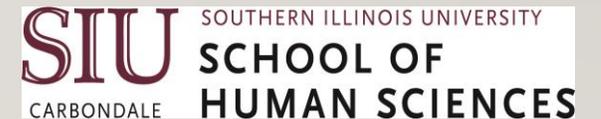




# IT'S A TEAM EFFORT: UTILIZING THE PARAPROFESSIONAL TEACHER LENS

---

*KIM NELSON, MA-EDL, LBS1*  
*PAULA STEWART, MA-EDL, LBS1*

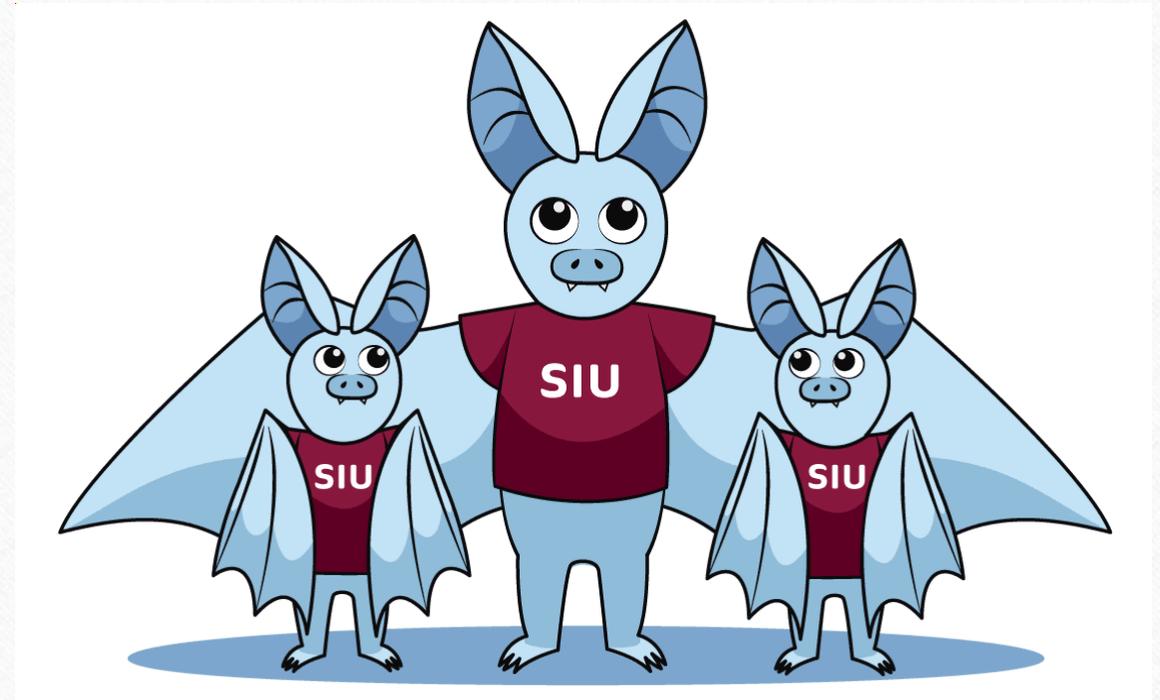


# BAT Project

---

*The Special Education Behavior Assessment Training (BAT) project provides comprehensive, professional learning for special education personnel on culturally responsive Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) practices, Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs), and Positive Interventions and Behavior Supports for students across all grade levels.*

**THIS SPECIAL EDUCATION TRAINING focuses on educational staff and their connection to culturally responsive FBAs, BIPs, Positive Interventions, and Behavior Supports.**



# Kim Nelson



# Paula Stewart



# Agenda

Educational  
Standards

Paraprofessional  
Roles and  
Responsibilities

Teacher Roles in  
Supervising  
Paraprofessionals

Management of  
"All the Things"

'B.A.T.'TING  
1000!

Let's Chat!

# Illinois Administrative School Code

[105 ILCS 5/10-22.34 and 34 -18]

