

Integrated Services
Guidelines for Serving Students with Emotional Disabilities

*Preparing students socially and academically for
success in school and in the community.*



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Acknowledgements

In the spring of 2008, a comprehensive evaluation of programs serving students with emotional disabilities was undertaken. The purpose of the evaluation was to identify competent practices, note any deficits or less effective practices, and provide recommendations for needed unity and improvement. As a result of that report and with a desire to improve outcomes for all ED students across the district, we set forth these program guidelines.

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Educate...Every Child, Every Day

Poudre School District exists to support and inspire every child to think, to learn, to care, and to graduate prepared to be successful in a changing world.

Integrated Services • Students with Emotional or Behavioral Disabilities

Believing that our charge is to “Educate...every child, every day” includes those students who are not always easy to educate, those who are troubled or challenging by virtue of their behavior and in need of specialized support to realize our mission. In compliance with the federal mandate of IDEA, Colorado state statutes, and the District’s commitment to support and inspire every child, the Integrated Services Department of Poudre School District is committed to providing the highest quality services for students with emotional or behavior disabilities that result in clear and measurable outcomes for this population.

It is within this commitment that we strive to provide clarity on the challenge of serving students with emotional or behavioral disabilities. This document strives to promote unity in vision and a common language across District staff, and to ensure the consistent implementation of best practices in service delivery at each and every building. Once a student is identified as eligible for special education services due to an emotional or behavioral disability, parents and students must be able to depend on the school to provide a level of quality services that is consistent regardless of where the student resides.

Our Students

A child with a “significant identifiable emotional disability,” as termed by the State, has emotional or social functioning that prevents them from benefiting from regular education services. This includes:

- Sad affect, depression and feelings of worthlessness, or atypical affect for a specific situation
- Excessive fear and anxiety
- Physical complaints not due to medical conditions
- Withdrawal or avoidance of social interactions that interferes with interpersonal relationships
- Out of touch with reality; experiencing hallucinations, disorientation, thought disorders or delusions
- Perseveration in thoughts or actions
- Aggression that disrupts interpersonal relationships
- Oppositional, defiant, or noncompliant responses
- Limited self-control
- Patterns of stealing, lying, or cheating
- Bizarre or exaggerated reactions to routine events

To be eligible for services, the presence of these behavior patterns must result in an inability to benefit from regular education and/or an inability to build or maintain interpersonal

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relationships to a degree that social development is impaired along with the ability to assume responsibility and meet the demands of their environment. With a commitment to serving students in the least restrictive environments and utilizing a response to intervention model (RTI) for best determining service needs, a variety of instructional and behavioral interventions must have been implemented within regular education without success before considering special education services. Furthermore, the behavior must exist at a rate or intensity that exceeds normal development, not be situational—that is occurs in multiple settings—and has existed over time, not transient in nature.

While the eligibility guidelines are at times tricky, the challenges that these student present daily are well known. Some of the more common concerns include:

- Inability to get along with peers
- Unaccepting of authority
- No sense of personal efficacy
- Low self-esteem or failure identity
- Blaming others, not taking responsibility for own behavior
- Lack of respect for self, others, property
- Poor problem-solving
- Lack of empathy for others
- Classroom disruptions; off task, wandering, disturbing others
- Failure to complete, turn in work
- Lack of commitment to curriculum
- Need for immediate gratification
- Limited or no motivation; poor goal orientation
- Belief that their inappropriate behavior is better
- Little or no value for school
- Restricted parental involvement
- Entitlement attitude
- Poor work ethic
- Poor hygiene, self-care; unhealthy lifestyles
- Truancy
- Emotionality, poor anger control
- Influence of drugs, substances
- Inadequate employability or vocational skills

Unfortunately, students with these behavior patterns not only have school problems, but also experience long-term effects on their adjustment status in later life. The best services for students with significant behavioral difficulties are those uniquely designed to be responsive to the students' presenting problems. The graphic on page 7 relates these common characteristics with the District's ED program components.

Our Mission and Goals

While the nature of the students we serve is complex, our mission is uncomplicated:

To prepare students socially and academically for success in school and in the community.

