



# **McGregor ISD #4**

## **Paraprofessional Handbook**

**2023-2024**

## **Welcome to McGregor Public Schools!**

As a paraprofessional, you belong to a great team that supports students and teachers in the school and the classroom. Students have unique and demanding needs and paraprofessionals provide the necessary support that enable the students to be successful and grow.

The expectations of paraprofessionals are to be advocates for the students they work with, supporters of the case managers they work under, and positive role models for all students and staff. You will be provided with necessary training, appropriate support, and ongoing professional development to ensure you have the resources to succeed.

In this handbook, you will find many answers to common questions that may arise during your work experience. If you have questions that are not addressed in this document, please feel free to contact your Case Manager or the Dean of Students.

Again, welcome to McGregor Schools! We are glad you are on our team, willing to contribute your talents and skills to help our students grow.

Brad Johnson, Superintendent of McGregor Public Schools

### **Mission Statement:**

**“Creating a Learning Community Where Improvement is Continuous.”**

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**Often asked questions:**

1. Is there a required orientation to this position?
2. Who is my direct supervisor, or who are my supervisors?
3. If I will be working with more than one teacher, how will my time be divided?
4. What staff development (training opportunities) will be available to me? What additional training will be required of me in the future?
5. Who evaluates me? How often will I be evaluated?
6. How will I receive communication from my supervisors, school administration and the school district?
7. What are my assigned hours? What schedules am I responsible for following? Can I anticipate my schedule changing in any way?
8. When do the students arrive? When do they leave?
9. What will be my role in instructional duties? What will be my role in non-instructional duties?
10. What records will I be responsible for keeping?
11. What are the district's regulations regarding emergency provisions (fire drills, earthquake drills, etc.), reporting suspected child abuse concerns, etc.
12. What is expected of me in terms of student discipline?
13. What is PBIS? Who can give me more information about this program?
14. What is the line of communication and authority I am expected to follow?
15. To whom should I direct questions regarding district policy?
16. What student records are available to me?
17. Where is my "spot"? In other words, where do I put my personal things and where do I keep the materials I will be using?
18. What should be my response when a parent raises a question regarding a child I am working with?
19. Is there anything I am expected to do that wasn't mentioned in the interview or on the job description?
20. Am I expected to go to staff meetings?
21. When the teacher is absent, will my role change in any way? If I am absent, will there be a substitute for me? Who do I call if I am ill and not able to come to work?

## DEFINITION OF PARAPROFESSIONAL

Minn. 3525.0200 Subp. 33. Paraprofessional. "Paraprofessional" means a district employee who is primarily engaged in direct interaction with one or more pupils for instructional activities, physical or behavior management, or other purposes under the direction of a regular education or special education teacher or related services provider.

Legislation MS125A.08 (b) (b) For paraprofessionals employed to work in programs for students with disabilities, the school board in each district shall ensure that –

1. Before or immediately upon employment, each paraprofessional develops sufficient knowledge and skills in emergency procedures, building orientation, roles and responsibilities, confidentiality, vulnerability, and reportability, among other things, to begin meeting the needs of the students with whom the paraprofessional works.
2. Annual training opportunities are available to enable the paraprofessional to continue to further develop the knowledge and skills that are specific to the students with whom the paraprofessional works, including understanding disabilities, following lesson plans and implementing follow up instructional procedures and activities.
3. A district wide process obligates each paraprofessional to work under the ongoing direction of a licensed teacher and where appropriate and possible, the supervision of a school nurse.

McGregor School District also has additional requirements for paraprofessional job trainings based on the level of your education and professional experience. You may need to complete the ParaPro Test. You will also be required to have PCA & MA Billing Training completed through Northern Lights Special Education Cooperative. These trainings need to be completed upon being hired. Please ask the District Office and your Case Manager for more information.

## **PARAPROFESSIONAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Paraprofessionals partner with case managers, teachers, and administrators to provide the best possible educational environment for students. Paraprofessional responsibilities are determined by the case manager and guided by the needs of the student as outlined in the Individual Education Program (IEP) and school setting. Additional duties may be determined, assigned, and directed by administration and supervisors. These duties may change depending on student needs, revisions to the IEP, or change in academic term. Paraprofessionals are part of a professional educational team and share in the expectations and respect afforded that position.