## Paraprofessionals

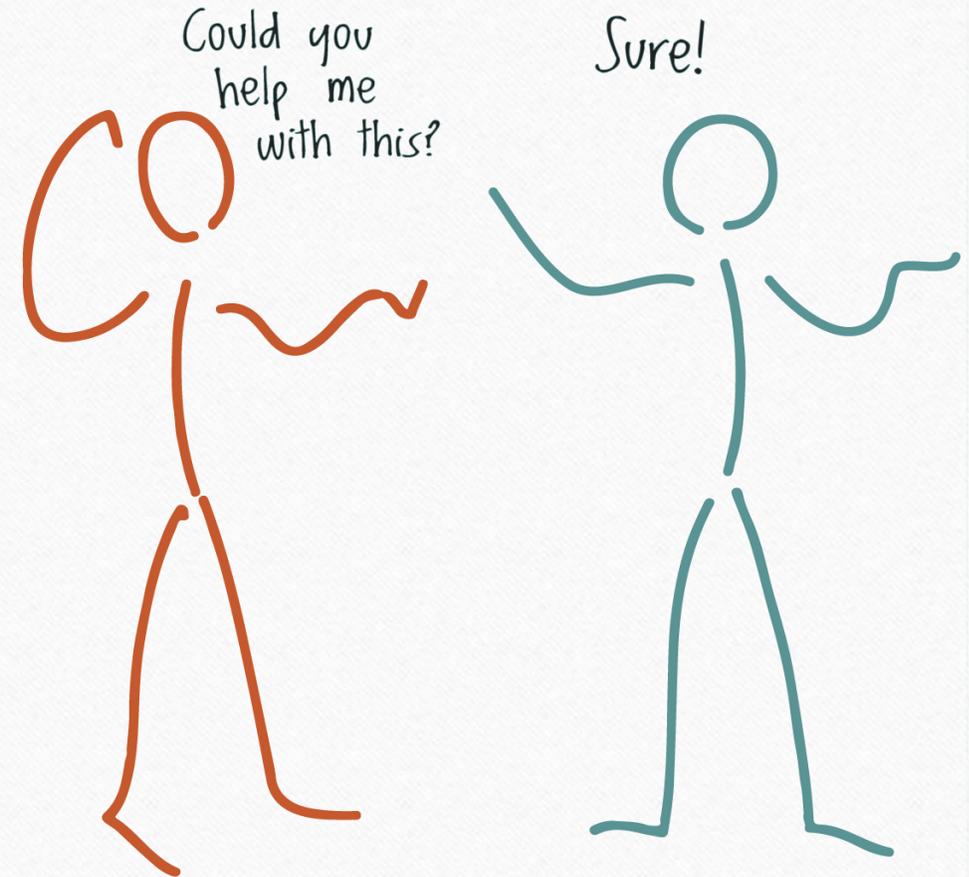
---



- School boards may employ **nonteaching personnel** or use volunteer personnel for nonteaching duties not requiring instructional judgment or evaluation of pupils.
- To "**assist in the instruction of pupils**", i.e., to serve as a paraprofessional, means to support teachers through interactions with students that will help them master curricular content, such as by tutoring; or to assist with classroom management, such as by organizing instructional materials.

# Each paraprofessional shall be:

- Under the direct supervision of a fully licensed teacher when assisting with instruction in ALL educational settings.
- (If there is a Substitute Teacher) The primary manager of the classroom to ensure consistency of delivery of supports.



The teacher shall be responsible for planning the activities and for evaluating the students.

And shall be continuously aware of the paraprofessional's activities, i.e., and be able to modify them.

# Roles and Expectations of the Para

- To **enhance the instructional programs** for students with disabilities. The Paraprofessional is under the direct supervision of the building administrator and the special education teacher and does not assume the primary responsibility for the classroom.

# Roles and Expectations of the Para

- The Paraprofessional **supports the teacher** (special or general) in providing instruction and performs duties which free the teacher to work with those students needing more help.
  - Many of the duties performed by the Paraprofessional are like those performed by the teacher.
  - Because the Paraprofessional works only under the direction of the teacher, the teacher diagnoses and prescribes the learning needs of the students.
  - The teacher functions in a leadership role and carries the primary responsibility of implementing the student's individual education plan (IEP); including the BIP.



Paraprofessionals may be assigned duties or activities which foster the implementation of various portions of the student's IEP/BIP.

- All lessons originate through the classroom teacher but may be implemented by the Paraprofessional.

➤ The special education Paraprofessional makes it possible for the teacher to be more effective and to utilize their ability and professional knowledge.

➤ **It is the teacher's responsibility to assure that the students are moving toward achievement of their individual goals and objectives.**

➤ **Paraprofessionals serve under the direction and supervision of the teacher to assist in carrying out those goals and objectives.**



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC](#)

# Paraprofessional Limitations

---

May  
NOT:

Write  
programs

Create new  
alternative  
instruction

Implement  
“Behavior”  
ideas

Take complete  
responsibility  
for any  
students

Talk with  
parents about  
educational  
program

# Whose Role?

<b>Task</b>	<b>Teacher Only</b>	<b>Paraprofessional Only</b>	<b>Both</b>
Design Instruction			
Assign Grades			
Review Lesson			
Modify Curriculum			
Gather Data			
Graph Data			
Interact with Parents			
Support Personal Care			
Prepare Materials			
Take Attendance			

