



## Developing Leaders Notes

Date: December 8th, 2021

Session Title: Paraprofessionals - How? When? Why?

Focus Area: Skilled Staff

### MAASE Focus Areas:

*We will align and organize the strategic priorities and work of MAASE to focus on the following elements:*

<i>High Quality Student Evaluations</i>	<i>Specially Designed Instruction</i>	<i>Skilled Staff</i>	<i>Program Evaluation</i>
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Through the platforms of:

Association Partnerships	Legislative Action and Advocacy	Professional Learning	Membership Services
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EdCamp is an open format where group members share thoughts to help one another in implementation of "real life" practice. These notes reflect the thinking of someone in the group but do not represent an official position on behalf of MAASE. Anyone using this as a resource is encouraged to use their best judgement in interpreting the suggestions.

MAASE EdCamp Format:

1. Clarify the Problem of Practice to Solve
2. Collaborate around the Problem of Practice by offering suggestions and resources
3. Give feedback to the committee on how to improve next time

### Notes:

#### Clarifying the Problem of Practice: Paraprofessionals, who, when, what, where

- Continuum of support?
- Para Process: understanding why a para would be needed. Use of the **START** process. Gave info especially for high needs students, facilitating independence for students. Fading modules are helpful, especially when discussing with parents to help them understand 'the why'. START takes the emotion out of the process. Ensuring you are solving the right problem and having conversations surrounding it.
- Becomes an emotional issue. Focusing on data. Identifying success within their day.
- ASD coaches at Wayne. They work to build capacity throughout the county to ensure paras understand how their role impacts a student and environment. [Wayne county para pd is on Wayne RESA website]
- Currently, general education teachers are reaching out via email to request adult support for students. Helping teachers to better understand what the process looks like is the focus. Data drives the discussion. Teachers feel in crisis and adult support often feels like the only answer. Important to validate teacher feelings and find ways to support and identify their control.
- Shortage of paras. Ann Arbor is not having difficulties as they are providing bonuses (they are full). Other districts are working to locate candidates.
  - Utilizing contracting agencies to support hiring. Much more expensive.
  - Referrals are working for some districts, including a bonus for the person who recommends high needs staff.
  - Utilization of bus drivers during their off time.
  - Bus aides also for support during the school day when not needed on buses.
- TAs don't often know their role when it comes to para support, training and partnering. Paras then also do not understand their role and how to support students, collect data, feel empowered to be with their students. Often they do not believe it is 'their role' to train the para.
- Teacher and para inability to communicate and find purpose.

- Within the behavior support process (FBA/PBSP) who is collecting data, what does the data look like, and who is collecting data.
- Understanding how scheduling can support use of paras, allowing for pd, allowing for rotation.
- Empowering teachers with PD to understand para processes and how to oversee or support paras within their classroom.
- Consortium in [Wayne RESA](#): Para Handbook
- Staffing shortage has forced a review of independence for students. The discussion of fading is occurring more often now that adult support is scarce. Wayne RESA utilizing. Data collection including what the para is doing. 'Review of support'. All forms on Wayne RESA website. \*how, what, when, why, categories
- [CEC para training](#): has anyone used it?
- Problem: Admin pulling paras to sub or cover duty.
  - Gets in the way of data collection
  - Provides additional issues when students need that person
  - Clarifying tiered support: those who need adult support with LRE review vs. room support
    - Conversations with admin
    - Is the student doing well without the support
    - Subbing a different person in to support

**Solutions:**

- Para rotation with students: staying with one student year after year has its drawback as well as switching paras yearly. Facilitation of independence is often difficult with paras who are with students for multiple years.
  - Paras based on the needs of the student, specific training/skill set needed for students would be a consideration for why adult support remains the same person.
  - Difficult students are often 'known' and some paras will not work with the student.
  - Para unions working with districts to support the process is helpful.
- Para Training
  - CPI, SSW support, teacher introduction, a culture of support is helpful.
  - Hired by building level admin at times and SE may not know
- Empowering GE teams to utilize accommodations and modifications appropriately to support students, often they find implementing what is outlined in the IEP correctly (or PBSP) will solve much of their need.
  - Providing an understanding of how acc/mod in Tier 1/2 can support students is helpful.
  - How do we provide information to GE teams
- Heather Forbes with Classroom 180 (trauma informed lens) West Shore District is Up North by a lake.