### **Role of Paraprofessional**

Various factors influencing the specific responsibilities assigned to the paraprofessionals include: characteristics and personalities of teachers, paraprofessionals, and students; interpersonal skills of both teachers and paraprofessionals; the skill level of the paraprofessionals; and the physical environment of the classroom. Individual teachers may vary the responsibilities of the paraprofessionals to enhance the program of instruction based on teacher plans and evaluations. Paraprofessionals observe, record, implement, and reinforce.

The following list illustrates instructional duties that could be assigned to paraprofessionals:

- Assist individual students in performing activities initiated by the teachers
- Assist in monitoring supplementary work and independent work
- Reinforce learning in small groups or with individuals while the teacher works with other students
- Provide assistance with individualized programmed materials
- Assist the teacher in observing, recording, and charting behavior
- Assist the teacher with crisis problems and behavior management
- Assist in preparation/production of instructional materials for special education teachers
- Assist students with the use of assistive technology
- Carry out instructional programs designed by the teacher

### **Role Clarification: Paraprofessional and Supervisor Roles**

A clear delineation of roles of the teacher and the paraprofessional is an important element of a successful program. Identification of teacher and paraprofessional roles ensures adherence to ethical and legal requirements and serves as a guide in supervision and performance feedback. Delivery of instruction to the student may be carried out by the paraprofessional under supervision of the teacher.

<b>Paraprofessional Responsibility</b>	<b>Supervisor Responsibility (Case Manager)</b>
Follow paraprofessional description in IEP or duty description from supervisory role	Diagnose education needs and provide necessary IEP information, student information, and supervision information
Complete daily charting and log information (data collection) as requested	Provide training, information, and materials for charting and reporting (data collection)
Report challenges and difficulties to supervisors	Respond with additional information, strategies, or materials to address challenges
Adhere to provided schedule in a timely manner, report to supervisor upon arrival and if leaving early	Create a schedule, share changes to schedule, and provide lunch and break opportunities in the schedule
Support the delivery and acquisition of instruction by responding to needs of the student and reinforcing/reviewing material, monitors student progress in programs, and communicates data with teacher	Takes responsibility for instruction of new concepts, skills, new classroom activity and revises instructional programs, designs & adapts materials and provides guidance to para for daily instruction for students
Manages behavior following techniques and procedures established by cm and teacher	Responsible for behavior management and/or discipline
Provide feedback to the case manager, including further use of your strengths and improvement plan	Complete yearly evaluation of paraprofessional job performance. Give productive feedback
Supervise students in hall and rest rooms, reinforcing school rules and expectations using PBIS model for positive reinforcements	Supervise students in hall and rest rooms, reinforcing school rules and expectations using PBIS model for positive reinforcements
Keep personal space and items in order	Provide access to a secure space for personal items
When your job responsibilities are decreased due to student absence, alert your supervisor that you are free to help in another area	Provide information and materials related to additional duties in order to assist students outside normal duties
Communicates with the case manager	Communicates with parents

**Supervision Duties** - Paraprofessionals may be assigned to various supervision duties before, during, and after school hours. The same expectations and duties will apply. Specifics of the supervision duties will be outlined by administration and/or supervisor. Examples of supervision includes, but are not limited to the following: morning and afternoon transportation duties, hall and classroom supervision throughout the day, student clubs/activities, indoor or outdoor recess, cafeteria supervision, direct supervision on special education bus or van routes. Outdoor recess supervision will be broken into Zones on the Playground. Paras will be assigned to a specific area and are not to congregate together in order to monitor the playground effectively.

## **Examples of Other Duties:**

- Read assessments to one or more students
- Use designated location to match student needs (such as small setting for assessments)
- Cover responsibilities of absent paraprofessional
- Work with groups of students
- Assist with student daily work
- Reinforce individual student programming
- Observe/document behavior
- Assist in preparation of materials for special education teacher
- Encourage student independence
- Model expected behavior and classroom procedures
- Model and enforce school and classroom expectations
- Refocus students with attention struggles
- Record classroom information and assignments for supervising teacher
- Provide assistance with self-cares after receiving appropriate training
- Attend required training sessions and workshops
- Cover assigned students but also engage with others in the classroom-help all when able

## **Common Paraprofessional Expectations**

As an important part of the educational team, expectations of paraprofessionals are similar to that of the expectations of teachers:

- Be timely. We are all impacted if someone is late. Students, teachers & other employees are depending on you to be on time in the morning and when returning from all breaks.
- You are a part of a team; students are impacted by the absence of teachers and paraprofessionals. Regular attendance is part of our success.
- Offer support that maintains high expectations while allowing students to be independent.
- Maintain professional dress and behavior in the classroom.
- Do not use a cell phone for personal use during student contact time
- Do not discuss students outside of school. Do not share information in writing, while speaking, or on social media; including pictures and names.
- Do not discuss your students with other staff members who do not work with them. Information is private and data privacy rules apply.
- Show respect for everyone and everything in words and actions. Show and expect respect, not friendship, in student relationships



- Students notice what you do. Be a role model, join in the excitement and learning in our school!

