

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANCE (SCIA)

POLICY

Every school district within the North Santa Cruz County SELPA is required to provide a full continuum of placement options for students with identified disabilities who are receiving special education services. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and California laws and regulations describe a continuum of placements such as instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions (CFR 300.551 (b) (1)).

The IDEA also defines related services as the utilization of aids, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes or other education-related settings to enable children with disabilities to be educated with non-disabled children to the maximum extent appropriate. This applies to any general education program or special education program in which the student may participate (34 CFR Part 300.550-300.556). There may be special circumstances when a student may need additional support in order to be successful in his/her educational placement.

A goal for any student with special needs is to encourage, promote, and maximize independence. The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team is responsible for developing and implementing a program that promotes that independence. Natural supports and existing staff supports should be used whenever possible.

If the IEP team is considering a Special Circumstance Instructional Assistance (SCIA) as a support for the classroom staff, the team must determine:

- a. Natural supports and/or existing staff supports are not adequate for the student to participate and progress in the general education program;
- b. Additional support is necessary to assist classroom staff in facilitating the student in:
 - Advancing appropriately toward the annual goals and/or;
 - Involvement in and progress in the general curriculum and/or;
 - Participation in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities and/or;
 - Participation with other disabled and non-disabled students.
- c. How quickly it anticipates the support can be faded and develop a method for systematic evaluation toward independence and more natural supports.

If the IEP Team recommends SCIA support, the team is also responsible for monitoring so that additional supports may be faded as soon as possible. If not carefully monitored and evaluated on a regular basis, additional paraprofessional support can unintentionally foster dependence.

Initial

When the members of the IEP team are considering the need for a SCIA support, there are a variety of tools that should be used (Referral for Special Circumstance Instructional Assistance, Rubric to Determine Need for Special Circumstance Instruction Assistance (SCIA) Support, Checklist of Existing Environmental Supports, School Day Analysis and Special Circumstance Paraprofessional Support Summary Sheet). Using these tools, the team should be able to identify the specific activities and times for which additional assistance or supervision is required. Please refer to the flowchart to assistance in determining the steps involved in moving forward with a referral for a SCIA.

There are some instances in which the need for SCIA support can be determined using existing data in the context of an IEP meeting. Most often, it is anticipated that an Assessment Plan will need to be developed in order to collect necessary data to bring to the IEP team.

Review of need

At regular intervals, designated members of the IEP team should use the tools to collect data about whether the level of assistance continues to be needed. As the student's level of independence or ability to use natural supports increases, behavior improves or the make-up of the class changes, the assistance should be faded.

Areas of need

It is important that the team consider each type of assistance listed below in order to determine if the student needs assistance with a particular activity and to estimate the amount of time that will be needed.

