



Great Public Schools for Every Student

Defining and Delineating Roles and Responsibilities for Team Success

Paraeducators and teachers define and delineate roles and responsibilities to improve the effectiveness of their team.

Key Method

Paraeducators and teachers collaboratively use a five-step inquiry learning cycle to define and delineate roles and responsibilities and create an action plan to improve team effectiveness.

Method Components

Guiding Principles

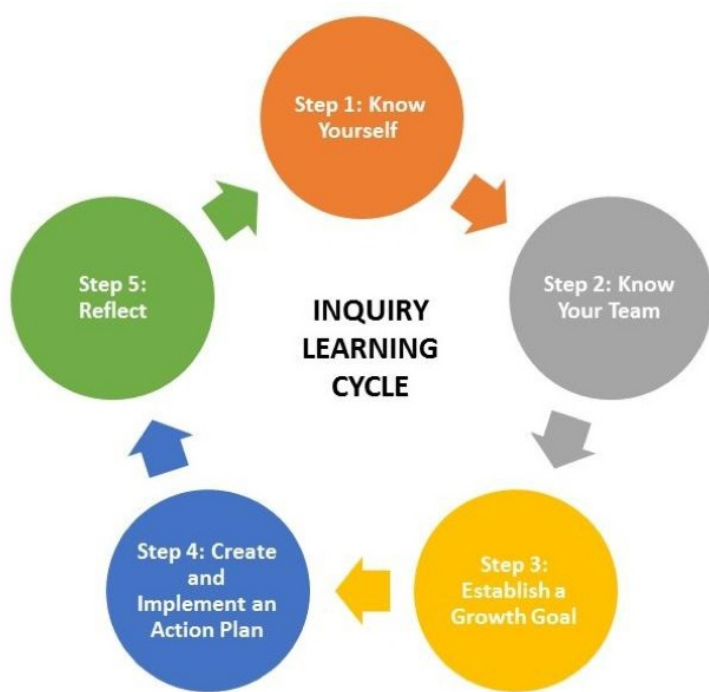
To enhance student outcomes, it is critical that paraeducators and teachers see themselves as partners in the educational process and continuously work to ensure they have an effective working relationship. A key characteristic of an effective paraeducator-teacher team is that roles and responsibilities are realistic, clearly defined, and acknowledged. It is important that the similarities, differences, and overlap between paraeducator and teacher roles, including the role of the teacher in guiding the work of the paraeducator, is understood.

Note: Paraeducators support certified/licensed educators, including teachers and other related service providers. Teams participating in the micro-credential process can also include related service providers, although the design of some of the micro-credentials and related artifacts are specific to the partnership between paraeducators and teachers. Related service providers might include speech-language pathologists, school nurses, transition specialists, school psychologists, school social workers, creative arts therapists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and school counselors. Most of these professions are currently defined as “providers of related services” in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) and “specialized instructional support personnel” (SISP) in the Every Student Succeeds Act (2015). NEA and the National Alliance of Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (NASISP) both recognize and use the term SISP. See the Resource Section to learn more about SISP.

The Inquiry Learning Cycle

For this micro-credential, paraeducators and teachers will use a 5-step inquiry learning cycle to demonstrate defining and delineating roles and responsibilities and create an action plan to improve team effectiveness.

Paraeducator-teacher teams will assess current roles and responsibilities to develop a mutual understanding of individual and shared roles and responsibilities. They will explore a need for growth or improvement, identify and target a goal for enhancing team performance, and develop and implement a team action plan. Last, paraeducators and teachers will reflect on the outcomes and process. See the Resource Section to learn more about the inquiry learning cycle.



Step 1 - Know Yourself (Individual Self-Assessment)

The first step in the inquiry cycle is to know yourself. In this step, you will examine and document your current individual and shared roles and responsibilities and assess alignment with your job description and existing skills and knowledge. You will also identify issues and challenges that you think are affecting your team's performance in this area.

Step 2 - Know Your Team (Team Process)

The second step in the inquiry cycle is to know your team. In this step, paraeducator-teacher teams will discuss their individual self-assessments and work together to develop a mutual understanding of individual and shared roles and responsibilities. Team members will also discuss, identify, and prioritize issues and challenges related to defining and delineating roles and responsibilities in preparation for identifying a growth goal (Step 3) for the team action plan.