It is our purpose to provide the climate, instruction and supports necessary to tackle students' emotional and behavioral issues, and thereby allow them to experience school and life fully. We provide every student with a safe and positive learning environment that reveals students' potentials; cultivates self-worth, respect for others, and the desire to learn; and develops the personal responsibility and accountability critical to meet the demands of life. The following are goals that lead to the achievement of our mission:

Social Competency

To develop the student's ability to function socially in a manner that is expected by the school as well as the general public.

1. Provide direct and systematic instruction on responsible student behaviors, the norms of the school, and social competencies.
2. Ensure use and generalization of those preferred behaviors through ongoing practice, positive and corrective feedback, and consequences.
3. Create a structured and positive learning climate that fosters excellence, mutual respect, and models social competency.

Academic Achievement

To provide a unique learning environment that engages students and ensures their fullest possible benefit.

4. Assess student academic strengths, weaknesses, and interests to set individual learning goals.
5. Provide instruction that ensures achievement commensurate with ability.
6. Conduct meaningful learning activities that engage students and build their commitment to learning and school.

Personal Responsibility, Productivity and Mental Health

To assist the student to become a valued member of society, to be productive and live up to the expectations placed on him by self and others.

7. Set high standards for responsible behavior and provide the conditions to achieve accountability for behavior and actions.
8. Connect students and families with local agencies as needed to seek and maintain services necessary for the student's mental health and family stability.
9. Develop the processes and skills for students to effectively advocate for themselves and access the supports needed for their success in school, the community, and later in work.

While staff and students will experience frequent victories as students learn and apply new behaviors within the framework of the above goals, overall program success is measured through: 1) the accomplishment of IEP goals, 2) exits from program services or greater time in a less restrictive environment, 3) participation in school activities, 4) student satisfaction with school, 5) decreased use of disciplinary actions, 6) attendance and on-time behavior, 7) classes passed, and 8) improved graduation rates. Ultimately the program's success may best be represented by successful transitions to the next life stage or environment, especially post-school success.

Our Philosophy and Beliefs

A high level of academic achievement remains a primary goal of education, however, there can be little disagreement that social, emotional, and behavioral problems not only impede that goal, but also disrupt lives. For this population, ensuring that students “graduate prepared for success in a changing world” involves the best of both academic and behavioral interventions. It is our responsibility as educators to join with the family and community to help change behavior—not merely find ways to accept the presenting behaviors, but instead helping them to develop both academically and socially to their fullest potential. Our principles or beliefs that guide all planning and delivery of services for students with emotional disabilities include:

- All students, regardless of home environments or experiences, can learn successful behaviors.
- Our primary focus is teaching behaviors that will lead to success and encouraging and empowering students to assume responsibility for their own behavior.
- Behavior change is largely an instructional endeavor. Behavior can be taught using the same instructional approaches used to teach academics—instruction, practice, and feedback.
- Behavior change is difficult and takes time. Interventions lead to lasting change when used correctly, consistently, and for a sustained period of time.
- Student academic engagement reduces discipline problems. A high level of student engagement and productivity is achieved by using best practices in lesson design and delivery.
- In order to prepare students for success in general education, classroom instruction should emulate the teaching arrangements students will experience in those settings, including structure, a high value for learning time, and expectations for participation and productivity.
- The preferred solutions for students with behavior problems are in the personal environment of their home school with those who are most committed to their long-term well-being.
- Services are best framed around individuals; student needs dictate the model for service delivery, not existing programs or preferred teaching arrangements.
- Behavior change is more likely to occur within a positive climate that strengthens adult-student relationships and models mutual respect.
- Relationships alone are not sufficient to bring about change. It is essential to also set high standards, teach, praise, correct and consistently use consequences.
- Tolerating inappropriate behavior does not help build relationships with students and does not help them to develop the skills they need for creating positive relationships with others.
- Students want high standards for their behavior. Teachers demonstrating high expectations for behavior and academics along with a strong personal commitment to students experience stronger relationships and greater student outcomes.

- Exclusionary approaches (detentions, suspensions, etc.) erode student connectedness and lead to truancy and dropping out of school. Students thrive with relational security—knowing that adults are committed to their success and will work resolutely to that end.
- Social errors are inevitable. Effective consequences help students to take responsibility for their errors and make amends to those they may have offended.
- Student engagement in school often hinges on perceptions of being a valued, contributing member. Assisting students to discover their strengths and help them to be a part of their school reinforces a commitment to school and learning.
- ED students should be included in general education settings to the maximum extent possible.
- While participation in general education and community settings is an ultimate goal, students should demonstrate the prerequisite behaviors necessary to experience success in those settings.
- Transition planning is central to all we do. Student goals that focus on the behavioral skill sets necessary for success in the next life stage promote relevance in learning and greater success.
- Parent involvement is fundamental to student success. Regular structures for communicating with and engaging parents, families, and community agencies strengthens student outcomes.