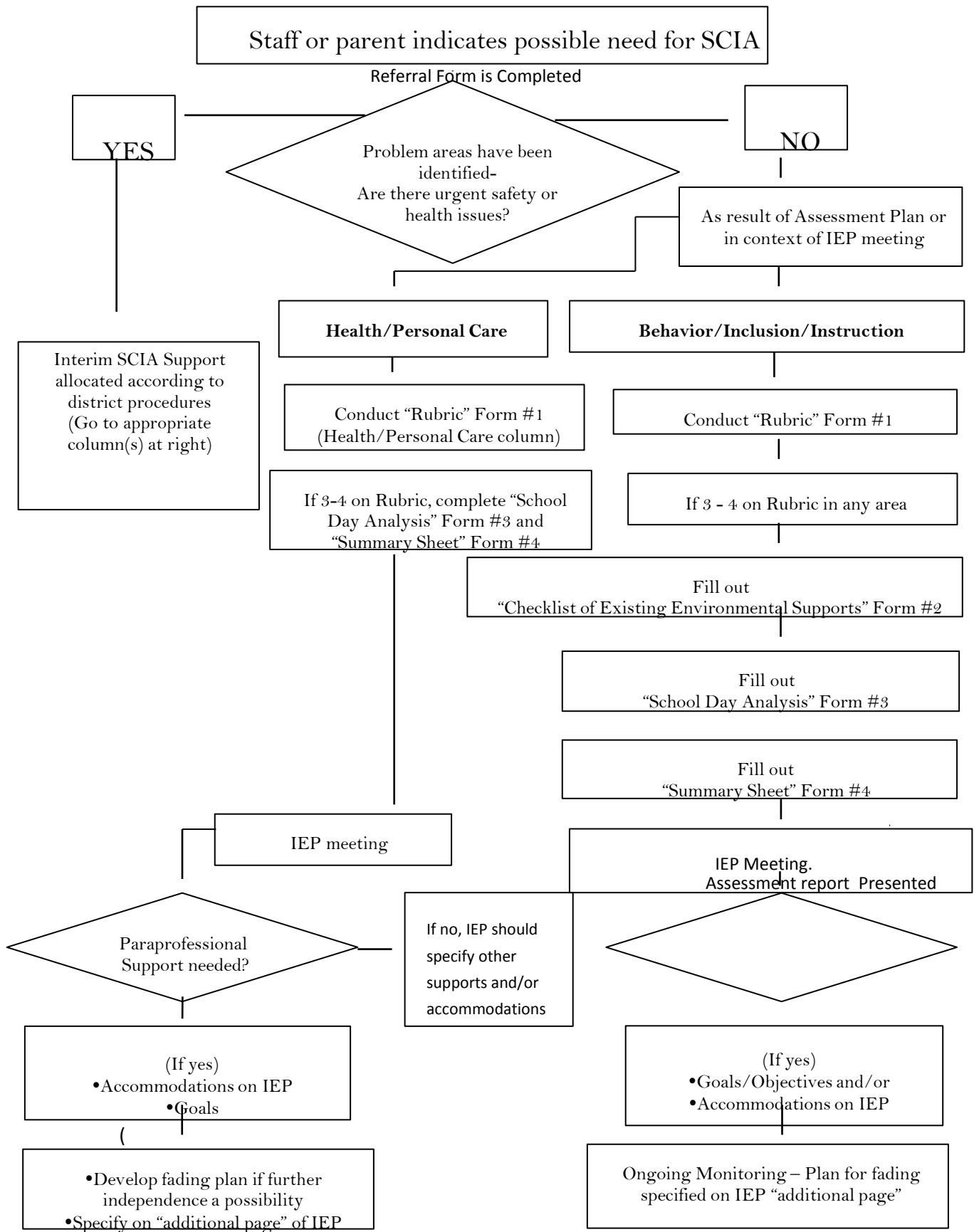
1. Health/Personal Care-

- a. Self help and bathroom needs- If a student needs assistance with toileting or other self-help skills, the team should note the times and duration for this activity. This should only be for brief periods during the day.
- b. Assistance during snack or lunch- If the student requires assistance with feeding, etc., note the type of assistance needed and note the times and duration required. Encourage reliance on peer helpers (with supervision) or other natural supports as much as possible for getting out food, opening containers, etc.

- c. Specialized Physical Health Care- Some intensive health supports may necessitate a SCIA support for an indefinite length of time.
 - d. Assistance with medical needs- Some students need additional assistance for medical reasons. If so, the team should consider the doctor's orders and the time of day and duration. Some medically related supports might be necessary only for brief periods per day/week.
2. Behavior-
- a. Due to behavior challenges, some students may need intensive support in order to assist classroom staff in implementing a Positive Behavior Support Plan.
 - b. SCIA support may be needed for a brief period to collect data while regular classroom staff are implementing a Positive Behavior Support Plan.
3. Instruction-
- a. Curriculum adaptations- Adaptations of the curriculum (highlighting, copying, enlarging, adding icons, cutting and pasting, etc.) should be done under the direction of the teacher. Most students will require no more than 1-1½ hours daily for curriculum adaptation. Curriculum adaptations do not need to be done in the classroom or in the physical presence of the teacher. Adult volunteers and parents may perform some of these activities.
 - b. Instructional support- Sometimes classroom staff need assistance in supporting a student in staying on-task or providing follow-up instruction. This should be faded as soon as schedules and/or behavior supports are put into place.
4. Inclusion-
- a. Recess or other activities- Assistance may be necessary if there are safety concerns with the student. It may also be needed when staff is attempting to facilitate social interactions with peers. Care should be taken that the development of natural peer supports and/or use of existing resources are the goals of the extra assistant, otherwise the adult may become the student's sole recess companion.

