PARA-EDUCATORS HANDBOOK

for

COORDINATED CAREER ACADEMIC EDUCATION

and

CAREER TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES

Georgia Department of Education

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Updated 2008

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Georgia offers unique interventions for students who need additional assistance to succeed in regular Career and Technical Education programs. Coordinated Vocational and Academic Education (GCSA) support services are offered to students who are academically challenged and Career Technical Instruction (CTI) support services are offered to students with disabilities. One aspect of successful educational careers of students is the involvement of adults who assist with the educational process. Research indicates that the presence of an additional adult in a classroom can add to the academic success of students who benefit from a team approach to their instruction.

School systems across the nation hire individuals who work alongside teachers to provide appropriate instruction to students. Some states refer to these individuals as teacher aides, paraprofessionals, or Para-Educators. GCSA and CTI offer individualized support for students who may be need academic assistance to maintain the educational status of their peers. The person hired to work with GCSA and CTI Coordinators must have a good understanding of Career and Technical Education (CTAE), the CTAE support services of GCSA and CTI and the nature and needs of students who will enroll in GCSA and CTI. Due to the vital role this individual plays in the successful implementation of support services for students, individuals hired to work with Georgia's GCSA and CTI students will be referred to as Para-Educators.

Explanation of Coordinated Career Academic Education

The Georgia Department of Education offers Coordinated Career Academic Education (GCSA), a support service for all secondary Career and Technical Education (CTAE) programs. Students enrolled in GCSA receive support services in CTAE courses, such as communication, computational, and employability skills. An interlocking team of academic and CTAE educators should be a major component of GCSA programs.

Enrollment of Students for CCAE Support Services

GCSA serves students enrolled in grades 9 through 12 who are enrolled in CTAE programs. Middle or high school teachers, counselors, administrators, or parents may refer students for GCSA services. CTAE students may be served by GCSA for any of the reasons in the following table.

Factors for Student Selection

- Two or more grade levels academically below their peers in math, English, and/or reading skills.
- Strong probability of being unable to succeed in their regular CTAE class without special support services.
- Frequent or excessive absenteeism.
- School alienated.
- Economically deprived.
- Potential school dropout.
- Limited English proficiency.

There are a multitude of characteristics that students may exhibit to qualify them as candidates for GCSA services. Refer to the GCSA Coordinator's Handbook for a more detailed

list of characteristics and conditions that cause students to be academically behind their peers and candidates for GCSA.

Technology Academic Plan

A Technology Academic Plan (TAP) is a good tool for interlocking teams to use when screening prospective students for GCSA. A sample TAP is located in Appendix A. Local school systems may wish to redesign the form to better serve specific needs of students from their communities. An individual TAP should be useful when planning each student's program of study.

GCSA Interlocking Team

The GCSA interlocking team is a group of individuals supporting the academic and CTAE success of students enrolled in GCSA. The GCSA interlocking team coordinates curriculum with the individual needs of students receiving CCAE Support Services. The table below indicates people who may serve as interlocking team members.

GCSA Interlocking Teams
- B GCSA Coordinator
- B CCAE ParaEducator
- B Academic Teachers
- B CTAE Teachers
- B Other Identified Teacher(s)
- B Administrators
- B Counselors
- B Community Members

The GCSA interlocking team may address the following issues:
- Preparation of academic prescriptions, i.e., Technology Academic Plan (TAP).
- Coordination of academic/technology learning.
- Modification of curriculum.
- Evaluation of student progress.
- Address student personal/academic concerns.
- Assist with GSCA/CTI activities and competitive projects.
- Interlocking team members need to be familiar with the individual learning strengths
- and weaknesses of students as well as their occupational and career aspirations.

Explanation of Career Technical Instruction

Career Technical Instruction (CTI) supports students with disabilities enrolled in secondary CTAE programs. CTI serves various numbers of students based on the school system and the number of students enrolled in special education programs. Students are identified for CTI through the Services for Exceptional Children in each school system. CTI also provides students with equal access to the least restrictive environment, varied instructional strategies, early guidance, CTAE assessment, appropriate transitional services, and special support services. CTI Support Services are agreed upon at the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) staffing and are added to the services section of the IEP for each student.

Enrollment of Students for CTI Support Services

CTI serves students with specific learning disabilities, emotional/behavioral disorders, mild intellectual disabilities, moderate intellectual disabilities, hearing impairments, physical impairments, speech/language impairments, visual impairments, or other health impairments

such as diabetes, epilepsy, Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), ADHD, etc.

Reasons Students May be Served by CTI

- Currently enrolled in a specific CTAE program.

- Requires additional support in the CTAE course to successfully complete the program.

- Currently receiving services for an identified disability.

Individualized Education Program for CTI Students

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a plan written by a team consisting minimally of the student's case manager, a regular education teacher, and the parent. Students in grades 9-12 usually participate in the IEP meeting along with the school counselor. The IEP is required by the Individual's with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a legally binding document that prescribes services, accommodations, and modifications to be provided for the student during the school year. Services are based on the student's deficit area(s) and provide assistance toward successful completion of the educational process.

Components of an IEP

1) Student's present levels of functioning (school progress).
2) Annual goals and short-term instructional objectives for each annual goal based on the student's deficit areas.
3) Dates for achieving the student's goals and objectives.
4) Criteria for evaluating the achievement of the goals and objectives.
5) Accommodations and modifications to be provided for the student.
6) Amount and type of services the student will receive in regular class and special needs program.
7) Individual Transition Plan (ITP) for high school students beginning at age 14.

Each student's IEP document helps the CTI Coordinator, CTAE instructor(s), and ParaEducator determine what assistance the student will need in his/her CTAE program of study. The ParaEducator's role in the IEP process will be to:

Y Collect data to report on the student's progress toward annual goals and short-term objectives.

Y Assist instructor with accommodations and modifications listed on the student's IEP.

Y Share information on student's strengths and weaknesses to help develop or dismiss goals and objectives.

Coordinator Assignment

GCSA and CTI Coordinators hold a variety of responsibilities depending on the school in which they work. The ParaEducator supports and assists the Coordinator(s) in achieving these responsibilities. Many times the GCSA and CTI Coordinators share the services of a ParaEducator. Coordinators' responsibilities include but are not limited to the following tasks.

A Curriculum

Use the GCSA curriculum or CTI appropriate curriculum in working with students to support academic and/or CTAE classes.

Work with students in an academic setting with the GCSA curriculum or CTI appropriate curriculum as a support.