Since each team member will view issues and challenges from a unique perspective, it is important that each team member has a voice in this discussion.

When prioritizing issues and challenges related to defining and delineating roles and responsibilities, team members should consider the following questions:

- What is our current process for defining and delineating roles and responsibilities?
- What is working in our current team situation? What is not working?
- What specific issues are we having? What factors may be contributing to these issues?
- Who is involved (e.g., students, other staff, families/guardians)
- What supports/resources does our team need that we aren't currently getting? How can administrators or other staff help support our team?
- How are the issues and challenges affecting outcomes for students and our team?

Step 3 - Establish a Growth or Improvement Goal (Team Process)

The third step in the inquiry cycle is to establish a SMART goal (Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Time-bound) for the team action plan (Step 4). Teams should work together to identify at least one goal that is based on the issues/challenges associated with defining and delineating roles and responsibilities, as identified in Step 2.

Before establishing the goal, teams should consider the following questions:

- What do we want to accomplish? What do we want to happen?
- Why do we want to accomplish this? What issues will the goal help to resolve?
- What is the overall desired outcome? How will we know if we were successful? How will we measure success?
- How will we meet our goal? What strategies will we implement to achieve success?

- When can we expect the goal to be completed? What is our timeline (e.g., start and end dates, key milestones, check-ins on progress)?

Step 4 - Create and Implement a Team Action Plan (Team Process)

The fourth step in the inquiry cycle is to create a team action plan. This action plan will help to ensure success in accomplishing the goal identified in Step 3. It provides a framework so that team members are clear on the goal, purpose, outcomes for success, strategies, implementation steps, timeline, and supports needed.

Step 5 - Reflect (Individual Reflection)

The final step in the inquiry cycle is to reflect on the outcomes and identify next steps. Paraeducators and teachers will individually examine what worked and what didn't work, and identify next steps for continued professional growth. Reflecting on what you have learned about yourself, your partner, your team, and defining and delineating roles and responsibilities will cement learning, further improve team effectiveness, and encourage continued professional growth.

Supporting Research

Role and Responsibilities / Effective Paraeducator-Teacher Teams

Malian, Ida M. "Paraeducators Perceptions of Their Roles in Inclusive Classrooms: A National Study of Paraeducators." Electronic Journal for Inclusive Education, vol. 2. No. 8, 2011. Web. December 10, 2018.

<https://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1133&context=ejie>

Ruedel, K., Diamond, M., Zaidi, A., Aboud, A. (2002) The Inclusive Environment: Paraeducators and Teachers Working Together. Wed. May 11, 2018

http://www.academia.edu/922366/The_Inclusive_Environment_Paraeducators_and_Teachers_Working_Together
(scroll down to read paper or provide email to download)

Pickett, Anna Lou. Strengthening and Supporting Teacher/Provider-Paraeducator Teams: Guidelines for Paraeducator Roles, Supervision, and Preparation. National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals in Education and Related Services, Center for Advanced Study in Education, Graduate Center, City University of New York, pp. 1–65. 1999.

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED440506.pdf>

Inquiry Learning Cycle

Abraham, M. "Research Matters - to the Science Teacher." NARST. National Association for Research in Science Teaching. January 2, 1997. Web. December 10, 2018.

<https://www.narst.org/publications/research/cycle.cfm>

Barron, B. and Darling-Hammond, L. "Teaching for Meaningful Learning: A Review on Inquiry-Based and Cooperative Learning." Edutopia. The George Lucas Educational Foundation. 2008. Web. December 10, 2018.