## **General Employment Information**

- Time Sheets do not need to be completed by the paraprofessional each day. You are expected to be on time and work your full shift each day. Time sheets will be filled out only for extra hours and need to be collected on the 15th and the end of each month or on the last working day closest to these dates. Your supervisor's signature and your own will be on the timesheet. Timesheets can be found in the lounge, offices and on ESS.
- All paraprofessionals will have a school email account. Email is the official system for district and building correspondence. All staff members are encouraged to check email correspondences daily.
- The business office will set up payroll information (SMARTeR).
- All absences will be reported through submission of an online request via Employee Smart System (SMARTeR). You must submit your request in a timely manner and within the guidelines of the AFSCME contract.
- Mailboxes are provided for all employees. Mailboxes should be checked daily.
- School-issued identification badge will be created by getting your picture taken on school picture day. A keycard may be included. Employees are responsible for key cards, which need to be returned at the end of the school year or at the end of employment term.
- School appropriate clothing is required. Jeans are acceptable but may not be ripped jeans. T-shirts may only be worn on Friday and must be a McGregor Mercs shirt.
- All school campuses are tobacco free and tobacco use is prohibited on all school property.

## **PROFESSIONALISM**

**Confidentiality:** All student information is confidential. There are many Federal laws and state statutes that protect the privacy of educational records. The main Federal law pertaining to student records is the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Information or records falling under this law must remain confidential. Significant penalties can occur from failure to comply with the privacy act. Many school staff fail to realize that even conversations with non-school personnel or school personnel without an educational involvement with a specific child can be a violation of this act.

Information and records covered under this act may include but are not limited to: personal and family data evaluation and test data, psychological, medical and anecdotal reports, records of school achievement and progress reports, disability information, and correspondence regarding students. Remember that matters regarding students are confidential and cannot be a topic of public discussion - not even in the teacher's lounge, not at the grocery store or a restaurant, and not with other paraprofessionals who do not work directly with the student. Even if you do not mention a student's name, talking about an incident can give identifiable information. If you are asked about a student, state that student information is confidential and they should contact the teacher. Confidentiality must

be maintained and protected. It is one of the most critical and important aspects of a paraprofessional's job. Abuse of this law is subject to disciplinary actions, including dismissal.

**Attendance:** Attendance and punctuality convey how seriously you take your job. Your supervising teacher and the students you work with count on you being at work and on time every day. Make sure you are ready to work at your start time, not just walking in at your start time. Whenever possible, personal appointments should be scheduled after work hours. Talk with the sub caller on how to notify them in case of an absence.

**Communication:** No matter how well a program is designed, success depends on good communication between all parties. Poor communication skills and negative statements are at the heart of most problems. The learning process is totally dependent upon the staff establishing and maintaining good lines of daily communication. However, communication with students and staff goes beyond verbal interaction and also includes nonverbal interaction. Research has concluded that approximately 80% of communication is nonverbal. Your actions may actually speak more loudly than your words.

Communication between the school district and the families needs to happen in a very specific way. The process of communication to families needs to come from the case manager, teacher or principal or dean of students. Paraprofessionals should not discuss the student with their parents, even if the parents ask. The paraprofessional should tell the parent to contact the case manager directly.

**Attitude:** All employees convey an image of the school to other professionals, parents, and to the community as a whole. We want this to be a favorable image. The special education paraprofessional is as much a part of creating this image as is the certificated staff member. Therefore, your actions, speech, and dress should be appropriate and professional at all times. Show your support for the special education program and building as well as your supervising teacher verbally, enthusiastically, and actively. For example, just remembering to smile, being friendly as well as looking for ways to assist others can make a difference.

When working with students, have a sense of humor, praise their efforts, and use positive statements to show students that you care about them and that you enjoy what you are doing. Remember, paraprofessionals, as all staff members, are responsible for the welfare of ALL students. Be willing to take initiative, show responsibility by looking ahead at what needs to be done, and be eager to assist when needed. Listen to directions and if unclear about what is being asked, ask questions! Work only on teaching concepts the teacher has set for the student. Again, if unclear, ask for clarification.