Prepare lesson plans.

A Remediation/Acceleration

Implement federal/state mandated testing.

A Advisement

Administer student career assessments.

Provide advisement in academic and technical classes.

A Counseling

Provide resources as needed for academic and/or personal counseling.

Offer career guidance/job exploration.

Seek transitional support services for exiting GSCA/CTI students.

A Youth Leadership Development

Sponsor local GSCA/CTI student organization.

Plan and coordinate GSCA/CTI activities such as field trips, etc.

Support GSCA/CTI region and state activities.

Supervise or support work-based education programs.

A Community Relations

Seek community support through local organizations and businesses.

Roles and responsibilities of Coordinators are many and varied. Para-Educators are important team members who provide assistance with the Coordinator's responsibilities, thus making support services for students more valuable.

Definition of ParaEducator

According to the National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals in Education and Related Services, Para-Educators are defined as employees:

1) whose positions are either instructional in nature or who deliver other indirect services to children, youth, and/or their parents; and

2) who work under the supervision of teachers or other professional personnel who have the ultimate responsibility for

(a) the design and implementation of education and related services programs, and

(b) the assessment of the impact on student progress and other education outcomes.

The Georgia Professional Standards Commission defines a Paraprofessional as a person who relates in role and function to a professional and who does a portion of the professional's job or task(s) under the supervision of a professional. A CTAE support services ParaEducator has some decision-making authority as limited and regulated by his or her relationship with professionals in their respective school systems.

Employment and Certification

All Georgia Para-Educators must hold a valid state certificate issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. Para-Educators are hired through local school systems.

School systems are responsible for assuring Para-Educators are in compliance with the state certification and federal requirement mandates. Each school system may have requirements in addition to the federal requirements outlined in the paragraph on the top of page 10.

In January 2002, the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, known as the "No Child Left Behind Act," established federal eligibility requirements for educational Para-Educators. Para-Educators hired to work in Title I schools and programs must satisfy one of the three requirements described in the chart below. Administrators for schools not participating in Title I programs may also require Para-Educators in their systems to meet these requirements. Para-Educators hired prior to the enactment have until January 8, 2006 to satisfy the requirements.

Federal and State Requirements

A paper/pencil version of the ParaPro Assessment is administered to Para-Educators at PRAXIS test sites six times per year. This assessment is also available online if the school system participates with the Educational Testing Service. For additional information regarding certification and federal requirements, contact the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission encourages local school systems to provide Para-Educators with a minimum of 50 contact hours (5 SDUs) within the first year of employment. Georgia's Program Specialist for Intervention Programs supports attendance of Para-Educators at a 50-hour GCSA/CTI Para-Educators Workshop, sponsored through the Georgia Vocational Staff Development Consortium, which is held annually each summer at a college or university.

Maintaining Certification

The beginning validity of a certificate is the date of issuance; it expires five years following that date. Completion of 100 contact hours (10 SDUs), or 6 semester hours, or 10-quarter hours every five years is necessary to maintain certification. Local school administrators determine the appropriateness of courses or workshops related to maintaining certification.

HOPE Scholarship Opportunities for Para-Educators

Former Governor Roy Barnes administered The A-Plus Education Reform Act in 2000, helping to place more certified teachers in Georgia's classrooms. The Promise II Teacher Scholarship helps Para-Educators gain a baccalaureate degree in education and become teachers. In return, scholarship recipients agree to teach in Georgia public schools at the pre-school, elementary, middle, or secondary level for one year. These opportunities are subject to change based on availability of funds. For current information regarding HOPE opportunities, check the GADOE website.

Legal Responsibilities of Para-Educators

While in the performance of their duties, Para-Educators should be under the supervision and direction of a GCSA or CTI Coordinator at all times. Therefore, legal questions should not become an issue if the ParaEducator performs his/her required duties under the supervision of a GCSA or CTI Coordinator and follows recognized procedures. A ParaEducator should fully understand his/her legal status and responsibilities before assuming the job. Negligence or failure to follow all school policies may result in legal action. Do not assume that protection is given in all situations. Do not perform tasks involving supervision of students unless under the direct supervision of a teacher. Ask a CTAE supervisor or principal for local school board policies, which detail the Para-Educators' legal responsibilities and job description.

Ethics

Para-Educators should realize that information concerning students, as well as faculty members, should not be conveyed to persons outside the school. The Family Rights & Privacy Act addresses confidentiality of school records. Confidentiality is a very important factor that must be considered when collecting, organizing, interpreting, and applying data on individual students.

Idle gossip, inside and outside of the school, can create a situation that is not conducive to a good educational setting. Like those in the medical and legal professions who observe a code of ethics, Para-Educators in the classroom must do the same. Being identified with a school and the teaching profession requires Para-Educators to assume the responsibilities of the role as an educator and choose a standard of behavior appropriate for this role.

Qualities of an Effective ParaEducator

A person serving as a Para-Educator should possess a willingness to cooperate with CTAE and Special Education teachers, GSCA/CTI students, GSCA/CTI Coordinators, and appropriate school personnel. Para-Educators should set an appropriate example for students to follow. There are various professional qualities Para-Educators should strive to demonstrate. They are presented below.

Professional Qualities of an Effective ParaEducator

- Exhibit a professional attitude regardless of student behavior.
- Be punctual.
- Maintain a record of regular attendance.
- Respect confidentiality of students and support services.
- Accept responsibility.
- Understand nature and needs of students in GSCA/CTI.
- Conduct professional attitude when confronted with inappropriate student behavior.
- Follow dress code policies.
- Accept constructive criticism from other educational professionals.

In addition to professional qualities, the personal qualities of Para-Educators are also important. Patience, tolerance, enthusiasm, and interest in the job are examples of personal qualities. Other desirable personal qualities of Para-Educators include friendliness, cooperativeness, honesty, maturity, confidence, sincerity, respect for individual differences, and sensitivity to the needs of others. Para-Educators should possess these qualities to maintain a good working relationship with the Coordinator, administrators, CTAE instructors, counselors, teachers, parents, and students. If Para-Educators do not have the above qualities, they should work to acquire them.

Relationship with School Personnel

Relationship with Coordinators

GCSA/CTI Para-Educators are resource personnel who support, improve, and enrich the GSCA/CTI services offered in a school. Para-Educators are invaluable in assisting the GSCA/CTI Coordinator and students. Duties performed by the Para-Educator should be outlined by the expectations of the school and the Coordinator.

