

Rubric for Determining Student Paraprofessional Needs in Special Education

This rubric is designed to help educators assess the level of support a student may require from a paraprofessional in a special education setting. The categories focus on areas such as academic support, behavior management, social skills, communication, mobility, and self-care. Each area is rated on a scale of 1–4, with higher scores indicating a greater need for paraprofessional support.

Instructions for Use for Table 1:

- ☐ For each category, rate the student's needs on a scale from 1 to 4.
- ☐ Add up the scores across categories.
- ☐ The total score will help to determine the level of paraprofessional support the student may require:
 - ☐ **7–14:** Little to no paraprofessional support needed.
 - ☐ **15–21:** Minimal paraprofessional support may be required.
 - ☐ **22–28:** Moderate paraprofessional support is necessary throughout the day.
 - ☐ **29–32:** High level of paraprofessional support is essential for most or all areas of functioning.

TABLE 1

Category	Independent (1)	Minimal (2)	Moderate (3)	High (4)
Academic	Student completes academic tasks independently with minimal accommodations.	Student occasionally requires help to follow instructions, stay on task, or understand content.	Student regularly requires help with tasks, staying on track, or task completion.	Student needs constant one-on-one support to complete or understand academic tasks.
Behavior	Student demonstrates appropriate behavior and self-regulation with no adult intervention.	Student occasionally needs reminders or redirection to stay focused or control behavior.	Student frequently needs behavior interventions and regular adult guidance to remain on task.	Student requires continuous behavior management and intervention throughout the day.
Social Skills	Student independently interacts with peers and follows social norms.	Student occasionally needs support to engage in appropriate social interactions.	Student regularly requires adult support to initiate, maintain, or follow through with social interactions.	Student needs consistent adult facilitation to engage in any social interactions or avoid social conflicts.

Rubric for Determining Student Paraprofessional Needs in Special Education

Communication	Student communicates effectively without additional support or accommodations.	Student occasionally needs assistance (e.g., prompting, visual supports) to communicate effectively.	Student frequently requires adult intervention to express needs, thoughts, or emotions.	Student relies on an adult to facilitate or interpret communication throughout the day.
Mobility	Student moves independently around the classroom and school environment.	Student occasionally needs assistance with physical mobility or navigating school spaces.	Student regularly needs assistance moving from one place to another or using mobility devices.	Student requires full assistance for mobility needs and transitions throughout the school day.
Self-Care	Student is independent in self-care tasks.	Student occasionally needs reminders or guidance to complete self-care tasks.	Student occasionally needs reminders or guidance to complete self-care tasks.	Student depends on one-on-one adult support for all self-care tasks.
Medical/Health	Student manages medical conditions independently (e.g., monitoring diabetes, seizures).	Student occasionally requires adult reminders or checks for medical/health needs.	Student regularly needs adult support to manage medical conditions (e.g., medication, treatments).	Student requires continuous adult supervision to manage ongoing medical/health needs.
Sensory	Student regulates sensory input independently or uses self-guided strategies.	Student occasionally needs support (e.g., sensory breaks) to regulate sensory input.	Student frequently requires adult-guided sensory strategies or accommodations to remain focused.	Student needs continuous adult intervention to manage sensory overload or sensitivities.

Rubric for Determining Student Paraprofessional Needs in Special Education

Here is a table rubric for determining paraprofessional support minutes on an Individualized Education Program (IEP) based on the level of support required by the student. The table links the level of support in various functional areas to the recommended number of minutes of paraprofessional support per day. It is important to remember that paraprofessional minutes should be determined **case by case** and these minutes are to be used as **general guidelines**. Paraprofessional minutes are a **team** decision and must be based on the best available data.

Instructions for Use for Table 2:

- ☐ Assess each support area: Rate the student in each area based on their need level (1–4).
- ☐ Calculate the total minutes per day: Add the recommended minutes for each category.
- ☐ Adjust based on individual needs: The final paraprofessional minutes can be adjusted up or down based on the specific school schedule and student's needs.
 - ☐ **0–90 minutes/day**: Minimal support required. Paraprofessional check-ins or support during specific periods.
 - ☐ **91–180 minutes/day**: Moderate support throughout the day, possibly during specific academic or non-academic periods.
 - ☐ **181–300 minutes/day**: High level of support, requiring assistance across multiple domains regularly.
 - ☐ **300+ minutes/day**: Full-day support needed across most or all activities.

TABLE 2

Category	Independent (1)	Minimal (2)	Moderate (3)	High (4)
Academic	No additional minutes required.	30–60 minutes/day (occasional check-ins).	60–120 minutes/day (regular support for assignments, tasks).	120+ minutes/day (continuous one-on-one support).
Behavior	No additional minutes required.	15–30 minutes/day (brief interventions or redirection).	30–90 minutes/day (regular behavior interventions).	90+ minutes/day (consistent behavior monitoring).
Social Skills	No additional minutes required.	15–30 minutes/day (peer interaction support during specific times, e.g., recess).	30–60 minutes/day (regular facilitation of social interactions).	60+ minutes/day (constant facilitation or social conflict intervention).
Communication	No additional minutes required.	15–30 minutes/day (prompting or assistance)	30–60 minutes/day (frequent assistance to)	60+ minutes/day (one-on-one support to communicate)

Rubric for Determining Student Paraprofessional Needs in Special Education

		during structured activities).	communicate needs and interact).	throughout the day).
Mobility	No additional minutes required.	15–30 minutes/day (help during transitions or specific physical activities).	30–60 minutes/day (regular assistance with moving through the school).	60+ minutes/day (constant assistance for all movement and transitions).
Self-Care	No additional minutes required.	15–30 minutes/day (occasional support, reminders for tasks).	30–60 minutes/day (frequent assistance but some independence).	60+ minutes/day (one-on-one support for all self-care tasks).
Medical/Health	No additional minutes required.	5–30 minutes/day (occasional health checks or minor medical support).	30–60 minutes/day (daily health management or monitoring).	60+ minutes/day (continuous health-related monitoring and support).
Sensory	No additional minutes required.	15–30 minutes/day (occasional sensory breaks or regulation).	30–60 minutes/day (regular sensory interventions to manage environment).	60+ minutes/day (ongoing sensory support throughout the school day).