A student's struggles or failure to make progress is not a reflection of your dedication or level of professionalism. Let students learn through making mistakes. Continue encouraging students to keep trying. Provide multiple opportunities to practice skills they are trying to learn. Stay positive!

*“Respond to children with **love** in their worst moments, their broken moments, their angry moments, their selfish moments, their frustrated moments, their inconvenient moments because it is in their most **unlovable** human moments that they most need to **feel loved**”*

**Gossip:** Remember our community is small and people work closely together. Speaking negatively about others hurts both feelings and morale which in turn affects the students. If you have concerns about a co-worker, address your supervisor. Gossip will not be tolerated.

**Technology:** Technology is a very important part of our daily lives. As stated earlier, you do have a school email account, which is a major source of communication for the district. You need to check this on a daily basis but it should not be used during student contact time.

**Cell phones:** Do not use your cell phone to conduct personal matters during student contact time. You are welcome to use your phone however you wish during breaks and lunch.

**Social Media:** Social Media is also an important part of our daily lives. As an employee of McGregor ISD #4, you need to remember that the public may be viewing your personal posts as an employee of the school. Please conduct yourself in a professional manner, even on your personal accounts. Employees may not discuss and/or post any information pertaining to individual students, staff, or situations on social media sites. Do not share photos that were taken within the building on social media, unless they are photos of your immediate family members.

**Disciplinary Action:** Disciplinary action will be taken if the guidance in the handbook, along with instruction from the case manager or administration isn't followed. Should the district need to take disciplinary action against an individual, they will follow the appropriate action steps outlined in the AFSCME contract.

### **Accepting Responsibilities:**

- Recognize that the case manager has the ultimate responsibility for the instruction/management, and follow the directions prescribed by him/her
- Engage only in activities for which you are qualified or trained
- Do not communicate progress or concerns about students to parents
- Refer concerns expressed by parents, students, or others to the case manager

### **Relationships with Teachers and Related Service**

#### **Personnel:**

- Recognize the teacher as the supervisor in the setting
- Establish effective communication and a positive relationship with the teacher
- Discuss concerns and questions about teaching methods with the teacher at an appropriate time, i.e., after, not during, instructional period
- Readily share information about students and the educational setting with the case manager

- Try to resolve issues at the school level before they escalate into a grievance
- Refer concerns about the students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members to the case manager
- Be cooperative and honest with all professional staff, administrators, and support staff

### **Relationships with the School:**

- Accept responsibility for improving skills.
- Know school policies and procedures.
- Represent the school district in a positive manner.
- Participate with administrators and other stakeholders in creating and implementing comprehensive systems of professional development for paraprofessionals.
- Participate in continuing staff development.

### **Relationships with Students:**

- Discuss school problems and confidential matters only with appropriate personnel
- Avoid engaging in discriminatory practices based on student's disability, race, sex, cultural background, religion, or socio-economic status
- Respect the dignity, privacy, and individuality of all students and their families
- Be a positive role model
- Learn students' names, interests, and other characteristics as soon as possible
- Show interest in students and adapt instruction to their unique needs as much as possible

## **WORKING WITH STUDENTS**

Become familiar with the specific needs of the students you are assigned to. Understanding program goals (for example a student with an IEP) helps eliminate confusion and provides a better understanding of what the expectations are for the student. The case manager will share the student's individual goals, objectives, accommodations/modifications with you. It is important to know each student's individual limitations. At the same time, it is very important to know each student's unique abilities. As a paraprofessional in the classroom, you are a primary advocate for the student in the general education setting. Your role is to encourage them to reach their full potential while accommodating their needs.

Encourage students with verbal praise or high fives for good work/behavior. However, be careful in regard to age appropriate hugging and touching. Hand over hand procedures or any physical prompts should not occur unless you are trained and it has been approved by your supervising teacher. Never verbally berate, belittle, or call a student negative names, even when talking with other staff. Use a calm, consistent voice when communicating with students.

Make yourself familiar with your building's Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies (PBIS) in pre-K-6th grade and with the Student Handbook for pre-K-12th grade. Approach students with positive affirmation and skills-focused redirection. Skills-focused redirection tells the student what *to* do, rather than what they should *not* do. Focus on the positive attributes of the student and his or her skills/behavior. Consider the child first, then the disability. Behavior is a signal. Focus on what is driving the behavior, rather than the behavior itself, that is where the connection begins.