Responsibilities of the GCSA/CTI Para-Educators should be aligned between the

Coordinator's expectations and the Para-Educator's capabilities. This alignment is extremely important in the management and support of GSCA/CTI services to the students. Unity of purpose must be evident at all times when working with students; therefore, the Para-Educator must realize that the Coordinator is ultimately responsible in the classroom. In return, the Coordinator should demonstrate respect and show consideration toward the Para-Educator. Any disagreements or concerns should be discussed and handled privately or seek counsel from an administrator if needed.

Relationship with Members of the Faculty

In working with the faculty, the Para-Educator must get to know the climate of the school. the Para-Educator should be knowledgeable of these things:

1. Organizational Structure and Channels of Communication. Find out who holds what position in the administration of the school and who to contact for information, or to handle certain situations.
2. School Procedures. Secure and read a copy of the school handbook.
3. Multiple Roles and Responsibilities of the Para-Educator. Learn what your responsibilities are in the classroom, in the CTAE laboratories, and on the school campus. Your responsibilities may be different from other Para-Educators due to the nature of GCSA and CTI Support Services.
4. Resource Personnel, Equipment, and Materials. Find those educational materials, which can be used by the Coordinator and interlocking team, from libraries (city, county, other schools, colleges and institutions, and other regional support agencies).

It is important that members of the faculty consider the GCSA/CTI Para-Educators a part of the school structure. However, teachers may not consider the ParaEducator who does not share equal responsibilities to be an equal member of the faculty. Usually if the ParaEducator shows an earnest and cooperative effort, he/she can alleviate problems that occur. To develop a positive relationship with other members of the faculty, consider these suggestions.

- Be patient and respectful of teachers with whom you work. Remember that they are learning to use your services as you are learning to serve and cooperate with them.
- Any task necessary to promote student learning is worthy of you performing it with pride and diligence.
- Teachers are teaching because they are dedicated to their profession, but being human, they too make mistakes.
- Question areas of concern. Try to understand thoroughly what is expected of you.
- Be supportive of administrators and teachers. Give the school administrators your loyal support, the teachers your best assistance, and the pupils your help and encouragement.
- Share new information with other faculty members.
- You should know which teachers might assign duties to you. Whenever questions or disputes arise, both you and the teachers involved should refer the problem to the Coordinator.
- All academic team members should be familiar with the roles and responsibilities of the GCSA/CTI Para-Educators. Discuss requests for your assistance with non-GSCA/CTI activities with the Coordinator.

Working with Parents

As a Para-Educator, remember that part of maintaining good public relations is having a good relationship with parents. You should treat parents with consideration and respect. Most parents will be appreciative of your interest in their child. When working with parents, always think and act in a professional manner. Report all contact with parents to the GSCA/CTI Coordinator with as much accuracy and lack of bias as possible.

Some Para-Educators may accompany their Coordinator on home visits. Also, the Para-Educator may help prepare the Coordinator for the visit by pulling the records of the student whose home the Coordinator is visiting so the Coordinator can be well prepared to discuss the student.

Through classroom activities and assistance, Para-Educators may free the Coordinator from tasks to make home visits possible. The Para-Educator, in some instances, may act as a liaison between the home and Coordinator. A Para-Educator with special cultural-ethnic or racial skills may make some home visits more beneficial. For instance, if a Para-Educator is from a certain community, he/she may have previous contacts that may enable the Coordinator to establish friendly relations. The following list contains several steps to follow concerning the student/parents/Para-Educator/Coordinator relationships:

- Explain the GCSA/CTI Support Services in detail.
- Obtain signed permission from parents for student to be in the support services. Due process for students with disabilities requires parental approval.
- Assist in setting up meetings between Coordinator, CTAE instructors, and parents.
- When going on home visits, go with the Coordinator. Never go alone. Whenever possible, visit the home when both parents are available. Call for an appointment to visit.
- Let parents know you are ready and willing to help with any problems they might have with their child (the student).
- Keep parents well informed of student's progress and attendance.
- Invite parents to visit classrooms and tell them to feel free to telephone you at their convenience.
- Help parents feel at ease when coming to visit Coordinators, CTAE instructors, or other teachers.
- Encourage parents to speak and think positively about their child and become involved in activities.
- Welcome parent comments and recommendations for working with their child/children with disabilities.

 GCSA and CTI Support Services facilitate teaching because parents and other adults become more involved in the educational process of youth from local communities.

Para-Educator Responsibilities

Duties

Tasks performed by the GCSA/CTI Para-Educators are extensive. The overall task is to assist the Coordinator in preparing GSCA/CTI students for success in the classroom and/or laboratory, as well as in the workplace. Para-Educators should complete all duties while under the supervision of the members of the GCSA interlocking team or CTI Coordinator and CTAE teachers. As soon as possible following employment, Para-Educators should meet with the GSCA/CTI Coordinator and the CTAE supervisor and/or principal, to review their written job

description. If no formal job description is available, one should be prepared and then signed by the Para-Educator, Coordinator, CTAE supervisor and/or principal. Para-Educators should remember that they are accountable to the Coordinators, instructors, and school administrators.

There are many essential tasks involved in successful achievement of GSCA/CTI services. Para-Educators, Coordinators, members of the GCSA interlocking team, and CTI or CTAE teachers should discuss these tasks at regular intervals to determine completion dates or deadlines. It should be clearly outlined what will happen if something prevents tasks from being completed. Para-Educators should not be used for generalized duties in the school, but should work within the GCSA or CTI Support Services. Questions that arise regarding assignment of duties should be directed to the local CTAE supervisor or the local chain of command.

GSCA/CTI Classroom and/or Lab Setting

Para-Educators assist GSCA/CTI Coordinators in all appropriate activities to successfully accomplish the mission of the respective services provided. Para-Educators can be the agents to make the IEP or TAP plan a reality, since they can work with each individual GSCA/CTI student. Para-Educators may be asked to perform any or all of the following tasks.

- Assist in the overall instructional program in CTAE classrooms and labs.
- Assist the instructor with making modifications and accommodations to assignments, tests and projects for the student.
- Make Coordinator aware of learning deficiencies.
- Prepare, obtain, or order materials needed for classroom or CTAE labs.
- Select and utilize available instructional materials.
- Assist with assessment and transition activities.
- Provide instruction to students as prescribed by the Coordinator and reinforce skills introduced by the Coordinator/instructor.
- Clarify course objectives for students.
- Provide tutorial service to small groups or individuals in the academic or CTAE education class.
- Manage student behavior and maintain classroom order when appropriate; reinforce rules of the school and classroom.
- Assist the Coordinator in assessment and in screening records for the selection of students who may be eligible for GCSA/CTI Support Services.
- Coordinate information from all available sources to assist in writing prescriptions.
- Assist in administering, grading and evaluating assessments and class assignments.
- Assist in maintaining classroom records such as attendance, work-based learning documentation, assignment of textbooks, disciplinary actions, grade book, seating charts, as well as student records, etc.
- Supervise the class when the Coordinator must leave.
- Be available to listen to individual student problems in academic as well as personal areas.