<https://backend.edutopia.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/edutopia-teaching-for-meaningful-learning.pdf>

Resources

NEA Building Winning Teams: Effective Paraeducator-Teacher Teams Training Resources

Teaming and Characteristics of Effective Paraeducator-Teacher Teams https://drive.google.com/open?id=1n_X1x1DzC0qVa9eMmUtlZ4h2-oil6C6_

Roles and Responsibilities of Paraeducators, Teachers and Administrators
<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1sThOxYiYAdR1BTziWFWzUvj-vsf64MMa>

The Five "Knows" of Collaborative Teaming <https://drive.google.com/open?id=169LxOaBy0oiFmt1RxA6t7eQmjPNjrfWA>

Effective Communication

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1RyzvYt_ESKan52iT3tFvfsDF2atRzag_

Generational Differences: Impact on Teaming and Communication

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1qCPGNqFny6jTY85pts3efTBAgH0vxgoS>

Conflict Management and Resolution Strategies

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hdjgyeDRKmBJzu15JM4niopoogeQ0luG/view?usp=sharing>

Problem Solving and Action Planning

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1mZ9t1Pso9jv_SqC5wkjbz6gC8_-4pBg

Roles & Responsibilities / Effective Paraeducator-Teacher Teams

Paraeducators: The Evolution in Their Roles, Responsibilities, Training, and Supervision

<https://ici.umn.edu/products/impact/152/over2.html>

The Distinction in Roles of Paraeducators and Teachers www.nrcpara.org/paranews/hot-topic---distinction-roles-paraeducators-and-teacher

Let's Team Up: What Every Paraprofessional Needs for Student Success and Effective Teamwork

<https://www.nprinc.com/content/free-resources/Lets-Team-Up-Gerlach-Nov-2016.pdf>

Classroom Partners: How Paraprofessionals Can Support All Students to Meet New Standards

https://www.nysut.org/~media/files/nysut/resources/2013/june/educators-voice-6/edvoice06_03_paraprofessionals.pdf?la=en

Teachers' Desk Reference: The Shared Responsibility of Educational Team Members

<https://www.pattan.net/CMSPages/GetAmazonFile.aspx?path=~\pattan\media\publications\2019%20accessible%20pdfs\tdr-shared-respons-1-17-19wba.pdf&hash=dee0a5893bea8187e5dd37fe6eaa4979dcf4657e2a31a9211e8c8b1c9052b7f6&ext=.pdf>

Top 10 List To Teachers – What Paraeducators Want You to Know

<https://dsagsl.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/what-paras-want-teachers-to-know.pdf>

NEA ESP Professional Growth Continuum (PGC) Paraeducator Standards & Teacher Leadership Competencies

NEA ESP PGC Paraeducator Universal Standards

http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PGC%20Universal%20Standards_Paraeducator.pdf

NEA Teacher Leadership Competencies

http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/NEA_TLCF_20180824.pdf

Inquiry Learning Cycle

Inquiry-based Learning

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inquiry-based_learning

Inquiry Learning Cycle Graphic

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1IPQZtjKFoEMPT4zhLZpRA9703A6-gxy4>

Goals

SMART Goals

<https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/smart-goals.htm>

Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP)

Specialized Instructional Support Personnel - NEA webpage
<http://www.nea.org/sisp>

National Alliance of Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (NASISP)
<http://nasisp.org/aboutus2/>

Artifact Templates

Paraeducator Roles and Responsibilities Self-Assessment (Artifact 1)
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1eALH2J7BwAPrjzec6xhrrfpvi9_gaSejzOZLuPmnWz9c/edit?usp=sharing

Teacher Roles and Responsibilities Self-Assessment (Artifact 1)
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1T8ZWioYiy4FoGSxkyEaKFbEWunGRdHmtN5wlplQqcAc/edit?usp=sharing>

Roles and Responsibilities Agreement (Artifact 2)
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1i5sq2pau-1g9pnQtcvfAZNCvWaHmHdOfRkbyzihea94/edit?usp=sharing>

Team Action Plan (Artifact 3)
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FjIBfmAWahJYUFfujNQOMQ7Ee0D-zlDJn7Kduz9bRn0/edit?usp=sharing>

Implementation Evidence (Artifact 4)
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XQWPuyL23wj4eFD7gpGAee173lwmw_DtJVw3wpg70mY/edit?usp=sharing

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

Part 1. Overview Questions

250 - 350 words

Please answer the following contextual questions to help our assessor understand your current situation. Please do not include any information that will make you, your partner, or your students identifiable to your reviewers.

