

## Promoting Independence and Reducing the Reliance on 1:1 Paraprofessionals

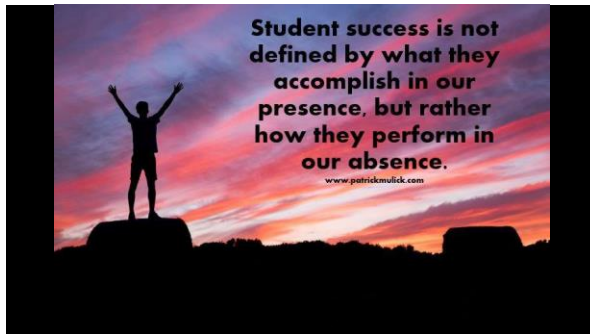
Patrick Mulick BCBA



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## The Auburn School District

- Home to over 17,000 students
- 11.9% access special education services
- 16 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, 3 high schools, 1 alternative high school
- Fastest growing district in King County
- Very diverse community
  - 44% of students live in multilingual households
  - 11% of students are new to the country within the past two years
  - 113 languages spoken

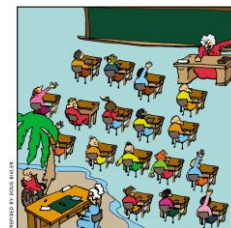
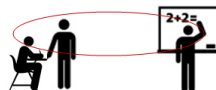


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## Detrimental Effects of Excessive Para Proximity

Giangreco et al., 2005

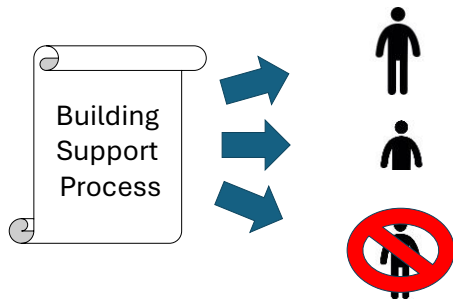
- Separation from classmates
- Unnecessary dependence
- Interference with peer interactions
- Insular relationships
- Feelings of Stigmatization
- Limited Access to Teacher instruction
- Loss of personal control
- Loss of gender identity
- Provocation of problem behaviors
- Risk of being bullied



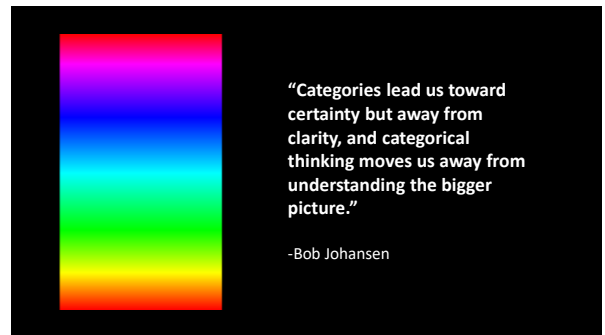
**ISLAND IN THE MAINSTREAM**  
MRS. JONES AND MRS. COOPER ARE STILL TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHY FRED DOESN'T FEEL LIKE PART OF THE CLASS.

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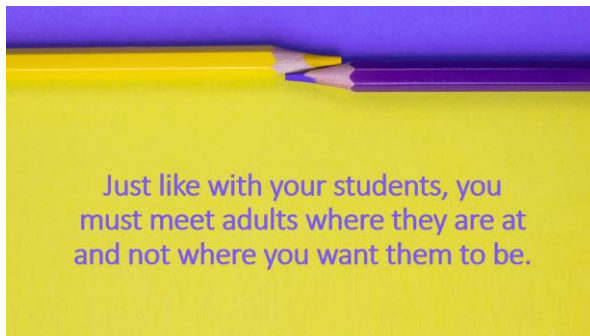
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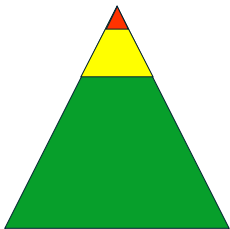
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## The Beginning

- Assembled a critical mass of special education staff
- Reviewed district data and practices related to 1:1s
- Had authentic discussion around barriers that exist in the district
- Made recommendations for next steps



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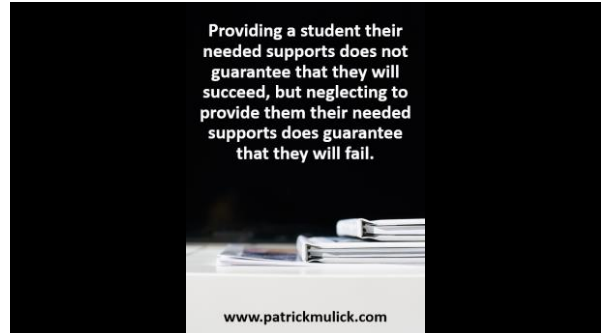
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### Floater Paraeducators



- High performing special education paraeducators whose job it is to support a student's program getting back on track
- Never assigned to one assignment for more than a couple of months
- Has a strong focus and goal of promoting student independence
- Through the guidance from Student Special Services, they strategically navigate both student and staff challenges