- Give supportive suggestions to students for self-improvement.
- Interpret difficult and important information for students who miss assignments.
- Provide extra help to students who do not understand assignments.
- Assist the Coordinator in objectively evaluating students' work.
- Observe students and report positive and negative behavior to the Coordinator.

- Telephone parents to arrange home visits or parent-Coordinator conferences, etc., and keep records of all contacts.
- Instruct students in the proper use of technology.
- Proofread and help students correct homework.
- Conduct reading and spelling groups and lead groups in simple drills and exercises.
- Accompany Coordinator on home visits, when appropriate.
- GCSA Interlocking Team and CTI Team Activities

Being part of a team means working cooperatively with other personnel. Para-Educators may work with the GCSA interlocking team, CTAE instructors or Special Education instructors.

ParaEducator's Role as Team Member
Record Keeping
 In addition to instructional skills, Para-Educators are responsible for maintaining and organizing records. Para-Educators may be required to perform the following activities.
- Assist in the preparation of daily lesson plans.
- Perform support tasks such as copying materials, laminating items, keeping correspondence, and filing paperwork and documentation.
- Handle forms and permits for students involved in school-to-work programs.
- Record student progress and prepare progress reports.
- Maintain a class plan book/journal (in addition to that of the Coordinator) for notes for each class period.
- Compile results for state and/or federal reports.
- Arrange field trips and collect parental permission forms, etc.
- Assist with record keeping associated with GSCA and CTI Youth Leadership Development activities.

Preparation of Student Folders
        The Para-Educator should prepare student folders at the beginning of each semester per the Coordinator's instructions. The folders may contain the following forms and information on students.
- Student data sheet (address, phone numbers, legal guardians, birthday, etc.).
- Student academic form(s).
- Assessment data.
- Training agreements and plans for students involved in work-based learning.
- Individual test results.
- CTAE class report forms.
- Class schedules.
- Career path information.
- Home visit forms.
- Records of GSCA or CTI Youth Leadership Development Conference participation.
- Cumulative work record.
- Parent consent forms for field trips.
- Insurance coverage forms.

Overall, Para-Educators should plan ahead to save the GSCA/CTI Coordinator as much time as possible. There are occasional disruptions in the school program, which may affect the Para-Educator's duties and how they are carried out. However, an energetic, positive attitude can help smooth out minor negative situations as they arise.

Para-Educator Schedules

Para-Educator schedules may vary from system to system since local school systems determine scheduling procedures. A schedule determines where the Para-Educator will be and under whose supervision he/she will be working. The GSCA/CTI Coordinator and Para-Educator should create a schedule together to optimize the impact of the Para-Educator on students' educational performance. Special education and CTAE teachers should be notified if the Para-Educator is to be placed in their room during a specified period of time. A sample schedule is located in Appendix B.

Guidelines for Preparing Schedules:

1. Distinguish between general blocks of time and specific short-term teaching plans.
2. Prepare a schedule for each semester or quarter. Change the schedule according to new situations.
3. To prevent conflicts, duplicate the schedule and distribute to all involved personnel.
4. Plan activities to meet the objectives for GSCA/CTI students as stated on their IEP or TAP.
5. Determine specific break periods for the Para-Educator.
6. Check the schedule against the schedules of all concerned.
7. Revise as needed.

Roles of GSCA/CTI Coordinators and Para-Educators are complex. As a result, Para-Educators will be working in a variety of CTAE settings. It is important to work with GSCA/CTI Coordinators to determine a Para-Educator's appropriate role, and recognize strengths and weaknesses so the Para-Educator's services may be utilized most effectively. CTAE classes can offer exciting new learning experiences while broadening the Para-Educator's teaching competencies.

Management of Student Behavior

According to the Quality Basic Education Act (section 20-2-215), "a classroom paraprofessional shall have, while performing assigned duties, the authority of in loco parents (in absence of parent), except for the administration of corporal punishment; provided however, that such paraprofessionals have at least the minimal training or experience and are under direct supervision of classroom teachers on a daily basis. Paraprofessionals shall have such authority both when classroom teachers are present and when they are absent for justifiable purposes." Para-Educators should consult the principal, CTAE supervisor, GSCA/CTI Coordinator, or local school board about local policies concerning Para-Educators' roles in classroom management. Para-Educators should keep up-to-date on policies at the local, state, or federal level.

Para-Educators play an important role in the management of student behavior. Behavior problems may occur that require disciplinary action. Para-Educators should know the local system's policies outlined for handling student behavior. If a situation arises that a Para-Educator is uncertain about, he/she should refer the problem to the GSCA/CTI Coordinator for advice. If there is more than one Para-Educator in the classroom/lab, they should refer any problems to the Coordinator. Discussing students' behavior with the Coordinator is the best way to avoid

problems. Often the Coordinator has some special information about a student in his or her behavior management plan that is important to anyone dealing with his/her behavior. In cases where the behavior warrants an official referral to an administrator, the Para-Educator should send the referral through the GSCA/CTI Coordinator. This step provides the Coordinator the opportunity to deal with the discipline problem and head off a potentially serious situation.

Para-Educators will encounter a wide variety of students from many different backgrounds and home situations. Problems at home may follow students into the classroom.

This often results in inappropriate behavior because students are unable to cope with their personal problems. Therefore, Para-Educators should not take every display of undesirable behavior as a personal offense.

The manner in which Para-Educators handle classroom problems will have a great deal to do with their success. Students need firm, respectful and consistent treatment from adults. They need to feel secure and know that an adult is in control. Students also need to know there are limits to their behavior. When they do misbehave, students must realize there are consequences, but that they will be treated fairly. Remember, students may not automatically like and respect Para-Educators. Respect must be earned.

Students

Para-Educators should make every effort to become familiar with each student. This includes getting to know their backgrounds, home life, strengths, and weaknesses, as well as their aspirations and goals. Para-Educators should review their assessment results. This information enables Para-Educators to better predict how a student is likely to react in a given situation. Para-Educators must be honest and sincere and always let students know what is expeCTAEd of them. In addition, Para-Educators should strive to form cooperative relationships with parents.