# *Teacher Role*

## *Supervising Paraprofessionals*

### *Six Competency Areas*

---

- ✓ Communicating with Paraprofessionals
- ✓ Planning and Scheduling
- ✓ Instructional Support
- ✓ Modeling for Paraprofessionals
- ✓ Public Relations
- ✓ Management of Paraprofessionals

- Wallace, Shin, Bartholomay, & Stahl (2001)

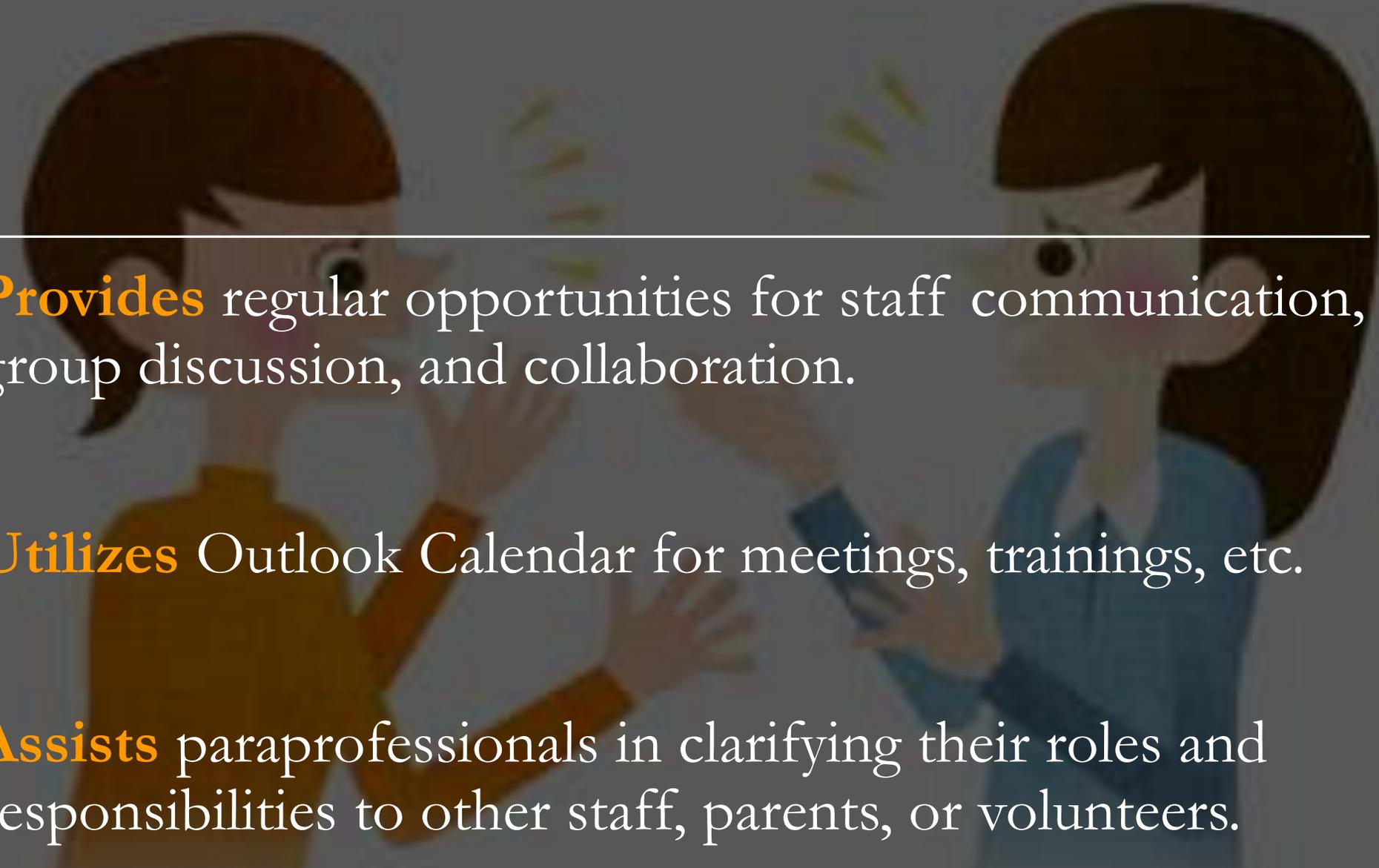
# Communicating with Paraprofessionals

Clear, receptive and responsive manner.

Daily direction in coordinating plans, schedules, and tasks.

Information/updates on student information, such as assessment results, behavioral changes, medications, and other factors.