### **Relationship Building:**

- Develop a positive rapport with student
- Maintain a professional, but supportive role with student as opposed to a "friend" relationship
- Provide positive, specific and frequent feedback
- Maintain your voice at a non-threatening moderate level
- Use respectful language with all students

### **Strategies for Motivation:**

- Provide reassurance and encouragement
- Frequent compliments
- Speak softly, in a non-threatening manner
- Review instructions
- Look for opportunities to put student in a leadership role
- Frequent reinforcement of desired behavior

### **Behavior Management**

When working with students, the paraprofessional will be expected to support the behavior management plan of the teacher. It is important to discuss with each teacher the behavior expectations and interventions which s/he has established, and to define the role of the paraprofessional in carrying out that plan. The use of proactive management strategies often helps the paraprofessional avoid possible management difficulties.

### **Common Behavior Management Strategies:**

- Be consistent with rules, directions, and routines
- Dispense encouragement and praise freely but fairly; help correct errors, reward corrections
- Praising and Active Ignoring: Appropriate behavior is rewarded by praise while minor infractions (such as calling out, pencil tapping, failure to start work) are initially ignored
- Planned ignoring means consciously ignoring the behavior – not showing any reaction to the behavior and ignoring other student responses to the behavior

- Soft corrections: Quietly and discreetly telling the student the appropriate behavior he or she should be showing
- After the correction, treat the issue as closed. Do not nag, harp, or repeat the correction multiple times
- Modeling: Model the behaviors you expect from the student
- Giving students choices: Some students use behaviors to gain control. (this can be prevented this by giving students choices whenever possible which also encourages students responsibility)

### **Strategies for Non- Compliance:**

- Praise compliant behavior
- Provide immediate feedback
- Ignore minor behaviors
- Use self-monitoring strategies

### **Strategies for Organization:**

- Set up notebook system
- Assignment notebook
- Schedule time to clean desk and notebooks
- Note taking buddy
- Set up a daily routine
- Provide graphic organizers
- Assist with short and long term planning

### **Person First Language**

Professional interactions require person-first language when talking with or about students. Person first language focuses on the person, not the disability or difference. Never identify a student or talk about a student in front of others using labels or inappropriate descriptions of their needs. Be committed to creating a culture of inclusion in our schools.

Use the following general guidelines when communicating about disability, ethnicity, race, gender or sexual orientation:

<b>NEGATIVE DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>USE INSTEAD</b>
Handicapped, the disabled	<b>A person with disabilities</b>
Normal	<b>A person without disabilities</b>
Birth defect	<b>A person with a congenital disability</b>
Suffers from, afflicted with...	<b>A person with a diagnosis of...</b>

Downs person, mongol	<b>A person who has Down Syndrome</b>
An autistic	<b>A person who is diagnosed with autism</b>
A cripple	<b>Person with a physical disability</b>
A dumb, mute	<b>A person who is unable to speak, person who uses a communication device</b>
The blind	<b>Person who is blind or visually impaired</b>
Crazy, insane, psycho, mentally ill, emotionally disturbed, demented	<b>A person diagnosed with a mental health condition</b>
Mentally retarded, retarded, slow, idiot, moron	<b>A person diagnosed with a cognitive disability or with an intellectual and developmental disability</b>
Special ed student, special education student, sped	<b>A student who receives special education services</b>
Learning disabled	<b>A person with a learning disability</b>
Homosexual, Homosexual relationship	<b>Lesbian, gay, same-sex couple</b>
Colored, minority, non-white and other racially divisive terms	<b>African American, American Indian, Native American, Hispanic, Latino, Asian</b>

## **Fostering Student Independence**

It is very important for students to be as independent as they can possibly be. Hovering over a student and doing too much for them can hinder their progress toward independence. Remember, your role is to facilitate the student's independence in accomplishing tasks by supporting the student, not by doing for the student.