We believe that these principles define the attitudes or patterns of behaving that, in turn, guide daily decisions regarding services and lead to success.

Our Program

The Poudre School District provides the resources to address a full continuum of individual student emotional and behavioral needs in all District zones and across educational levels. The program features, uniquely matched to the common presenting problems of this population, are discussed below. (See page 7).

1. **Supportive Environment and Teaming** Helping ED students to adjust their behavior and engage academically requires a safe and supportive environment and a staff-student ratio so that individual interventions can be expertly unfolded. A team of support staff, including a school psychologist and social worker, along with an Integrated Specialist, school resource officer, and building administrator, join with teachers and paraeducators to provide comprehensive services. This teaming also ensures that each student experiences a connection with a significant adult role model at school. A supportive environment includes high structure, explicit student expectations, a high rate of positive feedback (4:1), and adult relationship-building behaviors that lead students to feel a strong sense of caring and trust. The combination of high expectations within relationships of love and respect creates the powerful conditions for change.
2. **Individualized Educational Plans (IEP)** The hallmark of all Integrated Services is the joint planning with school staff, parents, and other agencies when appropriate, to determine personal learning and behavior goals and frame the services needed to realize those goals.

This IEP is mutually determined, based on the student's immediate needs, solution focused, and allows for mastery of the District's learning standards set forth for all students. Credible planning decisions occur with sufficient data, including the function of the behavior, and allow the team to readily discern services. Thoughtful involvement of parents as well as the student, when age-appropriate, enhances ownership and likelihood of program commitment.

3. Social Skills Training Social skills have been identified as prerequisites for academic achievement as well as for success in the community and on the job. They allow students to initiate and maintain positive social relationships, contribute to peer acceptance, and facilitate effective coping. Social skills training is a positive, proactive intervention that replaces negative behaviors with more desirable ones through direct teaching, modeling, feedback/coaching, and sometimes the use of self-assessment, self-recording, and problem-solving. A district curriculum of social skills aligned with behavioral standards provides a roadmap and a common language for developing student social competencies. Social skills training is most effective when it reflects the needs of individual students and utilizes strategies to ensure generalization. All Poudre School District ED students receive ongoing social skills instruction based on their specific needs.

4. Focused Academic Instruction Because ED students are often disengaged from the school curriculum and have learning difficulties, missed instruction or academic delays, a plan for meaningful academic instruction is vital. While the traditional curriculum is always preferred, students, regardless of age, who are two or more years behind in basic literacy or math skills are best served through intense instruction in a district-approved intervention curriculum designed to remediate deficits in a timely way. Learning needs might also dictate an alternative curriculum that targets the District's standards but increases interest or engagement through more applied learning and hands on activities that investigate how learning relates to doing. Other creative instructional arrangements might include on-line or credit recovery coursework. Additionally, most ED students require systematic instruction in study and organizational skills, taught within a structured classroom environment that emulates the general education setting, so as to develop task-related responsible behaviors necessary for successful inclusion. ED programs are committed to putting together an academic program of the highest standards that engage students and teach them how to be productive in the learning environment.

5. Behavioral Interventions, Goal Setting, and Progress Monitoring Along with social skills training, behavioral interventions provide the proven tools for creating lasting behavior change. Individual goal setting followed by teaching and gathering and reviewing performance data on those goals is one of the most powerful ways to engage students actively in change efforts. Use of motivation systems, feedback or tracking tools, and positive and negative consequences provide the means to target and consistently respond to behavior, monitor progress daily, and guide program and service decisions. With these tools, students at all service levels are assisted to work daily on their targeted behaviors.

6. Collaboration with Other Agencies ED Students often bring additional issues such as anger, depression, substance abuse, etc., and as a result call for school staff to work with other agencies and assist families in accessing specialized services and ensuring continuity of efforts across settings. The school, through the social worker or psychologist, assists parents and families to connect with social services, mental health, or other professionals, inviting those agencies to join the team efforts on behalf of students.

