

Paraprofessionals in Job Coach Roles

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The purpose of this article is to examine issues related to paraprofessionals in job coach roles for students with disabilities. Postschool outcomes of students with disabilities are partially dependent on the nature and quality of supports they receive during this critical time of transition in their lives. Although schools are increasingly relying on paraprofessionals to support students in school and community settings, including workplaces, there is growing concern about their lack of preparation and support. This article describes issues related to recruitment, retention, orientation, and training of paraprofessionals in job coach roles. In addition, roles and responsibilities, supervision, support, evaluation, and compensation issues are discussed in relation to school job coaches. Recommendations for improving practice are offered, which require an investment on the part of schools to ensure the provision of quality services and supports.

DESCRIPTORS: paraprofessionals, job coaches, special education, transition, supported employment

Since the mid-1980s, transition planning has been a focus for students receiving special education services. Transition services involve promoting student self-determination, which may include supporting students in employment, recreation, postsecondary education, community living, transportation, and in their communities at large (Abery, 1994; Johnson & Guy, 1997; Wehmeyer & Kelchner, 1995). Employment in community businesses, including supported employment, is a desired outcome for the majority of students with disabilities after high school or postsecondary education (Callahan & Garner, 1997; Hagner & DiLeo, 1993). Supported employment involves adult service personnel in the role of "job coaches" who assist individuals to get and keep employment.

A major challenge to the success of transition and supported employment services is the quality and quantity of personnel in job coach roles. The 1997 IDEA amendments of 1997 address the use and preparation of paraprofessionals who, if adequately trained and supervised, may assist in the delivery of special education

and related services. The School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994, the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998, and other related legislation have had an impact on the types of staff and services schools must provide for school based learning, work based learning, and other transition related activities. Schools have increasingly relied on paraprofessionals as indicated by a tremendous growth in their numbers from 150,000 in 1985 to more than 500,000 in 1995 (Hofmeister, Ashbaker, & Morgan, 1996; Pickett, 1996). The number of paraprofessionals involved in transition from school to work and adult life continues to grow (Pickett & Gerlach, 1997), although exact figures are not known. Reasons for this increase appear to include (1) the need to provide special education services in multiple school and community locations (including job sites) simultaneously (Morehouse & Albright, 1991) and (2) the shortage of special education professionals, resulting in larger caseloads for special education teachers and more paraprofessionals to assist them (Augenblick & Myers, 1996). For example, in the area of transition from school to postschool settings, schools might hire one transition or vocational coordinator to supervise multiple paraprofessionals in field based services.

The literature related to paraprofessionals who work with students with disabilities focuses primarily on their involvement in classrooms (Doyle, 1997; French, 1998; Pickett & Gerlach, 1997; Salzberg & Morgan, 1995) rather than on their involvement in employment or general community settings. However, issues related to paraeducators in school settings parallel those associated with paraprofessionals in employment and other community based roles. Specifically, recruitment and retention, orientation and training, roles and responsibilities, supervision and evaluation, and compensation are primary issues for school and adult service personnel working in employment and other community settings.

These issues have been addressed in the literature on supported employment (Agosta, Brown, & Melda, 1993; Callahan & Garner, 1997; Fabian, Luecking, & Tilson, 1994; Hagner & DiLeo, 1993; Murphy & Rogan, 1994; Rusch, 1990), and continue to challenge the field. For example, the results of a national survey of job coaches working in supported employment (Agosta et al., 1993) indicated that almost one third (31%) had held their job for less than 1 year. About 40% earned

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less than \$16,000 per year (working full-time for 12 months). About one third (37%) had only a high school diploma. Finally, 51% were given 8 hours or less of training before beginning work as a job coach. Despite the fact that most job coaches are not well trained, are paid poorly, and have a high turnover rate, they are expected to interface in a professional manner with employers and coworkers. Thus, there is a significant gap between the responsibilities and expectations of adult service job coaches and the amount systems typically invest in their development. This issue is also relevant to paraprofessionals working as job coaches with school age youth. The current dilemma is that we would like job coaches to exhibit high level skills with students at work sites and in other community settings, yet there is a discrepancy between our expectations and what we prepare and pay these individuals to do.