Classroom/Lab

A structured classroom/lab routine should be in place. All scheduled activities should be consistently followed. Any changes in the routine should be clearly and adequately explained. Rules should be established and stated in a positive manner. Limits and consequences should be applied consistently. Para-Educators should monitor the entire classroom and be aware of what is going on at all times. Recognize potential "trouble spots" and try to anticipate problems before they intensify. Para-Educators should seek advice from the GSCA/CTI Coordinator if they are unsure of how to handle a problem. Para-Educators should avoid using negative tactics, such as the ones below when managing student behavior.

- Punishing the whole class for the misbehavior of a few.
- Threatening a student and losing temper.
- Failing to follow through with identified consequences.
- Using sarcasm or ridicule as a means of punishment.
- Showing favoritism.
- Publicizing offenses.
- Being overly friendly or too distant.
- Making unreasonable demands.
- Using students as a focus for personal feelings of hostility or aggression.
- Holding grudges.
- Using students to find out information about others.

Escalated or Emergency Situations

If an escalated or emergency situation occurs, Para-Educators should remain calm and follow the school's policy. Para-Educators should contact a school official or administrator and handle the situation in a professional manner. Be firm, stay objective, and make every attempt to calm the student and the group. Determine what the problem is and separate facts from opinions. If possible, take the offender aside for a private discussion and give him/her the benefit of the doubt. Separate personal attitude toward the student from attitude toward his/her behavior. Do not revisit the matter once it has been settled. And… remember to keep your sense of humor!

Reinforcing Appropriate Behavior
Each student is an individual with specific needs and learning issues. Because each student and each situation is special, there are no set rules for every circumstance. An encouraging word will go far in convincing a child to continue with appropriate behavior. Para-Educators must allow students to learn to solve their own problems. Positive reinforcement of specific behaviors you want to see repeated helps maintain good discipline in the classroom/lab. The GSCA/CTI Coordinator may already have a "reinforcement/rewards" program in place. Some suggested ideas for positive reinforcement are birthday recognition (cards, special hat or seat, name on bulletin board), a small treat, verbal praise, computer time, refreshments, or allowing the student to be a helper by running errands.

Attitude Toward Students
        A Para-Educator must conduct himself/herself in a professional manner. Para-Educators set and maintain a professional distance while at the same time develop a good rapport with students. Failure to maintain a professional relationship from students will cause loss of control and the students will not consider the Para-Educator's leadership position.
        The Para-Educator should recognize students as individuals having specific needs, interests, and abilities. This recognition should be offered in a manner that will enable the students to view the Para-Educator's interest in them as sincere and honest.
        A GCSA/CTI Para-Educators may be most effective by first gaining a positive rapport with the students. By communicating with students on their own level, the Para-Educator will enhance the students' desire to cooperate. In establishing this rapport, Para-Educators must remember that effective teaching is greatly dependent upon the establishment and
enforcement of ground rules. These rules should be established by the Coordinator and always upheld by the Para-Educator. The Para-Educator must never assume a student knows what is expeCTAEd of him/her. Instead, the Coordinator and the Para-Educator must determine a student's strengths and weaknesses through careful assessment, screening, testing, and conferring with the student. Para-Educators may then proceed to work with the student individually.

GCSA/CTI Para-Educators Attitudes Toward Students

Always maintain a professional relationship with students.

Respect confidentiality. Do not discuss personal problems of students with anyone other than authorized personnel involved with the GCSA/CTI Support Services.

Remember that a student needs your acceptance as an individual, even though you may not approve of his/her actions.

Remember never to write or say anything about a student that can be misused in any way. Do not put anything in a file that you would not want a parent to see.

You will not be able to solve every problem for every student. Do not lead them to believe you can.

Be positive and knowledgeable about school rules and their enforcement.

Stress positive characteristics of students when conferring with professional personnel.

Document only observed behavior and not an opinion.

Maintaining Community Relations

Community involvement is important to the success of GCSA/CTI Support Services. Because of work-based learning settings, transition, job placements, and resource knowledge provided by the community, it is necessary to maintain good public relations. An effective support service for public relations can be maintained by working with the GSCA/CTI Coordinator in the following ways.

☆ Determine which facts, ideas, and recommendations will help citizens understand the benefits of CTAE.

☆ Keep citizens informed of the GCSA/CTI Support Services and aware of its benefit to the public.

☆ Determine what kinds of services are needed from the community that will benefit students.

☆ Find out what citizens want and do not want.

☆ Listen to students and involve them in planning the support services.

☆ Professionals who can speak or conduct workshops in the classroom (lawyers, doctors, nurses, ministers, etc.) are very helpful.

☆ Enlist the aid of civic organizations such as the Lions and Kiwanis to help with the funding of banquets, social affairs, and field trips.

Youth Leadership Development

GSCA

The Vocational Opportunities Chapters of America (GSCA) is a youth leadership organization that is a part of CCAE Support Services. Established in 1970, GSCA is administered on state, regional and local levels. GSCA is a cost-effective way to integrate academic and CTAE programs. Not only is GSCA fun and rewarding for student members, it gives back to the community in many ways.

GSCA provides students with the opportunity to sharpen skills learned in GCSA, as well as their other CTAE classes, through participation in regional contests and the state conference. In addition to learning job skills, GSCA members:

- Develop confidence and maturity through meeting challenges and completing projects.
- Receive recognition for their achievements, foster their self-esteem, and become more confident in their abilities.
- Recognize and develop their leadership abilities through participation in school, community and social activities. Learn to plan, organize, and implement – qualities essential for leadership.
- Prepare for participation in other youth organizations.
- Attain a purposeful life by establishing realistic CTAE goals and developing a respect for the   dignity of work.
- Have enthusiasm for learning.
- Become well-rounded individuals.
- Unite in a common bond those students in the state of Georgia who are enrolled in GCSA.

GSCA Contests

GSCA regional contests are held each year in February. These contests enable members to demonstrate proficiency and acquire experience in chapter projects, leadership skills, and occupational preparation. GSCA Skills Events procedures complement the Career and Technical Education Support Services philosophy and the QCC Objectives. Members' participation is encouraged on local, region, and state levels. Events on each level are designed to foster positive and constructive teamwork. Members are evaluated against a standard set of criteria that foster growth in self-esteem and teamwork. Regional winners placing 1_{st} and 2_{nd} participate in the state conference held each year in the spring. Some GSCA contests must be worked on individually while others may be a cooperative effort. This is in keeping with the idea that GSCA is a preparatory period for setting career objectives and future involvement in other Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs). Information about each contest and contest rules is located at the GSCA website under 'Contest Manual.'