Matching Program Features to Student Characteristics

Presenting Problem	Program Feature
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of poor relationships with adults • Low self-esteem or failure identity • Inability to get along with peers and adults • Limited respect for role-bound authority • Lack of respect for self, others, property • Poor problem-solving; verbal aggression • Blaming others, not taking responsibility for own behavior • Lack of empathy for others; inability to understand others' feelings 	<p><i>Supportive Environment</i></p> <p><i>Social Skills Training</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom disruptions; off task, wandering, disturbing others • Failure to complete, turn in work • Work quality below ability • Weak organizational skills • Limited study skills • Academic delays, spotty learning • Lack of commitment to curriculum 	<p><i>Structured Classroom Environment</i></p> <p><i>Study & Organizational Skills</i></p> <p><i>Focused Academic Instruction</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavior resistant to change • Need for immediate gratification • No sense of personal efficacy or power • Belief that their inappropriate behavior is better • Limited or no motivation; poor goal orientation • Little or no value for school 	<p><i>Behavioral Interventions, Goal Setting, and Progress Monitoring</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor attendance, truancy • Emotionality, poor anger control, fighting, physical aggression • Depression • Influence of drugs, substances; aftereffects of substance use and abuse • Poor hygiene, self-care; unhealthy lifestyles • Family difficulties 	<p><i>Collaboration with Other Agencies</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Give me” attitude or feelings of entitlement • Restricted leisure time skills • Inadequate employability or vocational skills • Lack of commitment to traditional curriculum • Poor work ethic 	<p><i>Service Learning, Transition Planning & Pre-vocational Training</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricted parental involvement • Poor attendance • Lack of support by parents for school/staff 	<p><i>Parent-Home Involvement</i></p>

7. Service Learning, Pre-vocational Training, and Transition Planning Many ED students have acquired self-centered attitudes and demanding behaviors related to a sense of entitlement. Service Learning provides a powerful opportunity to engage students of all ages/grades in the community, create applied learning opportunities, and shift their focus from a “gimme” attitude to caring for others. Providing experiences with constructive leisure time activities can also help to engage students and alter unhealthy behavior patterns. Furthermore, specialized curriculum options are often essential to ensure that this population is prepared for post-secondary success in the work world. Supplementing the Critical Skills course with additional work-related skills or arranging for PACE/ACE experiences or community college vocational participation may best serve some ED students. The value of community-focused learning for students at all levels cannot be disputed, however, participation in these areas and activities must not occur until students have been taught and can demonstrate basic social competencies that prepare them for success in these activities. Finally, just as we seek curriculum and learning experiences that build on student interests and needs, instruction that prepares students for success in the immediate or upcoming settings that they will encounter add great relevance and importance to learning. All work with this population is done with a constant eye on upcoming experiences, an analysis of the skills needed for success there, and the intentional teaching and practicing of those skills.

8. Parent-Home Involvement There is no doubt that parents have a significant impact on their children’s success in school. Student achievement, attitudes and behavior can all be improved when parents and schools work together; our success, at least in part, hinges on the family’s willingness to partner with us. And yet many families have become disenchanted with the school and some are experiencing heavy burdens in dealing with their child’s behavior. Finding ways to positively engage parents through joint planning and regular progress updates garners support. Further assistance may be necessary to help locate and obtain specialized services to alleviate family stressors and contribute to their child’s progress. This involvement is more likely to happen within a specific plan for parent engagement.

Service Delivery Models

The current emphasis in special education service delivery is on unified and integrated service systems where general and special educators work together to provide a full continuum of interventions in a seamless way. An essential characteristic of services in Poudre Schools is that resources are arranged to fit the needs of the student, rather than requiring the student to fit existing resources or delivery models. Interventions are planned and implemented, not based on disability category or a preferred program model, but rather on the specific educational needs of the student. This integrated services thinking is made operational in the Response to Intervention (RTI) movement. The success of this approach for all disabilities, and especially ED students, hinges on diligently assisting general educators with the skills to manage these difficult-to-teach students in the regular classroom, using support staff to participate in intervention design and delivery rather than solely testing, and a shift to focus on student outcomes rather than where or how services are delivered. As schools embrace RTI and invest in schoolwide discipline planning such as Positive Behavior Supports (PBS), meeting the needs of ED students will occur with greater success.