- 
- An illustration of two women with dark hair, one in a yellow top and one in a blue top, engaged in a conversation. They are gesturing with their hands as if explaining something. The background is a soft, light blue gradient.
- 
- **Provides** regular opportunities for staff communication, group discussion, and collaboration.
  - **Utilizes** Outlook Calendar for meetings, trainings, etc.
  - **Assists** paraprofessionals in clarifying their roles and responsibilities to other staff, parents, or volunteers.

# CONFIDENTIALITY

“What happens in Vegas,  
stays in Vegas”

---

Part 1

**CONFIDENTIAL**

# WHY IS CONFIDENTIALITY IMPORTANT IN SPECIAL EDUCATION?



[Why Is Confidentiality Important In Special Education? - Childhood Education Zone - YouTube](#)



# Planning and Scheduling



- 
- **Establishes** goals and detailed plans around which activities of paraprofessionals are coordinated.
  - **Organizes** and manages schedules that allow for cooperation, planning, and information sharing.
  - **Considers** the strengths, interests, and needs of paraprofessionals when managing schedules.

**Manages smooth transitions brought on by changes to the daily schedules.**

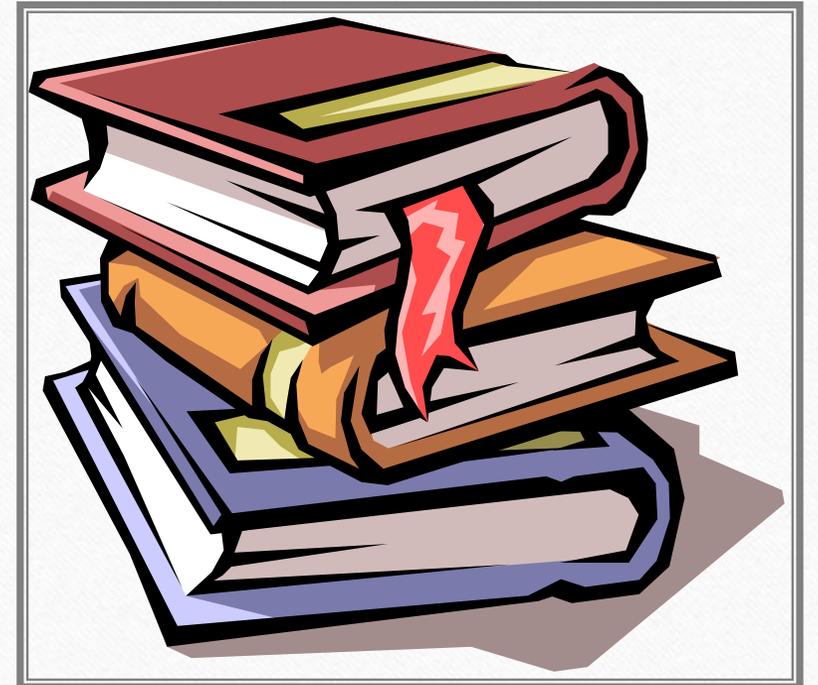
**Organizes and provides materials and resources that are necessary to carry out the objectives of any activity or lesson.**

---

# Provides Instructional Support

---

- **Provides** consistent constructive feedback regarding work performance.
- **Encourages** the involvement in setting goals and planning, implementing and evaluating the support, and instructional activities.
- **Coordinates** collaboration among all staff; such as specialists and related services.



**WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT  
PART OF BEING A PARA?**



**CONVERSATIONS WITH EDUCATORS**



- **Supports** and efficiently manages resources related to student instruction, such as instructional materials, physical space, and personnel.
- **Supports** in using modified instructional plans and materials to accommodate the exceptional learning needs of various students.
- **Supports** the directions for paraprofessionals who work in independent capacities.

# Modeling for Paraprofessionals

---

- Models a caring and respectful manner when interacting with students.
- Models a behavior that is trustworthy, cooperative, and active in school-wide programs.
- Models respect, patience, and persistence in carrying out educational objectives.

# Public Relations

---

Informs administrators, teachers, and parents of the responsibilities and roles of paras.

Advocates for training, leave time, modifications in responsibility, and involvement in decision groups.

# Management of Paraprofessionals

---

- **Describes** roles and responsibilities.
- **Maintains** regular positive supportive interaction.
- **Contributes** to the performance evaluation with the intent of assisting with skill improvement.





**Maintains professionalism through respect, confidentiality, and honoring boundaries.**



**Provides beginning and substitute paraprofessionals with orientation and also gives an understanding of other staff roles and responsibilities.**

# RELATIONSHIPS RESPONSIBILITIES

---

“You need to be aware of what others are doing, applaud their efforts, acknowledge their successes, and encourage them in their pursuits. When we all help one another, everybody wins.” — Jim Stovall



# ***Ethical Responsibilities for Teachers, Paraprofessionals***

1

Maintain confidentiality of personal information and educational records.