- b. Assistance with transitions- If a student has difficulty transitioning from classroom to playground, playground to classroom, or between activities, extra support may need to be available to help. When needed, the team should indicate type(s) of transition(s) as well as time of day and duration.
- c. Assistance with classroom centers or other activities- If there is a particular activity or time of day which is difficult for the student, extra help may be needed. When needed, the team should specify activity, time of day and duration.

Flowchart for Determining Need for Special Circumstance Instructional Assistance



North Santa Cruz County SELPA
Rubric to Determine Need for Special Circumstances Instructional Assistance Support

SCIA Form One

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Eligibility: _____ Date: _____

Teacher: _____ Program/School: _____

Completed by: _____ Title: _____

Mark the box that includes factors that best describes the student in each rubric category that is appropriate.

	Health/Personal Care	Behavior	Instruction	Inclusion
0	General good health. No specialized health care, or procedure, or medications taken. Independently maintains all "age appropriate" personal care. <input type="checkbox"/>	Follows adult directions without frequent prompts or class supervision. Handles change and redirection. Usually gets along with peers and adults. Seeks out friends. <input type="checkbox"/>	Participates fully in whole class instruction. Stays on task during typical instruction activity. Follows directions with few to no additional prompts. <input type="checkbox"/>	Participates in some core curriculum within general education class and requires few modifications. Can find classroom. Usually socializes well with peers. <input type="checkbox"/>
1	Mild or occasional health concerns. Allergies or other chronic health conditions. No specialized health care procedure. Medication administration takes less than 10 minutes time. Needs reminders to complete "age appropriate" personal care activities. <input type="checkbox"/>	Follows adult direction but occasionally requires additional encouragement and prompts. Occasional difficulty with peers or adults. Does not always seek out friends but plays if invited. <input type="checkbox"/>	Participates in groups at instructional level but may require additional prompts, cues, or reinforcement. Requires reminders to stay on task, follow directions, and to remain engaged in learning. <input type="checkbox"/>	Participates with modification and accommodation. Needs occasional reminders of room and schedule. Requires some additional support to finish work and be responsible. Needs some social cueing to interact with peers appropriately. <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Chronic health issues, generic health care procedure. Takes medication. Health care intervention for 10-15 minutes daily (diet, blood sugar, medication). Requires reminders and additional prompts or limited hands on assistance for washing hands, using bathroom, wiping mouth, shoes, buttons, zippers, etc. Occasional toileting accidents. <input type="checkbox"/>	Has problems following directions and behaving appropriately. Can be managed adequately with a classroom behavior support plan, but unable to experience much success without behavior support plan implementation. <input type="checkbox"/>	Cannot always participate in whole class instruction. Requires smaller groups and frequent verbal prompts, cues, or reinforcement. On task about 50% of the time with support. Requires more verbal prompts to follow directions. Requires signing 50-79% of the time. <input type="checkbox"/>	Participates with visual supervision and occasional verbal prompts. Requires visual shadowing to get to class. Needs modifications and accommodations to benefit from class activities. Regular socialization may require adult facilitation. <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Specialized health care procedure and medication. Limited mobility. Physical limitations requiring assistance (stander, walker, gait trainer or wheelchair). Special food prep or feeding. Health or sensory interventions 15-45 min. daily. Frequent physical prompts and direction assistance for personal care. Requires toilet schedule, training, direct help, diapering. <input type="checkbox"/>	Serious behavior problems almost daily. Defiant and/or prone to physical aggression which may be harmful to self or others. Requires a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) and behavior goals and objectives on the IEP. Requires close visual supervision to implement BIP. <input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty participating in a large group. Requires low student staff/ratio, close adult proximity, and prompts including physical assistance to stay on task. Primarily complies only with 1:1 directions and monitoring. Abilities and skills require strategies/adaptations not typical for class as a whole, such as: Discrete Trial, ABA, Structured Teaching, PECS or Assistive Technology. Requires signing over 80% of time. <input type="checkbox"/>	Does not participate without staff in close proximity for direct instruction, safety, mobility, or behavior monitoring. Requires adult to facilitate social interaction with peers and remain in close proximity at all times. Difficulty following school routines & schedules. Needs direct support to get to & from class. <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Very specialized health care procedure requiring care by specially trained employee (G tube, tracheotomy, catheterization.) Takes medication, requires positioning or bracing multiple times daily. Health or sensory related interventions 45 min. or more daily. Direct assistance with most personal care. Requires two-person lift. Direct 1:1 assistance 45 or more minutes daily. <input type="checkbox"/>	Serious behavior problems with potential for injury to self and others, runs away or aggressive on a daily basis. FAA or FBA has been completed and the student has a well-developed BIP that must be implemented to allow the student to safely attend school. Staff has been trained in the management of assaultive behaviors. <input type="checkbox"/>	Does not participate in a group without constant 1:1 support. Requires constant verbal and physical prompting to stay on task and follow directions. Regularly requires specific 1:1 instructional strategies to benefit from the IEP. Cognitive abilities and skills require significant accommodation and modification not typical for the class group. Requires signing 100% of time. <input type="checkbox"/>	Participation may require additional staff for direct instructional and behavioral support. Requires direct supervision going to and from class. Always requires modification and accommodations for class work. Rarely interacts with or is interested in peers. <input type="checkbox"/>