Service delivery decisions are grounded in the state and federal requirements of a full continuum of service options and the concepts of “least restrictive environment (LRE)” and “most appropriate education.” LRE and inclusive services means that students should attend the school they would normally attend if they did not have a disability and be included whenever possible in general education classes, bringing special education services to the student in that setting. Additionally, if an educational program is to be “most appropriate,” it also must be tailored to the individual needs of the child. While inclusion is desired, the decision must then be made based on whether the needed services and desired outcomes can be achieved in that setting. For ED students, this movement toward inclusion and the balancing of LRE and “most appropriate education” is not always easy. Some caution in accepting the full inclusion and non-categorical supposition for all ED students is wise, and the decision as to whether any particular student should be educated in a regular classroom setting all of the time, part of the time, or none of the time must always be an inquiry into the needs of that specific child, not prevailing trends or existing programs and services.

While inclusive approaches are obviously preferred, there are realities that make full inclusion for ED students difficult including the concept of “teachability,” the general severity of this disability category, and the resistance to intervention that is often associated with these students. ED students are ranked among the most difficult to teach, primarily because they exhibit behaviors patterns that are the least acceptable to general educators. Their absence of task-related behaviors and challenges to teacher authority and the control of the classroom create concerns regarding their “teachability” and the related impact on the climate and the learning of others.

Of course the severity of problems varies for ED students, just as it does within and between disability categories. The adjectives *mild*, *moderate*, and *severe* have been used to denote the severity of disabilities. Severity for ED students is influenced by the intensity of the behavior, the number or areas of problem behavior and, the amount and kind of support needed in order for the student to benefit from school. ED students are typically not determined eligible for special education services until the severity of their behavior has been demonstrated and they have failed to respond to interventions in the general education setting. As a result, resistance to intervention is another issue in service delivery decisions. Many ED students exhibit inappropriate behaviors that have high momentum and low frequencies of desirable or appropriate behaviors. In other words, they exhibit behaviors that have been practiced and have high response strength that are resistant to change. Best practices suggest that multiple interventions of great strength implemented with integrity by trained staff will likely be necessary to remediate resistant behaviors. Full inclusion or non-categorical service models may not be the most appropriate place for such interventions to be effectively supported. The questions to ask when planning are first, *What interventions or supports are needed to address the student’s behaviors of concern?* And then, *How or where can those interventions best be unfolded/supported?* A discussion of some of the more common supports and service delivery models within the full continuum of services follows along with considerations or implications for ED students.

Consultation Services It is estimated that 7% of all students will have behavior problems that require classroom intervention; about one-third to one-half of those will be serious enough to warrant special education designation. The unidentified students with behavior problems may require consultation support in order to be successful and to avoid further

special services. The early intervention and prevention of disabilities through general education teacher consultation is a legitimate service provided by the Integrated Services team. ED teachers, psychologists, or social workers may engage in joint planning weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly with general educators to unfold interventions for unidentified students. Investing in the skill development of general educators is essential to meeting student needs, maintaining students in general education settings, and facilitating the later successful mainstreaming of ED students. Once student problems have proven to be unresponsive to interventions in the general education setting and the student is referred and determined eligible for special education, services will likely need to be extended beyond this initial consultation level. A consultation service model may once again be appropriate as ED students are being transitioned out of special classes and back into the general education setting.

Co-Teaching Mandates for LRE and highly qualified teacher status have resulted in a greater interest in co-teaching. The term co-teaching has been used synonymously with collaboration or team teaching. It is a service delivery option where students with IEPs receive some of their instruction in the context of the general education classroom. Two professionals, a general educator and a special educator or specialist, share planning, facilitation of the learning process, and grading responsibilities for a heterogeneously grouped class. Often the special education teacher focuses on adapting and modifying instruction while the general education teacher focuses on assuring the mastery of related standards. It is not a general education classroom with one “real” teacher and one who serves as “the help” or “an extra set of hands.” Studies generally find that students have a positive response to co-teaching. Teachers recognize the potential value but find that time constraints for planning, funding, and staffing patterns may make it difficult. Co-teaching is generally most feasible when there is a sizeable group of ED students with mild to moderate behavioral concerns who are in need of a course that is difficult to provide in the special education environment or would better be delivered in general education.