2

Follow district or agency policies for protecting health, safety, and well-being.

3

Demonstrate an understanding of the distinctions in the roles of various education personnel.

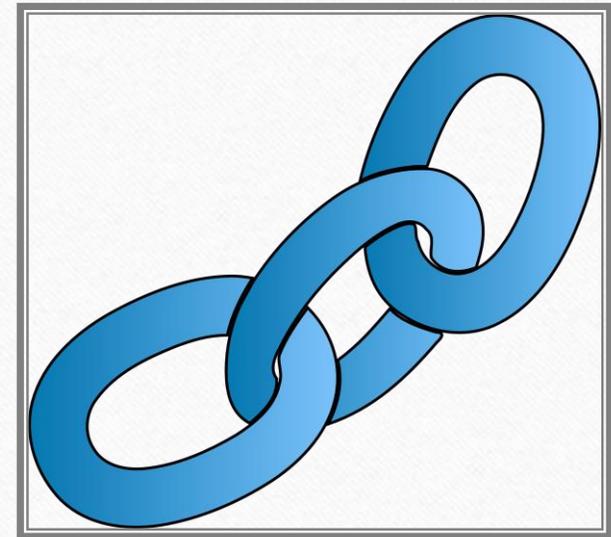
# Management of “all the things”

- Educators should share ownership of the learning and well-being of all students in the general education classroom, including students with disabilities:
  - Appropriate expectations for what each student with a disability can and should do in the general education or special education classroom
  - Appropriate support or what each student needs to be successful
    - C. B. Gilson and E.E. Biggs, 2023

# 'B.A.T.'TING 1000!

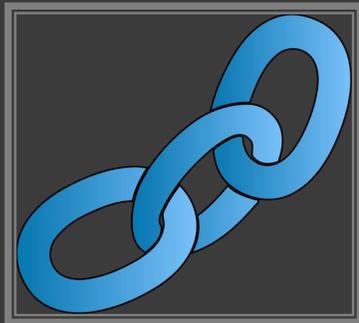
---

- Classroom Management/Behavior Management
- Organization/Instruction
- Direction/Positive Behavioral Supports
- Communication/Collaboration
- Differentiation/Learning/Understanding



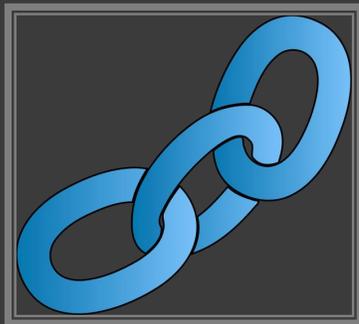
**ALL OF THESE ARE LINKED TOGETHER**

# Classroom and Behavior Management



- **Behavior management system:** Classroom wide/individualized per IEP and BIP (Classroom management becomes a behavior management system).
- **Rules of the classroom:** Implement a classroom management system (Picture cards with behavior expectations, reinforcement of routines and rules, and consistency).
- **Environmental supports:** Organize physical space (distinct areas for specified activities/lessons, visual reminders at eye level, regulation stations).
- **Scheduling and routines:** Classroom and individual schedules for repetition of routines and reinforcement of expectations.

# Classroom and Behavior Management



- **Visual supports:** Picture cards for behavioral expectations, classroom and individual schedules, FIRST/THEN, emergency situations, Break/Choice, and any other situation where clarification and communication of expectations is warranted.
- **Allowance of breaks:** Follow IEP/BIP for each student or as included within the classroom schedule for all. Choices for organized Break times utilizing preferred items/tasks/activities, again, individualized for each student.
- **Transitions-use of cues:** (visual, auditory, object, tactile). **MUST BE USED** consistently to create a repetitive routine of expectations for time frames. Non-negotiable.

The background is a blurred photograph of a classroom. In the center, there is a white rectangular box with an orange border. Inside this box, the text "6 CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT MISTAKES" is written in a bold, sans-serif font. "6 CLASSROOM" and "MISTAKES" are in white, while "MANAGEMENT" is in orange. Below the box, the text "(and what to do instead)" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

# 6 CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT MISTAKES

(and what to do instead)

Research-Backed Strategies for Better Classroom Management

# Refer to the FBA and BIP

The Master Teacher, 2018, 2023; [34-54 IEP Instructions \(isbe.net\)](#)

## Systems for school/classroom-wide

- Monitor and reinforce
- Implement classroom rules/responsibilities

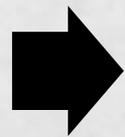
## Individualized systems based on Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs)

- Environment Supports
  - Target behavior of FBA/BIP
  - Physical environment: visuals/transitions
  - Supervision of students
  - Levels of student support needed

"We Must Use the Time Wisely and Forever Realize  
That The Time Is Always Ripe To Do Right."  
Nelson Mandela

---

By being  
prepared and  
providing  
students with  
IEP supports,  
there may not be  
a need for an FBA  
or a BIP.