North Santa Cruz County SELPA Checklist of Existing Environmental Supports

Student: _____ DOB: _____

Disability: _____ Teacher: _____

Program/School: _____ Eligibility: _____

Completed by: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____

A. Classroom schedule:

Is there a posted classroom schedule?

Yes (*answer questions below*) No

1. The following elements are included in the classroom schedule:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> times | <input type="checkbox"/> students |
| <input type="checkbox"/> activities | <input type="checkbox"/> locations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> staff names | |

2. The schedule is:

- daily
 weekly
 other

***Attach sample classroom schedule.**

Suggestions/
Next Steps

B. Schedule for individual student:

Is there an individual student schedule?

Yes (*answer questions below*) No

1. Student uses the following format for individualized schedule:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input type="checkbox"/> icon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> photograph | <input type="checkbox"/> word |
| <input type="checkbox"/> picture | |

2. Student ability to follow the schedule:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> independent | <input type="checkbox"/> with physical prompts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> with indirect verbal or gestural prompts | <input type="checkbox"/> inconsistent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> with direct verbal prompts | |

3. Student use of the schedule:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> student carries schedule | <input type="checkbox"/> student uses transition cards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> student goes to schedule board | <input type="checkbox"/> inconsistent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> teacher carries and shows the schedule | |

4. Room is arranged with structure to correlate with tasks on schedule:

(*check all that apply*):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> area for one-to-one work | <input type="checkbox"/> area for independent work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> area for group work | <input type="checkbox"/> area for leisure |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> not applicable |

***Attach sample individual schedule.**

C. Curriculum and instruction:

1. Are materials and activities differentiated for student's:
 - Chronological age? (*describe*)-

 - Ability level? (*describe*)-

 - Interest level? (*describe*)-

2. Check the curricular domains included in the student's program:

<input type="checkbox"/> communication	<input type="checkbox"/> pre-vocational/vocational
<input type="checkbox"/> domestic skills	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/leisure
<input type="checkbox"/> self-care	<input type="checkbox"/> motor skills/mobility
<input type="checkbox"/> academics	<input type="checkbox"/> other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> social skills	

3. List equipment or devices used/available that may relate to the need for assistance (*may be low incidence equipment or assistive technology device*).