Specialized Groups ED Students often need individual or specialized groups to deal with personal problems such as anger control, substance use/abuse, abuse or neglect, truancy, health issues, etc. These services are often provided by school psychologists, counselors, school resource officers, or social workers, but may also be provided through the coordinated efforts of other child-serving agencies. Regardless of other service models being employed to meet needs, ED students may receive these additional services as long as they are specifically identified on the student’s IEP.

Resource Services Resource services typically refer to specialized instruction in an individual or small group setting away from the mainstream for a portion of the day. Most often multi-categorical, for students with mild disabilities and for students with academic delays, resource services support and extend instruction in the regular classroom, and coordinate services closely with general education teachers to ensure continuity of learning activities and mastery of skills. Some resource services also support the social needs of students in a small group setting and provide behavior interventions. If this is the focus, it is essential that strategies are developed with general educators for the generalization of behaviors learned in the resource setting. If using resource level services, it is essential to ensure that the behavioral interventions needed by ED students can be provided. Resource support time tends to range from 3 hours a week up to a maximum of 50% of the school day.

Special Class Services Special classes serve students who need intensive individualized interventions for more than 50% of the school day. In a special class, students can receive part or all of their instruction in a carefully controlled setting with the intent of return to less restrictive services as soon as goals are achieved and success is probable. This service level meets the needs of student who require more personalized instruction, consistent behavior management, a highly structured environment, and more consistent adult supervision. Special classes may serve only ED students or students with different disabilities as long as they have similar educational and behavioral needs. One variation of special class services growing in popularity is a time-limited self-contained model that provides intensive supports for 6-9 weeks to stabilize students and build behavioral capacity for inclusion in other less restrictive service options. Often called “turnabout” programs, such services limit restrictiveness to a short duration while ensuring defensible behavior change.

One-to-One Instruction This most restrictive service level should be used with great caution and only for students unable to function academically or socially with other students. One-to-one instruction refers to a specially trained adult who provides services to a single student for the entire school day. For ED students, this arrangement might be used for brief durations until the student exhibits behaviors that are safe and predictable allowing return to group settings. The intense skill training would focus on the de-escalation of problematic behaviors and learning those behaviors necessary to participate in instructional settings with others. Homebound instruction is a most restrictive version of this service delivery option.

Other Services Other District alternative programs may meet the needs of a select group of students identified as ED. Online Independent Study (OIS) may be ideal for students needing credits but unable to handle the behavioral demands of the general education classroom. Centennial High School could effectively serve ED students who are attending school regularly but require 60% or more of their time in the ED program and are unlikely to return to the general education setting. Such students might benefit from a more comprehensive set of offerings, a smaller closed campus, strong positive culture, and structured environment at CHS. Also at the secondary level, the Poudre Transition Center (PTC) serves students who are temporarily in transition to/from residential and juvenile facilities with a focus on gradual inclusion into appropriate programs and services within their home schools. Finally, hospital or agency programs and residential placements may be needed to serve a few ED students; these and are accessed through the IEP process and collaboration with family and other agencies.

Our Roles and Responsibilities

The complex needs of students with emotional and behavioral disabilities are best served through a team of teachers and support staff working in harmony. Each building may have a differently configured team based upon the severity of student behaviors and building size and educational level, however, working together to plan and deliver services is critical to realize good student outcomes. It will ultimately be up to each building team to define their roles and responsibilities that best serve their staffing arrangement, personal skill sets, and setting. This is a first priority in program planning. In addition to having clear roles, teams are to create structures for regular meetings so as to discuss student progress or difficulties and determine specific assignments, thereby closely coordinating interventions and efforts. Some possible guidelines for role clarification follow.