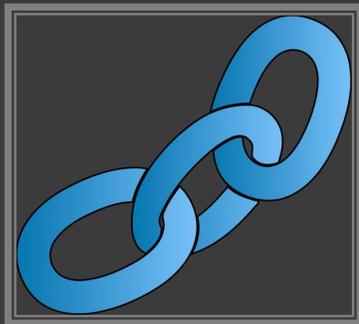


"Know Plan  
A,B,C-Z!"  
-Trained  
Paraprofessional



Best practice  
teaching, tiered  
interventions,  
and consistent  
effort from staff  
can elicit student  
success.

# Organization and Instruction

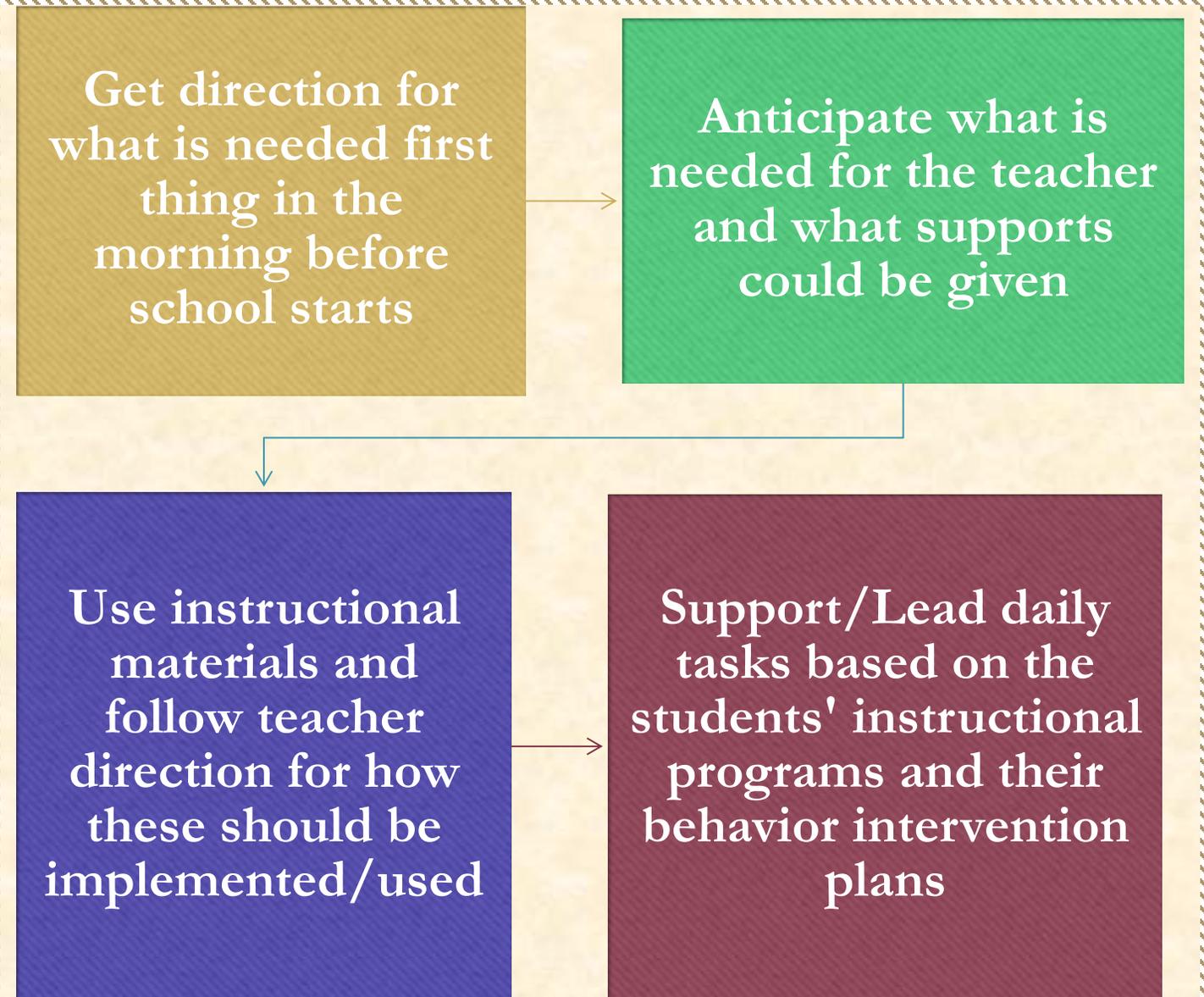


## TEACHERS ARE THE EXPERTS IN CONTENT AND INSTRUCTION

- **Ensure** organization in the classroom.
- **Regulate** instruction/curriculum based on the FBA/BIP.
  - These can be embedded in the organization of the classroom.
- **Value** each staff members' roles and input.
- **Manage** the paraprofessional's responsibilities; not taking on too many or not assigning/delegating any which are not theirs.