The purpose of this article is to discuss key issues related to paraprofessionals in job coach roles. Recruitment and retention, roles and responsibilities, orientation and training, supervision, support and evaluation, and compensation are discussed in the context of current literature and practice. Recommendations are offered within each section for improving practice. Finally, a summary discussion offers additional suggestions for future directions.

Recruitment and Retention

Although schools typically set minimal requirements for paraprofessional positions (e.g., a high school diploma), they seldom proactively recruit paraprofessionals with desired experience and/or expertise. Instead, school personnel may be either disappointed when applicants do not have relevant experience or pleasantly surprised if they do. Rather than hire paraprofessionals specifically for job coach roles, most are assigned to teachers and may provide both school and community based supports. Not surprisingly, very few have experience as job coaches prior to being hired. Once hired, paraprofessionals often have no job description or one that does not accurately reflect their job duties. In a survey of 7,000 principals and paraprofessionals, Wallace (1997) found that 58% of paraprofessionals believed that their job descriptions did not accurately reflect what they really did.

Paraprofessionals are typically recruited from the communities in which they reside (French & Pickett, 1997). This can be a great advantage for students in transition. If paraprofessionals know their community, they can serve as ambassadors or liaisons with employers and other community members. That is, they can tap their personal networks of contacts and relationships to open doors to employment and other community connections for students (Nittoli & Giloth, 1997). It does not appear that paraprofessionals have been asked

to assume this role, but schools would be wise to consider applicants' community connections when recruiting and screening candidates.

Low salaries, lack of career advancement opportunities, and lack of administrative support often impede recruitment and retention efforts (Passaro, Pickett, Latham, & HongBo, 1994). The following recommendations are offered for improving recruitment and retention of quality paraprofessionals in job coach roles.

Develop Accurate Job Descriptions

Job descriptions can be written that delineate the various roles and responsibilities of job coaches and the organizational philosophy upon which these practices are based. Such job descriptions would differentiate between school and community based roles and responsibilities, and would specify core job coach skills and functions.

Proactively Recruit Desired Personnel

Schools are advised to hire for the future by seeking paraprofessionals who possess attitudes and skills that mesh with the future directions of the program. Minimally, prime candidates would exhibit positive attitudes and values related to disability issues, maturity, and strong interpersonal and problem solving skills. Ideally, individuals would also bring experience in the business world and connections with the local community.

Conduct Relevant Interviews

A thoughtful and systematic interview process is important for hiring desirable candidates. A list of questions relevant to supporting students in community settings provides a consistent framework for all interviews. Questions might address applicants' attitudes and beliefs as well as their ability to problem solve based on case scenarios. Teachers and vocational personnel most closely involved in job training and other transition related activities are important participants in the selection of candidates for job openings via team interviews. Some schools ask finalists for paraprofessional positions to observe and shadow other personnel prior to being offered a position. The purpose of doing so is to ensure candidates understand the student population and work requirements, and to allow school personnel to observe their interactions and reactions in actual settings.

Invest in Retention Efforts

Effective retention efforts focus on providing ongoing opportunities for professional development, increasing pay for experience, credentials, and performance, and developing systems of support for each person. These are discussed in the following sections.

Roles and Responsibilities

Before discussing the training needs of paraprofessionals, it is necessary to discuss their roles and respon-

sibilities as job coaches. Few guidelines exist about the permissible duties of paraprofessionals. Some believe the roles of paraprofessionals are becoming more and more like those of professionals (French & Pickett, 1997; Pickett & Gerlach, 1997). Marks, Schrader, and Levine (1999) found that paraprofessionals assumed a range of roles in inclusive education settings, such as providing instruction, modifying curricula, managing student behaviors, and developing working relationships with others. Many of the paraprofessionals in their study assumed primary responsibility for student success in inclusive settings. According to these authors, it is unacceptable for paraprofessionals to assume sole responsibility for students. Instead, shared responsibility with the classroom teacher is desirable. In a similar fashion, paraprofessionals in job coach roles are often left to run community job training sites on their own without sufficient guidance or supervision.

Whether in classrooms or community work settings, paraprofessionals need a solid understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Giangreco, Edelman, Luiselli, and MacFarland (1997) found that instructional assistants were in close proximity to students on an ongoing basis. As a result, they sometimes interfered with the ownership of, and responsibility for, students with disabilities by general educators. The behavior of many paraprofessionals in job coach roles parallels this situation. Like general education teachers and students without disability labels, employers and coworkers may have little training or experience with people with disabilities. If paraprofessionals assume a "body guard" role, employers may not view supported employees as their responsibility and coworkers may avoid initiating interactions with them. A brief discussion of the evolving role of job coaches in supported employment is provided next in order to highlight issues with school paraprofessionals in job coach roles.