Career and Technical Student Organizations

DECA: an association for students and teachers of marketing, management and entrepreneurship.

FBLA: a student organization committed to preparing today's students for success in business leadership.

FCCLA: a student organization focusing on personal, family, work, and social issues, as well as the development of life skills.

FFA: an organization dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of young people by developing their leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

HOSA: a student organization whose mission is to promote career opportunities in health care and to enhance the delivery of quality health care to all people.

Skills USA-VICA: an organization aimed at developing leadership skills for students enrolled in technical, skilled, and service occupations, and health occupations.

TSA: a student organization for students enrolled in technology education classes that prepare students to become critical thinkers and problem solvers.

CTI Leadership Conferences

Currently there are two leadership conferences held each year for CTI students. Both conferences are sponsored by the Georgia Department of Education. The first conference is held in the fall of the year and has the explicit task of training CTI students to take on and be successful in leadership roles. It is a two-day training session held in a central location and offers sessions for CTI students and CTI Coordinators, as well as opportunities for the students to experience social interaction with other students from across the state.

The second leadership conference is held in April or May of each year. Students participate in enrichment sessions, competitive events that afford students the opportunity to show what they have learned in their high school CTAE classes. A variety of recreational opportunities and social activities help them meet other students from across the state.

CTI Leadership Development conferences are also a preparatory period for setting career objectives and future involvement in other CTSOs. The conferences provide students with experiences that will enable them to emerge from high school with a greater sense of responsibility and a determination to succeed as productive citizens in their communities.

Para-Educator's Duties with GSCA/CTI Youth Leadership Development

Like the GSCA/CTI Coordinator, Para-Educators must be involved with GSCA/CTI Youth Leadership Development. Coordinators will determine the amount of involvement of Para-Educators. A Para-Educator's assistance can ensure the success of students and the organization. Para-Educators should exhibit a cooperative and enthusiastic attitude, and become well-acquainted with contest manuals in order to encourage students to participate.

A Para-Educator's GSCA/CTI Youth Leadership Development duties may include:
- Encouraging and motivating students to join and participate in CTSOs such as GSCA and CTI
- Youth Leadership Development activities.
- Establishing GSCA/CTI Youth Leadership Development calendar for the school year activities.
- Creating a local GSCA/CTI Youth Leadership Development handbook.

- Planning of local GSCA/CTI Youth Leadership Development meetings.
- Supporting the president and Coordinator in preparing agenda for each meeting.
- Assisting members/students in preparing for competitive events.
- Publicizing GSCA/CTI Youth Leadership Development activities.
- Assisting with field trip planning/preparation (bus, permission forms, etc.).
- Chaperoning GSCA/CTI Youth Leadership Development activities, including field trips, if   required.

Para-Educators involved with GSCA may have additional duties including:
- Assisting in planning the installation of officers, recognition programs, and induction of members.
- Aiding in the election and training of officers.
- Encouraging members in fulfilling their official duties to the best of their abilities.
- Working with the GSCA secretary on minutes and membership roll.
- Helping the GSCA treasurer keep accurate financial records.
- Keeping accurate records of membership and dues paid.
- Support members preparing for local, region, and state contests.
- Contacting professional speakers for GSCA meetings.
- Assisting with fundraisers – including inventory, record of monies collected, etc.

Helping Students Be Successful in the Learning Environment

GCSA/CTI Support Services work with diverse populations. The goal of support services is to reach students who are failing or need additional assistance by using the most appropriate intervention(s). An intervention that works with one student may not work with another student. Para-Educators must be prepared to assist in managing different types of instruction.

The goals of GSCA/CTI intervention services are to raise academic expectations, increase motivation and self-esteem, reduce absenteeism, and reduce the dropout rate. A student who has experienced difficulty in learning may lack an interest in school. He/she may have given up and frequently can be disruptive to classmates and teachers. If the student is to experience success, materials must be provided that are suited to his/her needs. An IEP or the TAP should provide guidance for locating materials since these forms list the student's level of academic performance.

Career and Technical Education Assessment

Para-Educators will assist the GSCA/CTI Coordinator and/or other designated school personnel with CTAE assessments. Aptitude and interest assessments help identify appropriate CTAE programs for GSCA/CTI students. Para-Educators may assist their Coordinator with assessment by administering career assessments, organizing and/or preparing test materials, scheduling an appropriate testing location, notifying teachers of test schedules and participants, entering test data, preparing test reports, and reviewing the test reports with the student, school counselor, case manager, parent, or CTAE teacher.

Remediation and Acceleration

Effective Para-Educators prepare as thoroughly for the time spent with one student as the CTAE instructor spends preparing a lesson for the whole class. While working with a student

who needs assistance in a CTAE program, Para-Educators should implement the activities provided in the chart below.

Remediation/Acceleration Activities

1. Determine objectives for the session from the student's IEP or records.
2. Prepare specific learning activities and collect necessary materials.
3. Review each step with the student, making sure he/she understands what is expected.
4. Work together on the first few activities and provide corrective feedback.
5. Review the student's work after he/she has worked alone for a short time, then review together. Give the student ample time to ask questions.
6. Use as many positive responses to his/her work as possible.
7. Infuse material that is related to the student's own interest and related to his/her work in the CTAE lab to keep the student interested in the material.

Individualized Instruction

One-on-one instruction with a Para-Educator will give the GSCA/CTI student added confidence to achieve an objective. Para-Educators should display a positive attitude and be sure that the materials the student is using are appropriate for his/her learning strengths and weaknesses.

If Para-Educators are managing a large group of students who are working on an individualized curriculum, they must monitor the group, manage behavior in the group, help with materials, and make sure the students are achieving set objectives. The CTAE teacher is responsible for setting up the curriculum, designing the schedule, prescribing the materials, and managing the overall curriculum.

Small and Large Group Instruction

A Para-Educator's instructional role is to serve as a resource for the group, give the group directions, and see to it that all members of the group are included in the planning, discussion, and execution of their assigned tasks. Para-Educators may work with a small group of students who have similar learning difficulties.

Large group instruction (lecturing) is the traditional form of classroom instruction. Instruction is directed toward the entire group, but questions are usually directed to individual students.