1. Describe the context of the classroom or setting in which you work (e.g., general ed classroom, resource room, community-based setting). Include grade level, subject area, and any relevant cultural/demographic information and special considerations regarding student characteristics.
2. Describe the makeup of your team (with whom you work regularly to directly support students). Include who is on your team (i.e., teachers, paraeducators, related service providers/SISP), each team member’s roles/responsibilities, and how long you have worked together.
3. What did you know about defining and delineating roles and responsibilities before any information or resources were made available to you?
4. Describe your current roles and responsibilities and the process you use to define and delineate roles and responsibilities.
5. Explain why you chose to complete this micro-credential.
 - **Passing:** Responses should completely answer each question, cite specific examples from personal experience, and justify the reason for choosing this micro-credential to address the specific needs of both the paraeducator-teacher team and students. Writing is organized and easy to understand.

Part 2. Work Examples / Artifacts

To earn this micro-credential, please submit the following **four artifacts** as evidence of your learning. Please do not include any information that will make you, your partner, or your students identifiable to your reviewers. **Templates can be found in the Resource Section.**

Artifact 1: Self-Assessment

Using the template provided, submit the paraeducator or teacher self-assessment to identify and reflect on:

- Current individual and shared roles and responsibilities
- Current roles and responsibilities that are not aligned with (included in) your job description
- Roles and responsibilities that you haven't been performing but should be
- Current roles and responsibilities for which you have not received sufficient training
- The current process or strategies used by your team to define and delineate roles and responsibilities
- Issues and challenges related to defining and delineating roles and responsibilities that are affecting team performance

Note: Paraeducators and teachers must complete this artifact independently. There is a paraeducator self-assessment and a separate teacher self-assessment.

Artifact 2: Agreement

Using the template provided, submit the Roles and Responsibilities Agreement to demonstrate your team's mutual understanding and agreement of individual and shared roles and responsibilities, as well as issues and challenges affecting team effectiveness in this area.

Note: Paraeducators and teachers should complete this artifact together. They can submit the same agreement.

Artifact 3: Team Action Plan

Using the template provided, submit a team action plan around at least one SMART goal identified. The goal and strategies should relate to defining and delineating roles and responsibilities.

Note: Paraeducators and teachers should complete this artifact together. They can submit the same action plan.

Artifact 4: Implementation Evidence

Complete the following two parts and submit as one document. If the evidence is a video or audio file, you may submit them separately. Artifact should include an indication of your role on your team (i.e., paraeducator, teacher, related service provider/SISP).

Part 1

Submit one piece of evidence that demonstrates the implementation of at least one strategy identified in your team action plan.

Examples of evidence may include, but are not limited to:

- meeting schedules/logs
- meeting agendas
- meeting minutes
- recordings/transcripts of meetings

- pictures of communication boards
- daily communication calendars
- classroom schedules
- professional learning certificates of completion
- problem-solving forms
- planning forms

Part 2

Using the template provided, reflect on and describe how the evidence and strategy implemented supports defining and delineating roles and responsibilities and how they have affected team effectiveness and students.

Note: Paraeducators and teachers can submit the same piece of evidence (Part 1), but they must complete the reflection component (Part 2) independently.

	Proficient	Basic	Developing
Artifact 1: Self-Assessment	<p>All elements of the self-assessment are completed.</p> <p>Reflection clearly analyzes the assessment and performance of roles and responsibilities related to job description and training.</p> <p>Reflection clearly describes 1) the current process/strategies used to define and delineate roles and responsibilities, and 2) issues/challenges affecting the team. Specific examples are cited.</p> <p>Issues/challenges are relevant to defining and delineating roles and responsibilities.</p>	<p>Some elements of the self-assessment are completed.</p> <p>Reflection partially analyzes the assessment and performance of roles and responsibilities related to job description and training.</p> <p>Reflection partially describes 1) the current process/strategies used to define and delineate roles and responsibilities, and 2) issues/challenges affecting the team. Specific examples are cited.</p> <p>Issues/challenges are relevant to defining and delineating roles and responsibilities.</p>	<p>Some elements of the self-assessment are completed.</p> <p>Reflection minimally analyzes the assessment and performance of roles and responsibilities related to job description and training.</p> <p>Reflection minimally describes 1) the current process/strategies used to define and delineate roles and responsibilities, and 2) issues/challenges affecting the team. Specific examples are not cited.</p> <p>Issues/challenges are not relevant to defining and delineating roles and responsibilities</p>
Artifact 2: Agreement	<p>All elements of the agreement are completed.</p> <p>Issues and challenges are identified and prioritized and are relevant to defining and delineating roles and responsibilities.</p>	<p>Some elements of the agreement are completed.</p> <p>Issues and challenges are identified and prioritized but aren't relevant to defining and delineating roles and responsibilities.</p>	<p>Some elements of the agreement are completed.</p> <p>Issues and challenges are identified but aren't prioritized or relevant to defining and delineating roles and responsibilities.</p>