**“It helps when the teacher has a clear outline of the structure of the classroom and needs of the student.”**

**-Trained  
Paraprofessional**

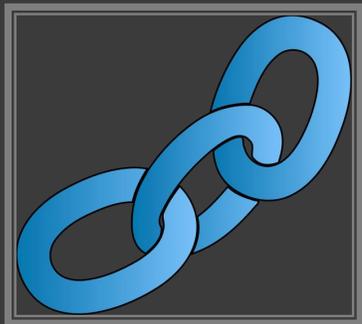


"Do not insert yourself into the process of what you ask a student to do. Let the student do it independently. We are supports and are not there to do it for them."

*Kim Nelson, BAT Content Writer*

*Paula Stewart, BAT Regional Specialist*

Direction  
and  
Positive Behavior  
Support



- **Positive Behavior Supports (PBS):** techniques in physical environment/interactions allowing a student to engage in appropriate behavior.
- **Proactive rather than reactive.**
- **BIPs addresses** changes for target behavior.
- **Determine supports** that can be added or faded.
- Know the type of **reinforcement** in place.

---

## Teachers teach examples of PBS

- Use visual cues.
- Model expected behavior.
- Allow student to make choices in lesson.
- Avoid power struggles.
- Saturate positive behavior with praise when initially reinforcing.

“One of the struggles is it's hard for them to know exactly how much support they should be giving.”  
- *C.B. Gilson and E.E. Biggs, 2023*

“Do we keep doing x, y, z, or stop doing it?”  
- *Trained paraprofessional*

# Problem Behavior or Behavior Problem

---

A problem behavior is NOT the same thing  
as a behavior problem!

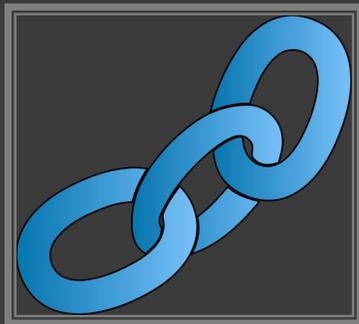
"This statement allows us to acknowledge and address the problem behavior without casting the student in the role of the instigator."

Diane Twachtman-Cullen, 2008



Inspirational Video- Be a Mr. Jensen- MUST WATCH!!

# Communication and Collaboration



- **Establish** ground rules for communication.
- **Communication** between all subsets involved.
- **Train** those who supervise during instructional and non-instructional lessons or activities.
- **Teach** to model more and talk less.
- **Ask** questions.

W.A.I.T.

---

WHY AM I  
TALKING?



# "Communication between us needs to be constant and consistent"

-Trained paraprofessional

---

## Have regular meetings

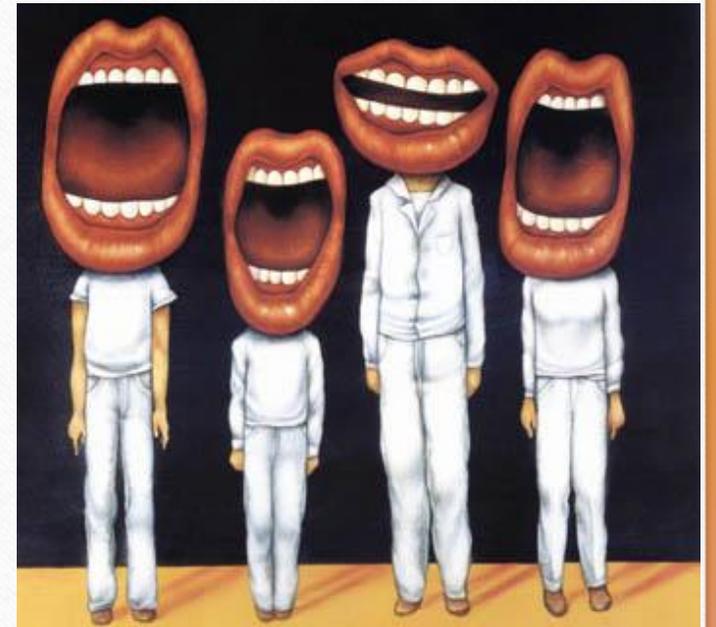
- ✓ start and end the day with time to plan/debrief
- ✓ Review the students' IEP/BIP together