Seldom will Para-Educators be responsible for teaching a whole class. Para-Educators may be asked to show videos or filmstrips to the large group, give directions, or administer a group test/assignment. On occasion Para-Educators may be asked to go over an assignment with

the whole class and to explain returned homework papers. The CTAE teacher may ask a Para-Educator to work with students in the class on a one-to-one basis after a group lesson is completed.

Advanced Graphic Organizers

Educational researchers have shown that scaffolding knowledge and activating prior knowledge is critical and even essential to all learning. Our background knowledge helps us put new knowledge into the right categories, and helps our perception of new knowledge. The research on advance organizers is quite significant for learning. By introducing crucial information and materials in advance of the lesson or unit, Coordinators and Para-Educators help learners acquire new knowledge and learn at an abstract, higher level. The advance organizer provides scaffolding for the retention and extension of the new concepts and skills. Advance organizers are not overviews or summaries; rather, they assist in differentiating knowledge and in bridging the gap between what learners already know and what they are going to learn. There are a variety of advanced graphic organizers. See Appendix C for examples of advanced graphic organizers and study guides.

Transition Plan

Students receiving special education services require an Individual Transition Plan (ITP). A transition plan can also be developed for GCSA students. A transition plan indicates the student's career interests and post-secondary plans. A detailed plan is developed to aid the student in achieving his/her secondary and post-secondary educational goals and career goals. Para-Educators can assist the GSCA/CTI Coordinator with the following duties:

- Career evaluation scheduling and testing.
- Preparation of student career evaluation reports.
- Identification of a student's transition needs.
- Assisting a student in investigating career options.
- Preparing files for agencies that provide employment training, evaluation, and
- assistance (Department of Labor, Job Corps, Division of Rehabilitation, etc.).
- Recording student progress toward transition goals.

Job Placement

Para-Educators assist the GSCA/CTI Coordinator with job placement for work-based learning students by assembling information on available jobs from CTAE instructors, counselors, businesses, and by making business contacts and preparing student work files. Para-Educators will also reinforce the student's understanding of good work ethics (being on time, performing his/her job well, dressing appropriately, and interacting appropriately with supervisors and co-workers), along with checking periodically on the student's work-based learning progress and accomplishments. Any employment difficulties should be shared with the GSCA/CTI Coordinator. The following responsibilities are related to job placement of GSCA/CTI students.

✒ Preparation of work-based learning forms (application, consent form, training agreement, and employer information).

✒ Preparation of a work-based learning file for each student (work-based learning

forms, work schedules, attendance records, evaluations, and directions to place of employment).

🖉 Business contacts and follow-ups regarding work-based learning opportunities and evaluations for students.

Work-Based Learning

Education though work-based learning is gaining acceptance by policy makers and educators as a means to improve the educational outcomes for many students. Students should be given every opportunity to receive academic and occupational preparation that equips them with the necessary skills for obtaining employment and/or entering postsecondary education. As defined by the research and literature, a work-based learning program must include a school-based learning component (classroom instruction in both academic and occupational areas), a work-based learning component (structured work), and a connecting activity component (career development activities).

Work-based learning programs are structured learning programs that integrate classroom learning (school-based) with productive, structured work experiences (work-based), which should be related to a student's career goal. Most work-based learning models are dependent upon local business and industry to provide work experience for students and on the abilities and skills of a work-based learning Coordinator, who has the responsibility for managing the specific work-based program.

Work-based learning programs come in many forms, but have the common goal of providing students with experience in the world of work. These work-based learning programs offer students hands-on workplace experience in order to provide them with opportunities to learn work-related skills and abilities they could not otherwise acquire in a classroom. In addition, these programs may increase the students' prospects for future gainful employment and postsecondary education. Examples of work-based learning programs include:
- Work experience opportunities for students, either paid or nonpaid.
- Job training and work experiences coordinated with both academic and occupational learning in school-based programs that are relevant to students' program of study choices and lead to the award of a secondary diploma and entrance criteria to a postsecondary institution.
- Workplace supervision.
- Instruction and activities in academic and occupational workplace competencies, including positive work attitudes, employability, and practical skills.
- Broad instruction, to the extent practicable, in all aspects of the industry.

For more information on these and other occupational experiences available to the GCSA student, refer to the Standards and Guidelines for Work-Based Learning Programs in Georgia handbook, which is produced by the Georgia Department of Education. Samples of a work-based learning application and agreements are located in Appendix D.

Preparing Students for Tests

Recent national and state trends move toward requirements that students pass achievement exams in order to exit high school. Educators across the nation are calling for the use of tests to make high-stakes decisions, such as whether a student will move on to the next grade level or

receive a diploma. School officials using such tests must ensure that students are tested on a curriculum they have had a fair opportunity to learn, so that certain subgroups of students, such as those served by GCSA and CTI, are not systematically excluded or disadvantaged by the test or the test-taking conditions. Although the intent of high-stakes tests is to improve the knowledge of students and raise their qualifications for obtaining employment, they can impose major barriers for students with disabilities and for students who are at risk for failing or dropping out of school due to poor reading abilities, cultural differences, and lack of ability to retain information for test taking purposes.

Despite a concern that high-stakes exit exams may not be the most effective way to assess the acquisition of knowledge for all students, they have been incorporated into many programs and school systems. As a result, Para-Educators need to be prepared to teach students to use intervention strategies that help them focus on material being taught, study wisely and efficiently for exams, and successfully complete exams for passing classes they take as well as tests required for moving to another grade level or exiting high school.

Measuring what and how well students learn is an important component of the educational process. Tests, along with students' scores from other assessments, and teacher evaluations, provide critical measures of students' skills, knowledge and abilities. Therefore, tests should be part of a broad and equitable access system to educational opportunities. When used properly, tests can be a sound and objective method to measure student performance.

Proactive Preparations

This paragraph describes four ways Para-Educators can reinforce and accelerate test taking so that it can have a positive effect on the educational process of students. Know what students are being tested on, the format of the tests, and how the tests are administered, scored and reported. Determine if the curriculum in their programs and in the classes their students are enrolled in are aligned with exams that are required for the classes or graduation. Take workshops to learn how to align your program and school's curriculum to high-stakes exams. Teach students how to become good test-takers.

On Your Mark

Teaching students to how to take notes, study, and prepare to take tests can make a difference in whether or not they stay in school and succeed in their classes. Numerous studies have shown the impact teachers can have on motivation and success of students. A student-centered atmosphere, where teachers focus on students' needs and abilities by helping students find ways to learn, results in higher achievements for students.