Job Coach Roles in Adult Services

The roles and responsibilities of job coaches in supported employment continue to expand, becoming more sophisticated with the evolutionary experience and innovation in the field. Traditionally, job coaches assumed primary responsibility for training and supporting employees with disabilities at their job sites (Murphy & Rogan, 1994). By doing so, they inadvertently usurped the practices used by businesses to train and support their workforce, and interfered with natural business practices (Fabian et al., 1994). In addition, job coaches have not consistently attended to workplace cultures or climates (i.e., the norms and rituals unique to each workplace). Instead, they have imported human services jargon and practices into the workplace (Callahan & Garner, 1997; Hagner & DiLeo, 1993). Unless job coaches are in tune with the way things work at each business, it is not likely they will effectively assist supported employees to become integrated and

connected at work (Hagner & DiLeo, 1993; Rogan, Hagner, & Murphy, 1993). Job coaches are currently being asked to facilitate natural (internal) workplace supports, and to shift to more of a facilitator role, with a focus on building the internal capacity of businesses to support a diverse workforce. In such a role, job coaches must think on their feet, assess each situation, intervene if necessary, and step back if possible. Unfortunately, it is common to observe paraprofessionals at work training sites standing next to students throughout their work shift, having minimal, if any, contact with coworkers or supervisors.

Another area of change for supported employment practitioners has been the shift away from a specialist model to a generalist approach of supported employment (Howard & Banks, 1997). Using a specialist model, job coaches are typically responsible for one aspect of the employment process: assessment, job development, training, or ongoing support. Some of the drawbacks of this approach include the discontinuity for individuals with disabilities and employers as they interface with multiple job coaches. Many organizations are now using a generalist approach whereby one job coach works with an individual throughout the entire employment process. This approach may promote seamless services and stronger relationships with people with disabilities, their families, and employers.

The use of a generalist approach is understandably uncommon in school vocational situations, given the lack of paraprofessional training and skills related to job coaching. Typically, school professionals in roles such as teacher, transition coordinator, or vocational coordinator are in charge of the "up front" phases of the job acquisition process. This includes assessing student interests and skills, contacting employers, and negotiating jobs. Sometimes, these professionals continue to be involved during initial job training. After the job site is set up for the student, paraprofessionals are commonly asked to step in to assist with job training (often requiring systematic instruction) and to provide ongoing support on the job. Although this approach makes sense for schools, given the current level of paraprofessional skills, it is important to realize the drawbacks of this process. Because of its limitations, it is important to plan for and implement a smooth transition process between support personnel to ensure continuity. If the hand over of responsibilities for student support occurs in a haphazard fashion, or if job coaches are not skilled at providing individualized, discreet support to students, it may jeopardize the job and/or employer relations.

Paraprofessional Roles as a Member of Transition Teams

Transition is cross disciplinary in nature, involving school and adult service personnel, families, funding sources, and community members (Clark & Kolstoe,

1995; Gallivan-Fenlon, 1994; Halpern, 1996). Effective transition teams clearly delineate and communicate the roles and responsibilities of team members, and members work closely together on behalf of students. Because most paraprofessionals support students in both school and community settings, and therefore know particular students well, it is important that they be included in team planning activities. It is advised that paraprofessionals participate as members of transition teams. They can share information and insights during student centered planning, use their personal connections to generate job leads, learn the necessary skills to provide appropriate support to students, and provide feedback about student performance.

It has been suggested in the literature that unless teachers make clear the expectations for paraprofessional roles and responsibilities, some paraprofessionals may feel role confusion (French, 1998; Jones & Bender, 1993; Wadsworth & Knight, 1996) and may feel anxious as they move between settings (Wadsworth & Knight, 1996). Because paraprofessionals are one of many transition team members, and because they provide only part of each student's daily support, communication, coordination, and collaboration are essential. The following recommendations are offered for clarifying the roles and responsibilities of paraprofessionals in job coach roles.