## Avoid being in the middle

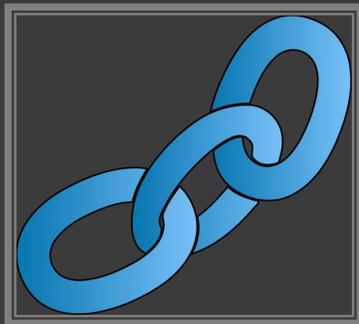
- ✓ General/Special Ed teachers should speak directly

## Co-plan lessons and activities

- ✓ This often happens throughout the day



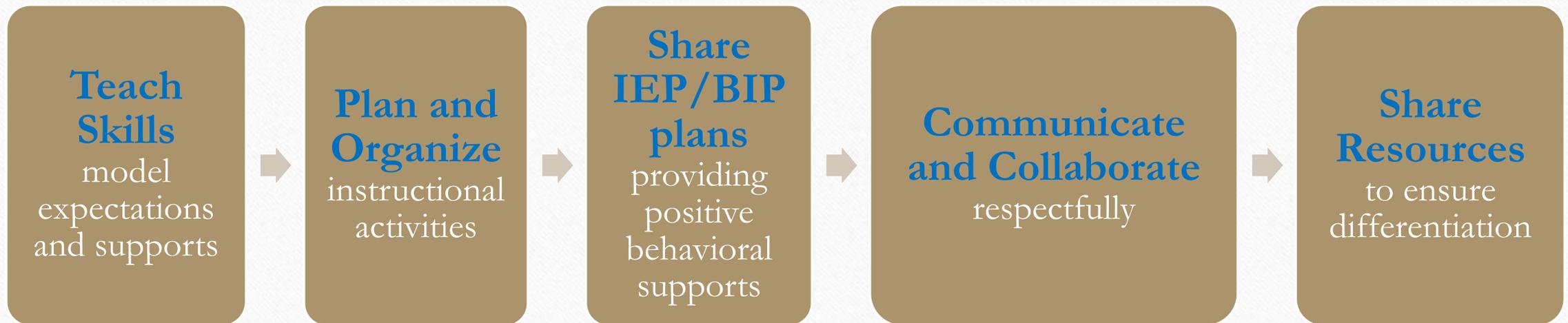
Differentiation,  
Learning,  
and  
Understanding



## THE MAIN GOAL FOR CHANGING BEHAVIOR

- Motivate students through differentiation.
- Every students' motivators will be listed in the BIP.
- Implement behavior strategies specific to the student's learning styles and understanding.

# How will you utilize the paraprofessional?





A good working partnership between a teacher and a paraprofessional does not just happen!

Both the teacher and the paraprofessional must ask themselves? What can we do to make the team better?

Let's Chat!

---



# Resources

---

Illinois Administrative Code-Paraprofessional standard-Pursuant to Sections 10-22.34 and 34-18 of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/10-22.34 and 34 -18], school boards may employ nonteaching personnel or use volunteer personnel for nonteaching duties not requiring instructional judgment or evaluation of pupils.[Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 1.630 - Paraprofessionals; Other Unlicensed Personnel | State Regulations | US Law | LII / Legal Information Institute \(cornell.edu\)](#)

# Resources

---

Knowledge and Skills for Teachers Supervising the Work of Paraprofessionals, Wallace, Shin, Bartholomay & Stahl (2001), Volume 67, Issue 4; [Knowledge and Skills for Teachers Supervising the Work of Paraprofessionals - Teri Wallace, Jongho Shin, Tom Bartholomay, Barbara J. Stahl, 2001 \(sagepub.com\)](#)

[What is the most difficult part of being a School Paraprofessional? | Conversations with Educators – YouTube](#)

[Inspirational Video- Be a Mr. Jensen- MUST WATCH!!](#)

# Resources

---

Carly B. Gilson and Elizabeth E. Biggs. The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, USA; b Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, USA; INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION. [Full article: Perspectives of special education teachers and paraprofessionals on working together in general education settings \(tandfonline.com\)](#)

Research-Backed Strategies for Better Classroom Management

Why Is Confidentiality Important In Special Education? - Childhood Education Zone - YouTube

# Resources

---

The Master Teacher, Para Course 110 Classroom and Behavior Management, 2018 and 2023

The Master Teacher, Para Course 124 Providing Positive Behavioral Supports for Individual Students, 2018 and 2023

The Master Teacher, Para Course 115 Developing Positive Communication Skills, 2018 and 2023

[A Teacher's Guide to Working With Paraprofessionals - We Are Teachers.](#) July 2017.