Building Administrator Studies show that building-level support from principals and general educators have strong effects on virtually all critical aspects of special education teachers' working conditions. The values and supportive actions of building administrators create the context through climate and culture for ED services to flourish. Their role is largely one of overseeing the provision of human and physical resources, but also providing continual support and, at times, personal engagement with teams and students. This role includes:

- Possess a thorough understanding of the program, its mission, philosophy, and best practices in service delivery, as well as legal requirements.
- Communicate value for and support of the program to the entire building staff.
- Participate in IEP meetings and/or ensure participation of critical staff.
- Promote a collaborative teaming environment for the program, ensuring the development and efficient operation of the team to plan and deliver services.
- Periodically attend team meetings and participate as requested for those cases where administrative assistance is needed.
- Meet with a designated team member periodically (school psychologist, social worker) to maintain familiarity with program activities, cases, and interventions.
- Ensure provision of materials and equipment necessary for program success.
- Set up structures for general education/special education collaboration and planning.
- Create an environment for positive parent engagement, supporting the team and teachers in parent meetings as needed.
- Reinforce a value building-wide for teaching all students social competencies that lead to respect and responsibility.
- Develop a plan for providing support to teachers for disruptive student behavior (office discipline referrals) that is congruent with the program philosophy.
- Engage with ED students to build positive relationships and school connections.
- Ensure that personal administrative disciplinary actions and/or contacts with students and parents are in harmony with other program interventions and the IEP.
- Supervise and evaluate staff based upon specific knowledge of the program.
- Work with other building administrators and District staff to pursue and ensure quality services.

Teachers The ED teacher's job is a complex one: extensive paperwork, large caseloads of students with varied needs, and numerous teachers and paraprofessional with whom to collaborate, often at multiple grade levels. To avoid overload, teachers will want to define their role smartly and fully utilize the support of the team, freeing them to design and deliver academic and behavioral interventions of the highest caliber. This role includes:

- Participate in IEP meetings, helping to transfer assessment and intervention data into needed interventions and service models, and ensuring completion of written IEP.
- Plan and coordinate an effective schedule to meet the unique needs of students on their caseload as identified in their IEPs.
- Clearly define paraprofessional's role and provide focused knowledge of setting expectations, student characteristics, interventions, and appropriate student interactions.

- Design an orderly and motivating classroom environment that establishes personal responsibility through clear procedures and routines and effective displays, interest centers, exhibits of student work, etc.
- Create a climate of mutual respect to establish and reinforce acceptable student behavior, attitudes, and social skills.
- Design core subject instruction/lesson plans that are standards-based and IEP-driven and include activities for direct instruction, guided and unguided practice, and assessment of learning.
- Ensure instruction in specialized curricular areas such as social skills, interpersonal skills, study and organization skills, service learning, and vocational preparation.
- Deliver lessons that engage students and ensures opportunity for students to gain mastery of identified learner outcomes.
- Clearly define the need and parameters for differentiated instruction for each student so others can implement consistently and planfully.
- Utilize classroom discipline strategies to maintain an environment that values learning time and teaches students task-related classroom behaviors needed for success in general education settings.
- Plan and implement behavior interventions that include individual student target behaviors and methods to teach those behaviors, provide feedback, deliver consequences, and monitor ongoing progress.
- Organize and synthesize behavioral data for sharing with the student, the team, parents, and to drive IEP planning.
- Meet with paraprofessional and classroom teachers to plan how to include ED students successfully into classrooms including their roles, learning outcomes, behavior tracking tools, and differentiated expectations, instruction, materials, or assignments.
- Participate in ED team meetings with support staff to discuss progress of individual students, promote appropriate implementation of behaviors and academic interventions, and determine modifications.
- Along with other team members, serve as case manager and individual point of contact for selected students and families, ensuring regular communication.
- Communicate regularly with parents by means of progress notes, phone calls, and conferences, and promote parent participation in activities designed to engage them in the school and their child's program.

Paraprofessional The special education paraprofessional has become one way of expanding services for ED students. However, the growing reliance on paraprofessionals may also be a concern. When the role of the assistant is unclear or they are left to make curricular or instructional decisions “on the fly,” there are often unintended, undesirable effects and they can actually, at times, be an unintended barrier to student learning or progress. It is important to remember that a paraeducator is one who assists and supports the teacher with instructional and non-teaching tasks, but does not assume primary teaching, disciplinary, or decision-making authority. The role and function of the paraprofessional should be well defined in order for coordinated interventions to occur. Teachers must take time to plan together with paras so that they are not left alone to create and design what they

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do with students. While job responsibilities vary greatly, paraprofessionals are an asset to the team. The following is a list of possible appropriate paraprofessional tasks:

