducators need time to practice the strategies before teachers expect proficiency. As comfort increases, many staff members become more efficient and effective; however, drift from specific teaching sequences may also occur. Thus, it is important for teachers to incorporate ongoing performance assessments of paraeducators as part of their overall plan.

**Ongoing Performance Assessments**

As supervisors, teachers conduct ongoing assessments of paraeducators to ensure effectiveness and student learning (Gaylord et al., 2002; Giangreco et al., 1999). Assessments may be informal or formal discussions that can include specific observations with data collection. During these assessments, teachers look and listen for specific competencies. Competency areas include (a) implementing specific teaching strategies, (b) reinforcing/redirecting student behavior, (c) preparing and using data collection materials, (d) maintaining an organized teaching environment, and (e) implementing each step of the teaching plan. Teachers should consult with administration regarding their school’s policies to determine what kind of documentation their school requires as part of the formal evaluation process for paraeducators. For example, some schools require a number of documented performance observations.

**Positive Supports.** Part of the assessment process should include specific and frequent praise for paraeducators as they go about their daily work. (See box, “What Does the Literature Say?” for three key ideas from the literature regarding strategies for supporting paraeducators in classroom settings.) Similar to the assessment model that includes both formative and summative feedback, paraeducators need to hear in specific and concrete language what they are doing well and which areas need improvement. Setting aside time each week to provide paraeducators with positive feedback is crucial. Comments such as, “I noticed that the student seemed very engaged in the story when you used the picture supports.” and “Thank you for taking time to help the students organize their planners. They seemed much calmer after you added post-it notes highlighting the key information.” are beneficial. Saying “thank you” each day and providing immediate feedback when something good occurs goes a long way to building positive rapport and improved performance.
What Does the Literature Say?
Below are three key ideas from the literature regarding strategies for supporting paraeducators in classroom settings.

- **Confidentiality:** Paraeducators need to understand the critical role of confidentiality in special education. They also need information regarding the importance of maintaining professional boundaries with parents and students (Chopra & French, 2004). Ensuring that paraprofessionals understand the nature of confidentiality and their role in protecting each child’s privacy is crucial.

- **Teaching Content Material:** Paraeducators need specific guidance to provide content-specific instruction (Giangreco, Broer, & Edelman, 2002). For example, if paraeducators are required to support students in solving complex math problems, they must have adequate understanding of the steps for solving such problems. They must also know and be able to implement evidence-based strategies for teaching students to solve such problems. Finally, they need guidance in understanding the individual needs of each student and how to vary the level of support provided.

- **Positive Praise and Appreciation:** Paraeducators value frequent nonmonetary signs and symbols of appreciation (Giangreco, Edelman, & Broer, 2001). In addition to needing to be heard, paraeducators report that they desire to be trusted with important responsibilities and given the support to successfully accomplish these duties. Specifically, paraeducators value orientation, ongoing support, and feedback about their efforts.

Beginning the year with clearly set expectations, a shared philosophy, and effective communication sets a positive tone for the rest of the school year and provides the foundation for a productive classroom environment. Effective communication, which includes the use of explicit language, ensures that everyone is on the same page (Friend & Cook, 2007), and relevant feedback provided through coaching and performance assessments facilitates paraeducator learning and emphasizes the importance of the work they do with the students.

References

Problem Solving Around Performance Issues
When performance issues arise, teachers must discuss concerns directly with the person(s) involved using effective communication. A balanced discussion, one that seeks to clarify all pertinent information, includes soliciting and listening to other points of view. Sometimes, it may be helpful to review the shared philosophy. In other instances, paraeducators may simply need to be reminded of why it is important to follow the teaching plan exactly. If paraeducators are having difficulty implementing a particular teaching strategy, it may be necessary to collect data to determine which steps are not being implemented correctly. These data will suggest what in particular should be addressed (e.g., the student’s behavior may warrant a contingency plan, the paraeducator may need to be reminded of the importance of following the script).

Concluding Remarks
When teachers provide consistent, positive supervision to paraeducators, it facilitates appropriate, effective instruction (French, 2001; Gaylord et al., 2002). As teachers begin to use a systematic approach such as the one outlined here, it will minimize the challenges that typically go along with supervising adults. Developing a shared philosophy regarding teaching and learning in the classroom supports a consistent, coherent classroom environment. Regularly scheduled meetings allow for the discussion of expectations and student performance, increase opportunities to provide positive feedback, and most important, allow paraeducators to understand the reasons behind the work asked of them.

Developing a shared philosophy regarding teaching and learning in the classroom supports a consistent, coherent classroom environment.
Giangreco, M. F., Broer, S. M., & Edelman, S. W. (2002). “That was then, this is now!” Paraprofessional supports for students with disabilities in general education classrooms. Exceptionality, 10, 47–64.

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