Specify Paraprofessional Roles and Responsibilities

Paraprofessional roles and responsibilities should be clearly specified in job descriptions. The parameters of decision making and authority need to be clearly delineated and reinforced through training, supervision, and evaluation. Paraprofessionals provide valuable supports, but they should not be given full teacher responsibilities. For most paraprofessionals in job coach roles, their primary role is to promote student self-determination and independence/interdependence while facilitating the involvement of natural supports on the job. Specific roles and responsibilities are discussed further in the following section, "Orientation and Training."

Clarify Role and Behavior Differences Between School and Community Settings

If paraprofessionals are involved in school and community settings, supervisors are advised to pay close attention to the role differences and skills needed in each setting. Cues, corrections, reinforcers, and evaluation methods used in classrooms may not be appropriate in community settings if they draw undue attention to the student or contradict workplace norms.

Involve Paraprofessionals as Members of Transition Teams

If a paraprofessional is a primary support person for a student, she/he should participate as a member of the student's team. However, it is not advisable for para-

professionals to be the primary contact person for parents, employers, or other team members. Communication channels between transition team members should be clearly stipulated so that paraprofessionals do not get multiple or mixed messages from various team members.

Orientation and Training

Clearly, job coaches require specific skills to meet the needs of students, employers, coworkers, school personnel, parents, and other stakeholders. What training is necessary to equip paraprofessionals for the roles discussed above?

The 1997 IDEA Amendments mandate the provision of fully qualified professional personnel through a comprehensive system of personnel development. The need for such trained personnel is established in the literature and is crucial to assisting students in making successful transitions from school to adult life (Morehouse & Albright, 1991). Unfortunately, paraprofessionals typically have little training to perform the tasks they are assigned, whether they are based in schools or in the community (French & Pickett, 1997). In fact, schools are struggling to fill the need for certified special educators, let alone trained paraprofessionals. In her study of 7,000 principals and paraprofessionals, Wallace (1997) found that a mere 23% of paraprofessionals in transition related roles received training at the time of their employment. Various curricula have been developed for paraprofessionals, including several for people providing transition related services (Jones & Bender, 1993; Krawetz, 1995; Morgan, Hofmeister, & Ashbaker, 1995; Passaro, Pickett, Latham, & HongBo, 1994; Pickett & Gerlach, 1997). It is not clear however, if such curricula are relevant, nor is it clear if and how they are being used.

Although most paraprofessionals are provided little or no orientation and training experiences, many are eager to enhance their knowledge and skills. For example, in a study by Morehouse and Albright (1991) involving 95 paraeducators, 78% said their experience with transition came from on-the-job training after being hired. Almost all (94%) of the paraeducators said they would like to upgrade their skills, and 74% said they would like to earn a bachelors degree.

What orientation and training procedures are necessary to ensure adequate preparation of paraprofessionals in job coach roles? The following recommendations are offered for strengthening orientation and training efforts.

Involve Paraprofessionals in a Formal Orientation Process

Ideally, new staff would receive an orientation prior to starting their job, or soon thereafter. A comprehensive orientation agenda might include a discussion of the program's philosophy, mission, culture, and values, expectations for staff performance, and a clear descrip-

tion of roles and responsibilities. School personnel are encouraged to monitor the effectiveness of their orientation program through session evaluations. Veteran paraprofessionals may be helpful contributors to orientation discussions with new hires.

Develop, Implement, and Evaluate a Comprehensive Training Agenda

The training that paraprofessionals receive should be closely aligned with activities associated with achieving desired postschool outcomes for students with disabilities. Some of the important competencies for job coaches include an understanding of positive transition practices and desired student outcomes; basic knowledge of relevant legal issues; basic knowledge of person centered planning processes; basic understanding of the entire job acquisition process; job training and support skills (e.g., systematic instruction, task analysis, use of natural cues, corrections, and reinforcers, fading strategies, student self-management strategies, facilitation of natural supports); data collection skills (e.g., discreet and accurate notations); and positive social and interpersonal skills (Wehman, 1992). Curricula need to be responsive to the unique needs of paraprofessionals and the students they support as well as the competencies needed in different types of work settings.

Many states offer ongoing training for job coaches working with adults that may be extremely beneficial for school employment personnel. Adult service employment personnel may be an excellent source for consultation, training, and technical assistance with schools. It is advisable to build inhouse expertise among school personnel in order to develop internal capacity. Schools can also pursue partnerships with area postsecondary education settings (community colleges, universities) to develop inservice opportunities. With distance education and web based courses, schools can bring training to their doorstep.

