

## Guidance for Determining Paraprofessional Support on IEP's

Determining paraprofessional minutes refers to the process of calculating how much time a paraprofessional should spend working with a student or group of students, typically based on the needs outlined in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). These minutes are critical in ensuring students with disabilities receive the appropriate support they need to succeed.

Here's a step-by-step guide to determining paraprofessional support (you may also reference [this rubric](#) to help determine level of support):

### 1. Review the Student's IEP

- ☐ The student's **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** is the primary document for determining paraprofessional minutes. The IEP outlines the student's specific needs, goals, and services, including how much support they require.
- ☐ Look for the section on **Supplementary Aids and Services** or **Supports for School Personnel**, which should indicate whether paraprofessional support is required, and if so, how much.
- ☐ Identify the **specific areas** where the paraprofessional is needed (e.g., during instruction, transitions, or personal care).

### 2. Identify the Type of Support Needed

- ☐ Determine the type of support the paraprofessional is expected to provide:
  - ☐ **Academic support:** Reinforcement of learning, modifying assignments, or assisting during specific subjects.
  - ☐ **Behavioral support:** Implementing a behavior intervention plan (BIP) or helping the student stay on task.
  - ☐ **Personal care:** Assisting with daily living tasks, such as toileting, feeding, or mobility.
- ☐ Understand whether the support is required for **specific times during the day** (e.g., math class) or throughout the entire school day.

### 3. Consult with Special Education Team

- ☐ The special education team (including the special education teacher, administrators, and related service providers) should meet to discuss the amount of paraprofessional support needed.
- ☐ During IEP meetings or staffing discussions, **team collaboration** can help clarify when and how often paraprofessional support is required (e.g., full-time, part-time, or during specific activities).
- ☐ Input from the general education teacher can also help determine when the paraprofessional is needed most in the classroom.

### 4. Consider the Student's Level of Independence

- ☐ The paraprofessional's role is often to **foster independence** in students, so it's important to assess how much support the student actually requires. Consider:
  - ☐ Can the student work independently for certain periods of time?
  - ☐ Are there specific subjects or activities where more support is needed, and others where less support is sufficient?

## Guidance for Determining Paraprofessional Support on IEP's

- ☐ The goal is to provide support without creating over-reliance on the paraprofessional, allowing the student to develop greater independence when appropriate.

### 5. Factor in Transition and Non-Academic Time

- ☐ Determine if the student needs support during **non-academic times** such as:
  - ☐ Transitions between classes.
  - ☐ Lunch and recess.
  - ☐ Extracurricular activities or special events.
- ☐ These periods often require additional paraprofessional minutes, especially for students who may need help with social interactions, mobility, or behavior management.

### 6. Determine Frequency and Duration

- ☐ Based on the student's needs and the IEP, specify how frequently paraprofessional support is needed (e.g., daily, during specific periods).
- ☐ **Total minutes** should reflect the amount of time per day or per week the paraprofessional will be directly supporting the student. For example:
  - ☐ **Full-time:** A paraprofessional might be assigned to work with the student for the entire school day (e.g., 6 hours/day).
  - ☐ **Part-time:** A paraprofessional might provide support during specific classes (e.g., 60 minutes for math and 45 minutes for reading).
- ☐ Ensure the schedule aligns with both the student's needs and the paraprofessional's availability.

### 7. Document the Minutes in the IEP

- ☐ Once the team has determined the required paraprofessional minutes, these should be clearly documented in the IEP under the **Services and Supports** section.
- ☐ Example: "The student will receive 180 minutes per day of paraprofessional support in the general education classroom to assist with reading, writing, and transitions."
- ☐ Ensure the minutes are **specific and measurable**, indicating how often and for how long the support will be provided.

### 8. Adjust Based on Progress and Reevaluation

- ☐ Paraprofessional minutes may need to be adjusted over time based on the student's progress toward their IEP goals.
- ☐ Regularly review the effectiveness of the paraprofessional support, and if the student becomes more independent, it may be appropriate to reduce the amount of time. Conversely, if the student requires more assistance, the IEP team may increase the paraprofessional minutes.

## Guidance for Determining Paraprofessional Support on IEP's

### Example Scenarios for Determining Paraprofessional Minutes

#### **Student with Behavioral Needs:**

- ☐ A student with significant behavior issues may need support throughout the day to implement a behavior plan. In this case, the paraprofessional may be assigned for **full-day support** to assist in both academic and non-academic settings (e.g., 360 minutes/day).

#### **Student with Academic Support Needs:**

- ☐ A student who struggles with reading and writing but can function independently in other subjects may need **part-time support** during specific classes. The IEP might specify 90 minutes/day of paraprofessional assistance during reading and writing instruction.

#### **Student with Mobility/Personal Care Needs:**

- ☐ A student with physical disabilities may need assistance with transitions, toileting, and lunch. The IEP could outline paraprofessional support for **non-academic times** (e.g., 30 minutes during transitions, 20 minutes during lunch, and 20 minutes for personal care), totaling 70 minutes/day.

#### **Conclusion:**

Determining paraprofessional minutes requires careful collaboration with the special education team, an understanding of the student's needs as outlined in the IEP, and ongoing monitoring of the student's progress. It's important to ensure that the assigned minutes align with the student's academic, behavioral, and personal care needs while fostering as much independence as possible.