In Saving Our Students, Saving Our Schools: 50 Proven Strategies for Revitalizing At-Risk Students and Low-Performing Schools, Barr and Parrett (2003) provide strategies teachers can utilize when teaching students how to prepare for taking tests. A succinct and relevant compilation of information related to teaching effective test-taking skills is located in the Test Scores chart below.

TEST   SCORES

Teach for the test, not to the test.
Approach instruction as assessment; teach for conceptual understandings and life skills (what students know and are able to do); use big ideas; and stress transfer, application, and performance through a multiple intelligences approach.

Expect the best; accept no less.
Set high expectations; use grade level or developmentally appropriate materials for all; enhance skill building with enrichment and acceleration as needed; use standards and benchmarks.

Structure with cooperative learning.
Use small group interactions to foster student-to-student dialogue and articulation; help students to hear what they and others are saying as they put ideas into their own words.

Teach test taking strategies explicitly.
Demonstrate techniques for true/false, multiple choice, and essay questions; show how to outline or web ideas for quick reference and what students can do if they don't know the answers; use metacognitive reflections to anchor learning.

Stress pre-learning strategies.
Emphasize pre-learning strategies that tap into prior knowledge and background experience; create fertile mindsets for learning.

Chunk the material for deep understanding.
Cluster ideas together into chunks that make sense; foster connection-making and personal understanding of information; promote transfer through patterns and meaning.

Organize with graphics.
Utilize graphic organizers to make student thinking visible; adapt advanced organizers as ways to gather information or as methods for reviewing material.

Reflect through mediation.
Foster reflective thinking and take time to make sense of things by mediating the learning with questions, logs, think-aloud partner dialogues, and other reflective tools.

Express ides with mnemonic devices and visual cues.
Teach memory devices to aid in learning; use acronyms, rhymes, and other sound-alike devices; use visualization techniques of color, action, and exaggeration as well as metaphors to trigger short-term memory and to internalize for long-term retrieval.

Seek student choices in learning situations.
Allow freedom of choice within a given structure; capitalize on student interest and self-selection opportunities; create personally relevant learning; build in self-assessments and evaluation.

Get Set

Para-Educators who know the type of material that will be covered, the format for type of test items and provisions for feedback have begun the process for preparing students' for any type of exam. The list below describes procedures that set the stage for successfully preparing students to take tests for specific courses and/or high-stakes exit exams.

Know the type of tests GSCA/CTI students will be required to take. Ask instructors for sample questions. Request or purchase study guides or sample items for high-stakes tests.

Simulate the test and conditions under which the test will be given. For example, if students will be required to sit for several hours to take a high-stakes test, plan practice days where students must sit, be quiet, and work on test items during a timed period. If the test is a performance test for a CTAE course, have students practice or lay out in a map or diagram the task(s) to be performed.

Provide practice on a variety of types of test items. Practice on answering short answer items versus discussion questions can provide students with confidence when taking the actual test. Practice with test items on all levels of Bloom's taxonomy is also beneficial to students in terms of processing what an item is actually requiring them to do.

Know class standards for courses your students are enrolled in and state standards for high-stakes or exit exams. Teach GSCA/CTI students to ask their instructors how they will be evaluated, how test items will be construCTAEd, and how they might best prepare for tests.

Encourage students to maintain their skill during school breaks. Practicing study skills and taking frequent practice exams have been proven effective in helping students maintain their knowledge in academic areas such as math and English.

Ready

There are numerous methods and strategies that specifically address study skills and test-taking skills for students that can help them perform well on tests. Appendix E, Test Taking Strategies, provides suggestions for general preparation for taking a test. In addition, textbooks written specifically on evaluation and assessment provide tips for students responding to different types of tests, such as multiple-choice, matching, short answer, fill-in- the-blank and discussion.

Constructing well-written tests that assess the content that was actually covered can be challenging and difficult. Locating resources that guide teachers through the process of writing clear directions and designing test items that reflect the techniques used to teach the material could be invaluable to you and the academic and CTAE instructors you work with. Suggesting

that administrators in your school plan an in-service workshop for the faculty could have long-term benefits for students as well as faculty.

Go

Specific test-taking strategies that can be taught to GSCA/CTI students include long-term, short-term, and last minute preparations. The following techniques include suggestions for each of the three types of preparation. These techniques can be used to teach students that preparing for tests and performing well on them does not happen because they have good or bad luck or because a teacher does or does not like them. Teaching the techniques from the chart help students' become accountable for their own learning and test-taking behavior.

Tips to Students Preparing for Exams

When you hear about the test:
- o Find out as much as you can about the test itself.
- o Find out exactly when the test will be given.
- o Ask your teacher to discuss the kinds of questions that will be on the test (multiple choice, true/false, essay, etc).
- o If the test will be essay, ask the teacher what he/she looks for in a good essay answer.
- o Try to guess what questions your teacher will ask based on what he/she teaches.
- o Begin to study for the test when you find out you will take it. Do not wait until the last minute.

The night before the test:
- o Do not cram. Study lightly to review the material you have been learning.
- o Be sure you have the materials you need to take the test, such as pencil and paper, ready to take with you the next day.
- o Get a good night's sleep.

The day of the test:
- o Eat a good breakfast.
- o Talk positively to yourself about doing well on the test.
- o Take all the materials you will need for the test with you.
- o Do not try to cram for the test right before class. Cramming makes some people very nervous and they do not do as well on test.

Evaluation of Para-Educators

Evaluation of a Para-Educator and his/her services in a school should be carried out at two levels. One level of evaluation should be carried out in terms of the overall GCSA/CTI Support Services. The second level concerns evaluation of the individual Para-Educator and should be carried out by the Coordinator, the administration, and other teachers when applicable. Criteria for evaluation should include objectives that have been established for the GCSA/CTI Support Services provided as well as the performance of the tasks the Para-Educator has been assigned during the school year by the Coordinator.

The most reliable evaluations are planned in advance, written, conducted throughout the school year, and made available to the Para-Educator being evaluated. Evaluation by the

Coordinator, Special Education, and CTAE teachers will vary according to the situation, personalities, and the size and scope of each school. Examples of evaluation instruments that may be used in the evaluation process of Para-Educators are included in Appendix F.

The Para-Educator should use the evaluation process as an opportunity to determine those areas in which he/she may need to improve. Ask the evaluator to explain points that are unclear and ask for suggestions on ways to improve performance. Accept these suggestions in a positive way. Inquire about staff development related to suggested areas needing improvement.