Finally, it is suggested that individual staff development plans be developed with each paraprofessional to identify areas for skill development. Plans should be reviewed and revised regularly by paraprofessionals and their supervisors.

Supervision, Support, and Evaluation

Obviously, teachers and other professionals can play a critical role in the success of paraprofessionals. If paraprofessionals are to positively impact students' education, they will need team members and those in supervisory roles to provide a supportive work environment. First and foremost, team members and supervisors themselves need to be knowledgeable about best practices. Many are not familiar with transition related activities and resources such as vocational education, supported employment, and adult services.

In addition to content expertise, teachers need to be prepared for supervisory roles (French & Pickett,

1997). Although collaboration and supervision are core roles of special educators, the majority have had no formal preparation for such roles (Pickett & Gerlach, 1997). A key aspect of supervision and support is communication among paraprofessionals, classroom teachers, transition coordinators, students and families, and related service personnel. Formal, sit-down meetings appear to be the exception, not the rule, among paraprofessionals and their supervisors (French, 1998). Many operate on a "catch as catch can" basis. Although paraprofessionals may provide the primary support for students during the school day, they are often left out of planning meetings. As a result, some paraprofessionals may feel uninformed and "out of the loop."

Another aspect of supervision involves observations of, and interactions with, job coaches at community job sites. Supervisors benefit from seeing job coaches in action on an ongoing basis in order to provide specific feedback. The amount and frequency of supervision at job sites depend on several factors, including the experience and skills of the job coach, the abilities of the student, the nature of the workplace and supports therein, and the desires of the employer. Supervisors need to be discreet when visiting workplaces so they do not get in the way or draw unnecessary attention to the worker with disabilities.

Although schools provide a fairly social environment for staff, the very nature of supporting students in the community is isolating. It is helpful to provide opportunities for paraprofessionals to meet with and support each other on a regular basis. Senior paraprofessionals often enjoy the opportunity to mentor new paraprofessionals. The ineffectiveness of the annual performance appraisal has received attention in the business world (Deming, 1986). Feedback may be more effective if given more immediately and frequently. Ongoing feedback is an essential tool for teaching and enhancing performance (Larson & Lafasto, 1989). Regular informal evaluation, in combination with good staff training, is more likely to promote positive performance. Paraprofessionals must be adequately supervised and evaluated in order to promote the provision of quality services. Recommendations for supervisors are discussed below.

Visit Work Sites on a Regular Basis to Train, Observe, and Evaluate Paraprofessionals

Individualized decisions must be made regarding the frequency of site supervision according to the factors mentioned above. Due to the fact that student schedules in high schools are often complex, and teaching and support personnel are moving in multiple directions at once, finding time for supervising paraprofessionals is a challenge. Times for supervision must be planned in advance, schedules modified, and back-up support arranged accordingly. Teachers can solicit the short-term support of administrators, teachers, or other

paraprofessionals to cover their duties while they check in on paraprofessionals in the community. It is not always easy, but it is essential. While at job sites, supervisors are advised to also assess student, coworker, and employer satisfaction with the work situation.

Although sufficient supervision and support are necessary to identify and reward desired behavior, it is also necessary to acknowledge when there are problems. In the event that the performance of a paraprofessional is not acceptable after sufficient efforts have been made to remedy issues, specific documentation will be necessary to relieve the individual of his/her duties.

Monitor Student Progress With Paraprofessionals

Job coaches can be trained to record student performance information in a confidential and discreet fashion, but they should not be solely responsible for monitoring student progress and making major decisions about instruction and support issues. Ultimately, supervisors need to be familiar enough with each student's situation to determine whether adequate progress is being made and to suggest appropriate interventions. Shared decision making can prove to be the most effective approach in these situations.

Provide Feedback to and Seek Input From Paraprofessionals on a Consistent Basis Through Collaborative Meetings

It is important to set aside time on a regular basis for supervisors and paraprofessionals to meet and discuss goals, responsibilities, effective strategies, and progress to date in relation to both students and paraprofessionals. Supervisors can facilitate a give and take, collaborative tone during these meetings so paraprofessionals feel comfortable sharing their ideas. An equal partnership and shared decision making may take time, but will reap positive benefits for students and staff alike. Paraprofessional work schedules and/or pay can be adjusted to allow for such meetings to occur before, during, or after school. Regular opportunities for providing feedback increase the likelihood of acknowledging a job well done as well as identifying potential problems.