Artifact 3: Team
Action Plan

Reflection clearly describes the issue/challenge ranked as most important and why the team ranked it as such. Specific examples are cited.

The action plan contains all of the following components:
-at least one goal
-purpose/rationale
-desired outcome(s)
-1-3 strategies for achieving goal
-steps to implement strategies
-timeline
-supports needed

The goal is SMART and aligns to each element of the SMART framework (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant to defining and delineating roles and responsibilities, and time-bound).

Strategies are relevant to the goal and are achievable.

The plan has clearly defined action steps.

Artifact 4:
Implementation
Evidence

Evidence clearly demonstrates implementation of at least one strategy outlined in the action plan.

Reflection clearly describes how the evidence and strategy implemented supports defining and delineating roles and responsibilities. Specific examples are cited.

Reflection clearly describes the impact of implementing the strategy on team

Reflection partially describes the issue/challenge ranked as most important and why the team ranked it as such. Specific examples are cited.

The action plan is missing one or two of the following components:
-at least one goal
-purpose/rationale
-desired outcome(s)
-1-3 strategies for achieving goal
-steps to implement strategies
-timeline
-supports needed

The goal is missing one or two elements of the SMART framework (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant to defining and delineating roles and responsibilities, and time-bound).

Strategies are relevant to the goal or are achievable, but not both.

Action steps are broad.

Evidence partially demonstrates implementation of at least one strategy outlined in the action plan.

Reflection partially describes how the evidence and strategy implemented supports defining and delineating roles and responsibilities. Specific examples are cited.

Reflection partially describes the impact of implementing the strategy on team

Reflection minimally describes the issue/challenge ranked as most important and why the team ranked it as such. Specific examples are not cited.

The action plan is missing more than two of the following components:
-at least one goal
-purpose/rationale
-desired outcome(s)
-1-3 strategies for achieving goal
-steps to implement strategies
-timeline
-supports needed

The goal is missing more than two elements of the SMART framework (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant to defining and delineating roles and responsibilities, and time-bound).

Strategies aren't relevant to the goal and they aren't achievable.

Action steps are not evident.

Evidence minimally demonstrates implementation of at least one strategy outlined in the action plan.

Reflection minimally describes how the evidence and strategy implemented supports defining and delineating roles and responsibilities. Specific examples are not cited.

Reflection minimally describes the impact of implementing the strategy on team

effectiveness and students. Specific examples are cited.

effectiveness and students. Specific examples are cited.

effectiveness and students. Specific examples are not cited.

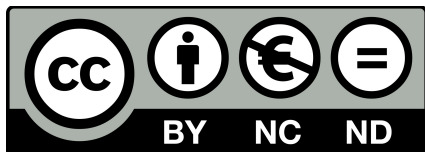
Part 3. Reflection

250 - 350 words

Please answer the following reflective questions. Please do not include any information that will make you, your partner, or your students identifiable to your reviewers.

1. What was the impact of your action plan? Did you meet your goal(s)? Why or why not? What changes would you make to your plan? Note any successes or challenges that you encountered.
2. How did the process of defining and delineating roles and responsibilities affect team effectiveness? How did it affect students?
3. How has this experience affected you in your role as a paraeducator or teacher?
4. How do you envision using this process with existing or new team members in the future?

- **Passing:** Responses should completely answer each question, cite specific examples from personal experience, and describe how the process and learnings have affected the paraeducator-teacher team as well as students. Specific actionable steps that demonstrate how the new learnings will be integrated into future practices are also cited. Writing is organized and easy to understand.



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