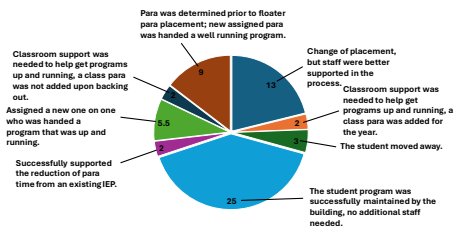
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CATEGORY OF ALTERNATIVES	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES
Resource Reallocation	Trading in paraprofessional positions to hire additional special education teachers provides increased access to more highly qualified personnel.
Co-teaching	Teachers and special educators work together in the same classroom. To maintain a naturally occurring number of students special needs, it may be necessary to share a special educator across three or four classes.
Building Capacity of Teachers	Teacher capacity can be built in a variety of areas (e.g., expectations of teacher engagement with students with disabilities, differentiated instruction, universal design, response to instruction, positive behavior supports, assistive technology, information about current evidence-based practices).
Paperwork Paraprofessionals	Paraprofessionals may be assigned clerical paperwork duties that free time for special educators to collaborate with teachers and work directly with students.
Improving Working Conditions for Special Educators and Classroom Teachers	Special educator conditions can be improved by reducing caseload size, the grade range covered, and the number teachers with whom special educators interact. Explore changes in class size, increase availability of special educator and related supports, schedule coordinated meeting times, and provide access to adapted materials, to improve conditions for teachers.
Peer Supports	Encourage peer support strategies that provide natural ways to support students with disabilities and may also benefit students without disabilities.
Self-Determination	Teach self-determination skills and provide opportunities for students with disabilities to have a voice in determining their own supports.
Paraprofessional Pools	Establishing a small pool of skilled paraprofessionals (or one floating position for a small school) allows for their temporary assignments to address specific, short-term needs.
Fading Plans	Developing a plan to fade paraprofessional support as much as possible can lead to greater student independence and more natural supports.
Dually Certified Teachers	Hire teachers who are certified in both general and special education to provide enhanced personnel capacity for all students.

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### Our Data after 4 Years and 62 Cases



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### Floater Updates



- Created an intake and exit process
- Changed the Name to **Inclusive Support Professional**
- Changed the actual category of the position due to the type of work involved
  - Supporting staff who are struggling to support a student
  - Collaborating with many adults and co-creating student systems
  - Coaching gen ed teachers on interventions
  - Being flexible with start/end times

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## High Quality PD on Promoting Independence

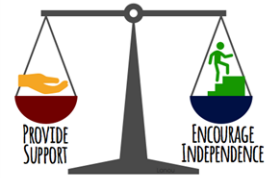
For case managers who had a student with a 1:1 paraeducator assigned, multiple opportunities for PD on PI were provided. The course highlighted:

- Strategies to promote student independence
- How to lead this work with families and school teams
- Tools and resources
- Shifting mindsets



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**Providing support without enabling.  
Promoting independence without abandoning.**



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*A Shift in Mindsets to Support Independence  
For Students with 1:1 Paraeducators in General Education*

The Velcro



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The Wind-up



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The Orbit



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## The Houdini



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## The Tooth Fairy



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## The Mime



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## (a.k.a. silent supports)

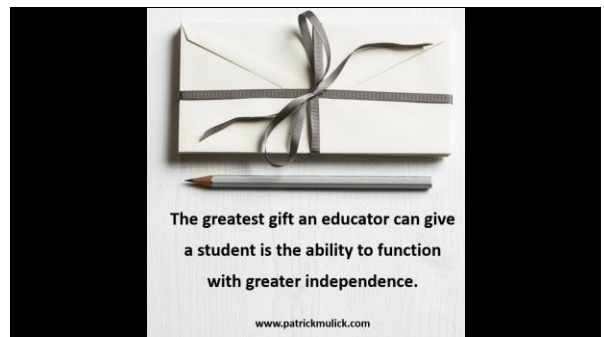


- Highlighting the key directions
- Jot down the teacher directions or create a checklist for an activity
- Find a peer to help
- Write down questions to ask during a discussion
- Point out other appropriate models of behavior in class
- Use a graphic organizer to show complex topics simply
- Find a "how to" video on YouTube
- Use the "3 before me" rule

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Less Adult Reliance **=** More Opportunities

More Adult Reliance **=** Less Opportunities

### Bad Reason's to Continue the Use of a 1:1 Paraeducator

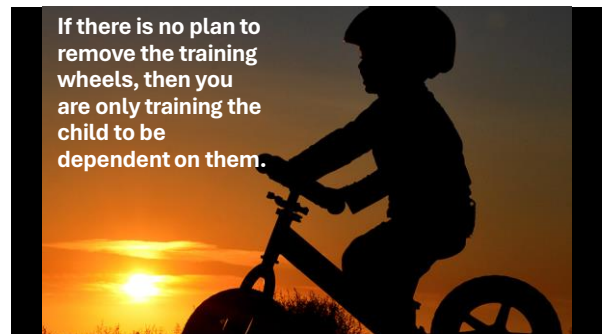
- Everybody in the building loves the para, they are a part of the school, people would hate to see them go
- Makes it easier to find the student in a crowd, just look for the para
- The para and the student are a good match, the student enjoys the para and responds well to them
- The student feels safer when their para is around
- It helps to have someone following the student around all day just in case they escalate
- The student needs to be nudged when they stop working and the para is great at doing that