Support Paraprofessionals to Self-Evaluate Their Performance

Given that many job coaches operate fairly autonomously, it is important that they evaluate their own performance and make adjustments accordingly. In order to do so, paraprofessionals need to be clear about expectations and criteria for their performance. As mentioned above, they can generate their own professional development plans with supervisors and have input into all performance reviews related to these plans.

Compensation

The pay of paraprofessionals generally ranges from \$7.00 to \$10.00 per hour plus benefits such as paid sick

days, some holidays, and insurance after a probationary period. When asked why they choose to leave their jobs, paraprofessionals report a number of reasons for attrition. The low rate of pay and lack of respect or status are mentioned frequently (Hofmeister et al., 1996; Jones & Bender, 1993; Passaro et al., 1994). This is a critical issue for the entire human service field. The high turnover of direct service workers is detrimental to those receiving supports and to the host organization. In schools, it is difficult to maintain continuity and build expertise if staff turnover is high. How can schools adequately compensate paraprofessionals in order to attract and keep quality candidates? The following recommendations are offered.

Offer a Positive Work Climate Wherein All Personnel Are Valued for Their Contributions

Many people determine personal job satisfaction according to whether their jobs offer a positive work climate, satisfying relationships, and a sense of being valued for one's contributions (Hagner & DiLeo, 1993). It is beneficial to include paraprofessionals in the life of the school. Their voices should be represented in relevant decision making, they should be included in school sponsored social gatherings, and their contributions should be acknowledged in multiple ways.

Reward Staff Competence and Longevity

Salary increases can be given for merit as well as longevity. In addition to pay, special perks can be offered to compensate staff for good performance. For example, staff may appreciate such perks as public recognition for their work (e.g., a posting, announcement, or published article), professional development opportunities (e.g., attend a conference or take a course), or flexibility (e.g., in work hours).

Discussion

It is important to acknowledge that we are at a crossroads in relation to our expectations of paraprofessionals in job coach roles, and our willingness and capacity to invest in developing and maintaining professional development systems. On one hand, we expect paraprofessionals who support students in work and other community settings to act professionally and demonstrate a wide array of fairly sophisticated skills. On the other hand, we have not invested enough in the training, support, nor compensation of such individuals to carry out these roles and activities.

If the goal is to provide quality services and supports that result in positive student outcomes, school personnel must first and foremost examine the use and reliance on paraprofessionals in community settings. Schools must be proactive in addressing the fact that skilled professionals cannot be replaced by untrained personnel in community employment settings. When paraprofessionals *are* deemed necessary, the primary

goal should be to recruit and retain qualified individuals. Once hired, it is imperative that school personnel, policy makers, and others involved in services for youth with disabilities clarify the expectations, roles, and responsibilities for paraprofessionals. Furthermore, an investment must be made in the initial orientation and ongoing training of paraprofessionals. In order to obtain successful and mutually satisfactory relationships between paraprofessionals and their supervisors, school personnel would benefit from establishing ongoing opportunities for dialogue. Finally, it is necessary to compensate individuals in multiple ways. Despite the fact that paraprofessionals receive low wages (Wages and Trends Occupation Search, 1999), they choose their work because of a desire to work with students with disabilities and they should be respected for their contributions (Passaro et al., 1994).

Conclusion

As reliance on paraprofessionals in the transition process continues, so too must the investment schools make in hiring and supporting qualified personnel. This article provides a discussion of key issues related to paraprofessionals in job coach roles. It offers recommendations for improving recruitment and retention, clarifying roles and responsibilities, investing in orientation and training, providing effective supervision and evaluation, and providing adequate compensation. The stakes are high when schools partner with community businesses on behalf of students with disabilities. Student outcomes are directly impacted by the quality of supports they receive. Paraprofessionals in job coach roles, if well trained and supported, can become strong ambassadors for youth with disabilities, and can contribute significantly to positive student outcomes. Schools are encouraged to evaluate their efforts and outcomes in regard to supporting students in transition, and to invest in the development of quality personnel, including paraprofessionals.

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