4. Describe an activity which is challenging for the student.
If appropriate, attach a sample task analysis form used for a challenging activity with the student (*see page 20 for sample form*).

D. Behavior Support:

Are there problem behavior(s) interfering with learning of self or others?

Yes (*answer questions below*) **No**

- Brief description of problem behavior(s)-

- Where behavior(s) typically occur-

- When behavior(s) typically occur-

1. Student has a Positive Behavior Support Plan/Behavior Intervention Plan:
 Yes (*answer questions below*) **No**
2. Behavior plan is based on a Functional Behavior analysis (FBA) or Functional Analysis Assessment (FAA):
 yes no in process need to initiate
3. How effective is the plan in addressing the student's needs?
 very moderately mildly not at all
4. Describe anticipated level of support to implement plan (i.e., frequency of reinforcement, prompting, redirection).
5. What supports exist for implementing the plan?
 (i.e., self-monitoring, other adults)

Suggestions/
Next Steps

★ Attach Behavior Support Plan/Behavior Intervention Plan.

E. Current data systems and collection of data:

Are there current data on each IEP objective and/or behavior plan?

Yes (*answer questions below*) **No**

1. Data records include:

- date level of independence (*prompting needed*)
 task
 level of progress

2. Data are collected:

- daily other _____
 weekly
 monthly

3. Data are summarized:

- graphed other _____
 written narrative

★ Attach sample data collection sheet- sample form on page 19.

F. Planning team meetings:

Are team meetings held? (*formal or informal meetings to problem solve.*)

Yes (*answer questions below*)

No

1. Meetings are held:

daily

weekly

monthly

bi-weekly

not applicable

needed

2. Meetings include:

parent(s)

general education teacher

specialists

special education teacher

yard duty

others _____

Suggestions/
Next Steps

***Attach team meeting format.**

G. Layout of setting where supports may be needed:

Diagram or describe the arrangement of furniture, small group instruction areas, and/or equipment of the classroom or other setting:

H. Check and describe other supports currently provided:

training for instructional staff _____

consultation for the classroom staff _____

in-classroom coaching _____

other _____

Please summarize from this form components that need to be developed/implemented and/or where further training/consultation/coaching may be needed before considering need for additional adult support (*see notes in "suggestions/next steps" column.*)

School Day Analysis

SCIA Form Three

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Disability: _____

Teacher: _____ Program/School: _____

Completed by: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____

Time	Activity	What student can do without assistance	What student needs accommodation/assistance to complete	What adult support is currently available (Specify & include ratio)	Can peer support be provided? (Specify)	Is there, or can there be, an IEP goal for independence? (Specify)

Use as many copies of this page as necessary to describe all areas of concern throughout the student's typical school day.

**Special Circumstance Instructional Assistance
Support
- Summary Sheet -**

SCIA Form Four

Student: _____ DOB: _____ Disability: _____

Teacher: _____ Program/School: _____

Completed by: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____

Check the areas of intensive need that might require additional paraprofessional support:

Health/Personal Care	Behavior	Instruction	Inclusion
<input type="checkbox"/> G-tube feeding* <input type="checkbox"/> Medication * <input type="checkbox"/> Suctioning * <input type="checkbox"/> Food preparation <input type="checkbox"/> Diaper changing <input type="checkbox"/> Feeding-full support <input type="checkbox"/> Seizures * <input type="checkbox"/> Lifting/Transfers <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ * Specialized physical health care plan or emergency plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Behavior plan implementation or documentation <input type="checkbox"/> Physically aggressive <input type="checkbox"/> Non-compliant in class <input type="checkbox"/> Non-compliant on campus <input type="checkbox"/> Runs away <input type="checkbox"/> Self-injurious <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Unique strategies not typical for class <input type="checkbox"/> Visual communication system <input type="checkbox"/> Structured teaching <input type="checkbox"/> High level of physical prompts <input type="checkbox"/> High level of verbal prompts <input type="checkbox"/> Assistive technology support <input type="checkbox"/> Sign language <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructional support <input type="checkbox"/> Physical support/positioning <input type="checkbox"/> Safety supervision <input type="checkbox"/> Social support <input type="checkbox"/> Transitions <input type="checkbox"/> Recess/lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<i>Areas of Need</i>			<i>Time/Days</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			

For each area of need in which further independence is possible, develop an IEP goal & a plan for frequent monitoring for the purpose of fading the paraprofessional support. Other ongoing supports should be noted on the Accommodations page of the IEP.

Assessment Report

The assessment report completed by the school psychologist or program specialist will be presented at the IEP meeting (Assessment Report Outline.) (When possible, a school psychologist from another school may complete the assessment.) If the IEP team agrees that SCIA support is needed for a particular student, it will be noted on the IEP in the meeting notes and on the service page.

Extra paraprofessional support provided to a teacher to assist in managing a whole class not specific to any one child's needs may be also noted in the Modification/Accommodations section of the service page as "additional supports for the **classroom**."

For each area in which SCIA support is being provided due to lack of skill or independence, the IEP team should write a goal. Some areas, such as health/personal care needs may not be appropriate for goals. These supports should be noted on the "Accommodations page."

IEP If additional SCIA support is required as a result of a child's behavioral difficulties, the child's IEP should include a Positive Behavioral Support Plan or Behavior Intervention Plan.

For areas in which increased independence is possible, note the means for evaluating whether the SCIA support continues to be needed on the "Additional page." In these cases, write a systematic plan to address how the support will be monitored and faded as independence increases.

When a SCIA is provided to assist a child on a short-term basis (i.e., transition to a new program), the written plan should specify the level of independence to be achieved before the SCIA is faded/removed, or a date when the SCIA will be discontinued.

Evaluation

The student's Case Manager is responsible for monitoring the written plan, supervising the SCIA and developing a system for data collection. The Case Manager will review the data and advise the SCIA with strategies for fading and promoting increased student independence and goal attainment. The Case Manager should meet at periods specified in the plan with selected members of the IEP team to review the data, make adjustments to the plan, if needed, and determine when criteria for fading have been met. Major changes to the plan would require an IEP Review or Addendum.

If there is a goal which reflects the area in which SCIA support is being provided, then data collection on progress toward that goal will be sufficient.

(Attached are sample forms for monitoring increased student independence.)

Team Meetings (to facilitate/support the fading process):

The Case Manager, teacher, parent(s) and others involved with the student should meet periodically and as necessary to evaluate student progress and continued need for special circumstance instructional assistance. The Case Manager should bring updated documentation by

completing Task Analysis Data Sheet, IEP Goal and Objective Charting, and Rubric to Determine Need. Strategies and support for encouraging student independence and stepping back as possible are important. SCIA support is NOT a person, but assistance. If the individual offering the support is having difficulty “letting go,” it may be necessary to rotate instructional assistance.

Guidelines for planning for fading in the IEP

- Develop goals and objectives that contain reduced levels of support and prompting to be used as measures of need.
- Include specific plan for reinforcement of Positive Behavior Support Plan.
- Specify accommodations/modifications to be provided as needed or as requested by student.
- Indicate specific activities and/or time for SCIA support under “Support for Student” on the IEP page indicating *least restrictive environment*.
- Specify criteria for fading measures to be used, who will review and how often in written plan for fading on “Additional Page” of IEP.

General Workshops for Special Circumstance Instructional Assistance (SCIA):

The following workshops are designed for implementing the NSCC SELPA SCIA Policy. They are offered periodically throughout the year or as needed by SELPA or district. Some may be available to districts upon request. Not all workshops are appropriate for all SCIA assignments.