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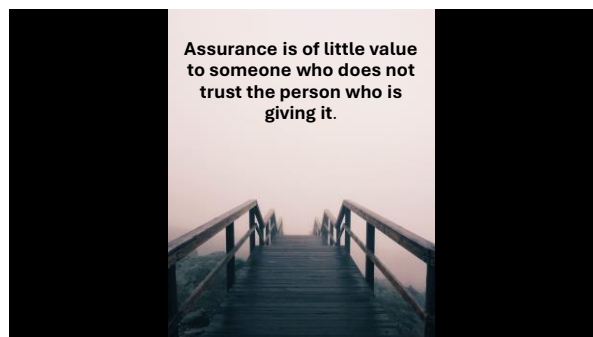
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*Paraeducator Role Rubric*

Time of Day, Activity, or Class Period	What can the student do independently with the provided classroom supports and should not be given extra help with by the 1:1 paraeducator?	What does the student need 1:1 assistance with that cannot be provided by the existing classroom staff?	What accommodations and strategies can be utilized that would permit the student to complete the activity independently?	What work can the paraeducator do when their targeted student is not in need of support?

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**Student Skill Analysis**

What missing skills are interfering with the student's ability to function more independently at school that cannot be supported by the existing classroom staff? Please list each skill with a corresponding goal from the IEP that is addressing it and how data is being collected. Finally, list out the next steps or future goals that will need to be reached before the support of the 1:1 paraeducator can be fully transferred over to the existing classroom staff. If the next step is to transfer the support back over to the existing classroom staff and reduce the 1:1 paraeducator time, please write "reduce paraeducator time."

Missing Skill	Description of the IEP goal that is addressing the missing skill	Method of data collection	Next steps or future goals that need to be reached before the student can become independent of the 1:1 paraeducator

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What is your estimated timeline in which you believe the student will be able to continue to make progress on their goals independent of an assigned 1:1 paraeducator?

List an estimated 1:1 paraeducator support reduction plan:

	The Reduction in 1:1 Paraeducator Support	Estimated Timeline of Achievement
Step 1		
Step 2		
Step 3		
Step 4		
Step 5		
Step 6		
Step 7		

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**Adult Support Role Rubric**

Fill out the table below that specifies the role of the adult support. Indicate "N/A" for times that do not apply.

Time of Day, Activity, or Class Period	What can the student do independently and does not need additional help with?	In what ways will the classroom teacher assist the student and in what ways will the adult support assist the student?	Beyond the direct assistance of an adult, what supports can be used to help advance the skills of the student and build their independence? (for example, a visual schedule, voice scale, break card, timer, eye gaze device, switch, etc.)	What work can the adult support do when their targeted student is not in need of support?
General Education Setting:		Teacher assists by:  Adult support assists by:		
Special Education Setting:		Teacher assists by:  Adult support assists by:		

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1. What is the intent of the assigned 1:1 paraeducator as described in the adverse impact statement of the IEP?

2. In what ways has the student demonstrated greater independence in the past year?

3. What skills, when developed, will indicate that the student is performing at their highest level of independence?

4. What specially designed instruction is the student currently receiving to help advance those skills and how is it being delivered?

5. What next steps can the staff take to support the student in becoming more independent?

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**Reduction of 1:1 Paraeducator Time****Misleading Language**

- Remove the para
- Yank the para
- Dropping support
- Getting less help
- Decreasing student support

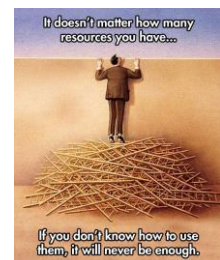
**Student Centered Language**

- Increasing opportunities for independence
- Progressing the student's learning through the use of naturally occurring academic, social, and behavioral cues
- Transfer instructional control from the para to their teacher
- Increasing student's ability to do it all on their own
- Growing the student's ability to be a do it yourselfer
- Maximizing direct learning from peers and the highly trained teacher
- Advancing the student from being dependent on their own adult to be successful

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**Where Things Sit Today**

- 65.5 1:1 Paras
- 19 Behavior Specialists
- 2 LPNs



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Everything rises and  
falls on leadership.

John C. Maxwell

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## Updates



Meeting with building principals and principal leadership about promoting independence in buildings



Moved promoting independence professional development to an asynchronous option



Periodically having school teams return to Student Special Services to provide updates on students



This work is still hard!!!!

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## Here's an IDEA!

The purposes of IDEA include ensuring that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and **prepare them for further education, employment and independent living.**

What are we  
preparing  
them for?

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"I cannot do all the good that the world needs. But the world needs all the good that I can do."

-Jana Stanfield

www.patrickmulick.com

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# Thank You!

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