- Provide assistance to the teacher during large group instruction, helping pupils to understand teacher directions, monitor student work, and answer questions.
- Provide small group instruction designed by the teacher.
- Supervise students in hallways, study hall, during recess, etc.
- Prepare instructional resources and manage classroom supplies and equipment.
- Provide one-on-one instruction designed by the teacher.
- Help students with supplementary work, independent study, or missed work.
- Assist the teacher to implement behavior management plans.
- Listen to oral reading.
- Assist the teacher with observing, recording, and charting behavior.
- Re-teach with special practice after initial instruction by the teacher.
- Provide a high rate of reinforcement to all students.
- Provide personal care assistance.
- Prepare/maintain the classroom environment.
- Score objective tests and papers.
- Assist teacher to maintain records, folders, and filing.

School Psychologist The school psychologist provides indirect and direct support to ED programs in the areas of assessment, instructional and behavioral interventions, social skills instruction, and progress monitoring. While their specific functions can be similar to those of the school social worker, some of the more typical responsibilities include:

- Oversee student assessment, conducting and assisting others in data collection to ensure integrity in intervention decisions.
- Interface with teams from schools considering ED services/placement, explaining the program and advocating for appropriate decisions.
- Organize, coordinate, and lead IEP team meetings, interpreting assessment and intervention data, and contributing to valid decisions regarding services.
- Participate in or lead ED team meetings to discuss progress of individual students, promote appropriate implementation of behaviors and academic interventions, and determine modifications.
- In conjunction with the administrator and other support staff, intervene with disruptive students (office discipline referrals) ensuring learning and consequences consistent with program guidelines.
- Along with other team members, serve as case manager and individual point of contact for selected students and families, ensuring regular communication.
- Assist teachers to monitor student behavioral progress through direct student contact, observation, and consultation with teachers.
- Assist teacher in implementing regularly scheduled classroom meetings to facilitate problem solving and a positive class culture.

- Assist students in resolving personal and interpersonal problems on an individual or group basis at the request of teachers or the team.
- Assist the program in developing and/or implementing specialized curriculum and community-based learning activities.
- Work with general education staff to promote competence in meeting student behavioral needs.

Social Worker The school social worker brings an essential family and community systems framework to the team serving ED students along with knowledge of therapeutic and counseling strategies. While some responsibilities may overlap with the school psychologist, the typical school social work includes:

- Seek and maintain a high level of contact and collaboration with the court system and community agencies (e.g., mental health, DHS, vocational rehabilitation, etc.) that serve the program's students.
- Serve as the primary liaison with parents and the home, involving and informing other team members and ensuring close, regular communication.
- Work with the School Resource Officer and administration to formulate procedures and processes for ensuring student attendance, reducing truancy.
 - Organize, coordinate, and lead IEP team meetings, interpreting assessment and intervention data, and contributing to valid decisions regarding services.
- Provide behaviorally based therapeutic counseling for individuals and groups based upon the IEP and team requests.
- Champion planning for transitions for all students and create procedures to ensure thorough communication with others across settings.
- Participate in or lead ED team meetings to discuss progress of individual students, promote appropriate implementation of behaviors and academic interventions, and determine modifications.
- In conjunction with the administrator and other support staff, intervene with disruptive students (office discipline referrals) ensuring learning and consequences consistent with program guidelines.
- Assist teacher in implementing regularly scheduled classroom meetings to facilitate problem solving and a positive class culture.
- Assist the program in developing and/or implementing specialized curriculum and community-based learning activities.

Parents ED programs will want to planfully approach their work with parents, unfolding with them their role in student success and providing the supports for them to arise to meet those expectations:

- Participate in IEP meetings and become familiar with the program, the staff, and services.
- Model and encourage a positive attitude toward school, the staff, behaving and learning for their child.
- Communicate the ongoing medical needs of their child including changes in medication.
- Encourage their child's success through regular attendance and homework completion.

ED Guidelines

- Periodically discuss/review with their child the responsible behaviors expected at school.
- Communicate with the school if behavior problems or concerns develop.
- Respond in a cooperative and timely manner to school staff who are working to help solve a child's discipline problem (e.g., return phone calls, attend planning meetings).
- Support the school's disciplinary efforts with follow-up at home when appropriate.
- Work with the social worker or psychologist to ensure continuity in interventions at home, or by working with other professionals or agencies as may be needed to realize their child's growth and improvement.