### **Effective ways of fading paraprofessional support**

Fading physical support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make contact with the individual</li> <li>● Communicate what is going to happen in a way that the individual can understand</li> <li>● Prepare the individual physically for the routine</li> <li>● Perform the steps of the routine in ways that require the individual to participate as much as possible</li> <li>● Incorporate the principle of partial participation</li> </ul>
Fading social support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Highlight similarities among students</li> <li>● Help students invite each other to socialize</li> <li>● Provide behavioral supports that are social in nature</li> <li>● Provide your student with activities that are interactive and collaborative</li> <li>● Encourage peer support</li> <li>● Encourage independence and interdependence</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fade your cues</li> </ul>
Fading academic support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Focus on strengths</li> <li>● Keep expectations high</li> <li>● Break tasks into smaller steps</li> <li>● Extend time on tasks</li> <li>● Present limited amount of information on a page</li> <li>● Make things concrete</li> <li>● Teach organizational skills</li> <li>● Offer support only when needed, do not just give it</li> </ul>
Fading behavior support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Know the student's crisis intervention plan</li> <li>● All behavior is communicative</li> <li>● Build a relationship</li> <li>● Match instructional practices with student strengths</li> <li>● Set up the environment in a way that promotes positive behavior</li> <li>● Meet the student's needs</li> <li>● Task analysis</li> <li>● Visual schedules and supports</li> <li>● Self-management strategies</li> </ul>

## MANDATED REPORTING

**Who should report suspected child abuse or neglect?** If you are a professional who works with children and families, you are in a key position to help protect children from harm. Minnesota law requires professionals and their delegates who work with children to make a child protection report if they know of or have reason to believe a child:

- Is being neglected or abused, or
- Has been neglected or abused within the preceding three years.

Minnesota laws **obligate** mandated reporters to take action. If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, you cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to a supervisor, or to someone else in the office, school, clinic or licensed facility. However, it's recommended to also share your concern with your case manager. You alone are required to make the report to the responsible agency. Reporting to the School Resource Officer (SRO) does meet the reporting requirement.

Anyone who reports child abuse or neglect in good faith is immune from civil liability. The reporter's name is confidential. It is accessible only if the reporter consents, by court order, or by court procedure. If you are required to report known or suspected abuse or neglect and fail to do so, you are guilty of a misdemeanor.

Reporting suspected abuse or neglect is a serious matter that must not be taken lightly. The child



protection worker, law enforcement agent, or licensing agency worker to whom you report may ask you to provide as many facts as possible so they can assess a child's situation and determine the need for intervention. If a child protection report results in a court hearing, you may be asked to testify. Any inconvenience of reporting is offset by a simple fact: The action you take may very well save the life and spirit of a child and provide a family with needed support.

**When to report suspected abuse or neglect?** The law requires mandated reporters to make a report if they know of or have reason to believe a child is being neglected or abused, or has been neglected or abused within the preceding three years. Verbal reports must be made immediately (no longer than **24 hours**). A written report must be submitted within **72 hours** (weekends and holidays are excluded). Reports should be made to the local child welfare agency. Please use the form included in this handbook. The school office can assist you in faxing your completed form to Aitkin County Family Services.

If you are unsure whether you should make a report, call your local child welfare agency and report your concern. The child welfare agency will consult with you about the concern. Screeners can also consult with reporters regarding concerns that are not specific to an identifiable child.

**What you may be asked:**

- Your name, phone number, your relationship to the family or child, and source of information. (witnessed, heard, etc.)
- Name, address, age, and other identifying information regarding the alleged victim, siblings, alleged offender, other household members, or any additional witnesses.
- Specific description of allegations. When and where the alleged incident occurred and if a child is in immediate danger.
- Description of a child's injuries or present conditions, and reporter's understanding of the impact of the alleged maltreatment to the child.
- Presence of domestic violence, criminal activity, including prostitution or sex trafficking of children, weapons, or other dangerous activities in the home.
- Description of any action a school and/or other facility or agency has taken specifically in response to the incident.
- Family's awareness of reporter's contact with the agency.
- Reporter's awareness or knowledge of any immediate family/relative/ community resources willing to offer protection or support. What the reporter is willing to do (or has done) to help the family.
- Reporter's awareness of a child's lineage to Indian tribes, and if so, which tribes, if known.
- Additional information regarding a child and/or family which may be helpful.
- Whether the reporter would like to be notified of the initial disposition. Although you may not have knowledge or answers to all questions asked, respond to the best of your ability.

**What to report:**

- Neglect
- Physical abuse
- Threatened injury
- Sexual abuse
- Threatened sexual abuse
- Domestic Violence
- Predatory offenders
- Sexually exploited youth

**Aitkin County Social Services Contact Information**

Phone: 218-927-7200 or 800-328-3744

Email: [child.protection@co.aitkin.mn.us](mailto:child.protection@co.aitkin.mn.us)

Website: [www.co.aitkin.mn.us](http://www.co.aitkin.mn.us)

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

**Accommodation** : A tool, procedure, or change in the classroom that provides equal access to instruction and assessment for students with disabilities without changing instructional content.