New Special Education Instructional Aide Training – This workshop covers these elements:

- Special Education disabilities
- The IEP
- Learning styles
- The Paraprofessional’s role
- Supporting positive behavior

The Paraprofessional’s Role in Full Inclusion – Uses a video and workbook and covers these elements:

- “People first” language
- Collaboration
- Philosophy of inclusive education
- The role of the paraprofessional in supporting the student
- Facilitating academic and social growth
- Assisting the teacher and documenting progress

It also includes:

- Strategies for “fading” support
- Working as a part of a team
- Positive behavior support
- Adaptation of instructional material

This is a very thorough training when conducted in person during a 3-hour session showing the video and stopping to discuss and enter information into the workbook. It is much less effective if the video is shown straight through (takes about 30 minutes). The videotape and workbook may be checked out from the Ventura County SELPA Library.

Accommodations and Modifications for Special Education Students in the Mainstream – This workshop offers ideas and strategies for paraprofessionals for modifying curriculum and instruction to meet student’s needs.

Why Won’t This Kid Behave? – A brief overview for paraprofessionals of the Positive Behavior Support Plan process and how to assist the teacher in implementing the plans.

The Paraprofessional’s Role in Teaching Reading – Covers basic components of reading instruction and how to assist the teacher.

Children with Autism-Expectations for the Paraprofessional – Covers general characteristics and strategies for supporting children with autism.

TEACCH – The Paraprofessional’s Role – A workshop on the Structured Teaching Approach, rationale and strategies.

Intensive Behavior Intervention – Covers four basic approaches for individual interventions with students with autism.

Possible specific training for various areas of intensive need:

Most are provided at the district level by a trained professional and are specific to a student's need.

General Health and Personal Care – Training to be provided by school nurse and/or other health care provider on district procedures and policies (i.e., Blood- borne pathogens, use of gloves, medications, diapering, etc.). It is recommended that individuals providing SCIA support have CPR and First Aid certificates.

Specialized Health Care Procedures – These are developed to cover procedures for a specific child such as skin care with diapering, lifting techniques, feeding, food preparation, changing positions, etc. Training will be provided by a school nurse or other health care professional. It may also be done by the parent in some cases. In most cases, the person who conducts the training would supervise the paraprofessional (except parents). The level and frequency of supervision will vary depending upon the needs of the student, but clearly articulated with the paraprofessional. The individual providing SCIA support should be trained regarding what concerns should to be reported and to whom.

Specialized Physical Health Care Services – These are written plans, included in the IEP for each procedure ordered by a doctor, and containing child-specific notes (e.g. gastrostomy-tube feeding ["g-tube"], catheterization, and suctioning). The individual providing SCIA support requires training to a level of competency to safely perform the procedure as determined by the nurse. The school nurse also will determine the level of supervision required, i.e. immediate, direct or indirect.

Emergency Plan – These plans are also included in the IEP and describe procedures to follow under certain specific conditions, i.e. seizures, asthma attack, anaphylactic shock and cardiac emergencies. Training for the paraprofessional would include specific steps to be followed in an emergency (e.g. signs and symptoms of an emergency, how to deal with the immediate problem, when to call 911, who to inform, etc.).

Behavior – The individual providing SCIA support should be very familiar with the student's behavior plan and specific strategies to use with the student in various circumstances. Supervision of the individual providing SCIA support would normally be provided by the classroom teacher or other person who developed the plan. If there is a potential for physical contact to be necessary in order to insure safety, training in a SELPA-approved non-violent crisis prevention strategies such as TCI, CPI, etc. should be provided. The SELPA or district periodically provides such approved trainings.

Specific Instructional Strategies - In general, training would be provided by a district staff person with expertise in the particular program or strategy to be used with the student, or the student's Case Manager. For sign language, the individual should already be certified, but might require additional training on the specific needs of the student.