**Assistive Technology (AT)** : Any item, piece of equipment, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities and academic performance of children with disabilities.

**Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)** : A chronic condition that may affect educational performance marked by some of the following characteristics: high activity level, impulsive behavior and lack of self-control, difficulty with transitions, socially immature.

**Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)**: An "umbrella" term for neurodevelopmental disorders that affect how an individual processes information and interprets the world. Core features of autism are persistent deficits in social interaction and communication and restricted, repetitive or stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, or activities.

**Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)**: A written plan used to address problem behavior that includes positive behavioral interventions and support.

**Blind/Visually Impaired (BVI)**: A medically verified visual impairment accompanied by limitations in sight that interfere with acquiring information or interaction with the environment.

**Case Manager** : A licensed teacher or related service provider who is a member of the IEP team and is responsible to coordinate instruction and related services for students receiving special education. The case manager is usually the primary contact for the parent.

**Developmental Adaptive Physical Education (DAPE)**: A supplemental physical education program for students with motor skills needs.

**Developmental Cognitive Delayed (DCD)**: A condition that results in intellectual functioning significantly below average and is associated with concurrent deficits in adaptive behavior.

**Developmentally Delayed (DD)**: Disability category that a student under age 7 can qualify if he is experiencing a measurable delay in development according to diagnostic instruments and procedures.

**Deaf/Blind**: Verified vision loss coupled with a medically diagnosed hearing loss that together interfere with student's ability to interact with their environment. **Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH)**: A diminished sensitivity to sound, or hearing loss, that is expressed in terms of standard audiological

measures.

**Emotional Behavior Disorder (EBD):** Students who need specialized services for emotional or behavioral supports for a wide range of complex and challenging emotional or behavioral conditions that can affect their ability to learn and function in school can qualify for special education services under this category.

**Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE):** Free, appropriate, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a preschool child with a disability ages birth to kindergarten. Instruction can be provided in any of the following settings: home, hospitals, institutions, special schools, classrooms, child care, or preschool settings.

**English Language Learners(ELL):** Students whose primary language is not English may qualify to receive services by a teacher who specializes in assisting students with their acquisition of English and other skills to prepare them for school.

**Extended School Year (ESY):** A type of special education instruction given on days when school is not in session. Students who receive special education services and qualify for this service are unable to retain information and skills learned over breaks from school or need continued support to maintain self-help skills.

**Evaluation Report/Assessment (ER):** A required document for all students who have been assessed for special education services. This report includes a summary of results and interpretation of assessments as well as information about present levels of performance and eligibility for services.

**Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE):** The education of each child with a disability must be provided at public expense without charge to the child or child's parents.

**Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS):** Part of the range of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders resulting from alcohol exposure during the mother's pregnancy, causing irreversible brain damage and growth problems in the child. Lifelong issues caused by FAS include cognitive disabilities, learning disorders, and behavioral challenges.

**Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA):** An educational assessment that involves gathering information to maximize the efficiency of behavioral supports.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):** Federal legislation that protects the privacy of students' personally identifiable information.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** An education act that guarantees a free appropriate public education is available to eligible children with disabilities consisting of special

education and related services provided in conformity with an IEP.

**Individualized Education Program (IEP):** A legal, written document for a student with an identified disability that provides information about the student's present levels of performance, annual goals, and special education services.

**Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP):** A plan for special services for children from birth to 3 years of age with disabilities.

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** Schools are responsible for making sure that children with disabilities are educated alongside children without disabilities as much as it is appropriate.

**Modifications:** An instructional or assessment change in what a student is taught or expected to learn to allow a student to more fully participate in learning.

**Other Health Disability/Impairment (OHD/OHI):** This includes a wide range of chronic or acute health conditions, including Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD), that can range from mild to severe. These conditions can affect a student's ability to learn and function at school. A student with such a condition may be considered for special education under the OHD category.

**Occupational Therapy/Occupational Therapist (OT):** This service helps students receiving special education services develop skills for the activities of daily living, including self-care, leisure, independent living, and work skills.

**Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS):** A school-wide proactive approach to encourage and promote positive behavior.

**Physically Impaired (PI):** A medically diagnosed chronic, physical impairment, either congenital or acquired, that may adversely affect physical or academic functioning.

**Physical Therapy (PT):** Physical therapists may provide services for students who have difficulty with their physical strength or endurance. Possible services include: developing exercise routines, assisting with stretching and muscle tone, and improving the mobility of students.

**Responsive Classroom (RC):** An educational approach that emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community.

**Related Services:** Supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, including occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), developmental adaptive physical education (DAPE), speech/language services, counseling, social workers, etc.

**Response to Intervention (RtI):** A multi-tiered approach to the early identification and support of

students with learning and behavior needs. This includes high-quality instruction and universal screening of all students within a school.

**Secondary Transition:** Services that prepare students with disabilities to move from school to post-school life based on individual needs and interests and includes planning for postsecondary education or training, employment, and independent living.

**Specific Learning Disability (SLD):** A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language. It may present as an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. SLD also includes conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia.

**Severely Multiply Impaired (SMI):** Severe learning and developmental problems resulting from two or more disability conditions.

**Speech/Language Disorder (S/LD or SPL):** A communication disorder such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language impairment, or a voice impairment that adversely affects a student's educational performance.

**Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI):** An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that may adversely affect the student's educational performance.

**Title 1:** A program within qualifying schools that have a high number of children from low-income families that is designed to ensure that all students, particularly those that are at-risk, demonstrate progress and achievement on state academic standards.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

**Northern Lights Special Education Cooperative** <http://www.nlsec.org>

**Medical Assistance (MA Billing) or SpEd Forms** - contact NLSEC at 218-655-5018

**AFSCME Union** - view Union contract or talk to the Union President

**National Support Center for Paraeducators** <http://www.nrcpara.org/>

**Minnesota Paraprofessional Consortium** <https://ici.umn.edu/para/default.html>

**Minnesota Department of Education** <http://education.state.mn.us/mde/index.html>

**Google Suite Learning Center** <https://gsuite.google.com/learning-center/tips/docs/#/>

**Academic and Behavioral Interventions** <http://www.interventioncentral.org/>

**Behavioral Strategies** <http://www.pbisworld.com/>

## Paraprofessional Evaluation Form

### McGregor Public Schools

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_ Case Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **DEFINITIONS OF RATINGS**

The following definitions are used to identify the employee's level of performance.

<b>DISTINGUISHED (D)</b>	Performs assigned duties in a manner indicating exceptional understanding of essential functions. Results achieved are often better than expected.
<b>PROFICIENT (P)</b>	Performs assigned duties at an acceptable level through demonstrated application of skills.
<b>BASIC (B)</b>	Performance in one or more areas does not meet the requirement for a "Meets Expectations" rating. Improvement is required.
<b>UNSATISFACTORY (U)</b>	Even under close direction, performance does not indicate the ability and/or willingness to produce required results.

<b><u>Criteria</u></b>	<b><u>Performance Rating</u></b>	<b><u>Comments</u></b>
<u>Quality/Quantity of work</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Accurate/Thorough</li> <li>● Consistently charts student progress</li> <li>● Student planners/notebooks completed in professional manner</li> <li>● Sound Judgment/Decision-making exhibited</li> </ul>		
<u>Work habits</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● On-Time</li> <li>● Organized</li> <li>● Effectively uses time</li> <li>● Dependable</li> <li>● Adaptable/Flexible</li> <li>● Positive attitude</li> <li>● Demonstrates initiative/Self-starter</li> </ul>		



<u>Work relationships</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works well with other adult staff members</li> <li>• Contributes to the team</li> <li>• Communicates effectively with supervisors</li> <li>• Maintains professional boundaries with parents</li> </ul>		
<u>Work Commitments</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completes assignments effectively</li> <li>• Follows procedures and school rules</li> <li>• Complies with district safety policies and practices</li> <li>• Demonstrates consistent attendance</li> <li>• Maintains professional appearance and demeanor</li> </ul>		
<u>Student Interaction</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps establish and maintain a positive and challenging learning environment</li> <li>• Fosters student independence</li> <li>• Provides effective behavior management for all students</li> <li>• Takes action when needed</li> <li>• Supports student needs</li> <li>• Treats students with fairness, respect, and consistency</li> </ul>		
<u>Communication Skills</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writes and speaks clearly</li> <li>• Conveys important messages to teachers and parents</li> <li>• Maintains confidentiality in all communications</li> </ul>		
<u>Overall performance</u>		

Summary of Strengths:

Area of Skills Acquisition and Refinement:

Employee Comments:

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Employee Signature

Date

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Evaluator Signature

Date

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Site Administrator Signature

Date