



K-12

# Instructional Assistant Manual

## **Cell Phone Use**

Because we expect cell phone use to be limited for our students and not to disrupt their learning we hold the same expectation for all staff. Do not use your cell phone during teaching / supervising times.

Phone calls, text messages, etc., need to be done during break times only and in accordance with Board Policy GCAB *Personal Communication Devices and Social Media*.

## **Internet Guidelines for OSD Schools**

The use of the internet at OSD Schools is a privilege, not a right.

The internet is to be made available to staff under the following conditions:

- All staff whether part time, full time, teaching staff or non teaching staff are allowed
- Access to the internet in accordance with the following provisions.

All internet use shall be for the purpose of :

1. Providing information for students or for the teachers of students such that they may have a better understanding of subject matter.
2. For the up skilling of staff through research and procurement of information via the internet.
3. The use of e-mail for contact with other teaching staff on school business or to request information to the benefit of the school.

- Use of the internet for personal use is not permitted, other than for exchange of e-mail.

Internet use using the WWW shall be for school purposes only.

- Confidential student private data shall not be communicated via email.
- No profanity, obscenities, or any other language that could be construed as such, is to be used in any e-mail messages.
- No private information is to be distributed to other parties at any time. This includes reposting of information sent by another party.
- The network is not to be used for personal gain or illegal activity.
- Deliberate attempts to gain access to internet material of pornographic, racially or religiously offensive, illegal or offensive material will be dealt with as a serious breach of school rules.
- Downloading of material must be scanned for viruses at all times and any deliberate attempt to spread viruses through the network will be dealt with by the management of the school.
- All copyright, privacy and international laws are to be abided by at all times.

OSD Schools are not, and cannot be held responsible for the loss of material, accidental corruption or any other action that might affect transmission or loss of data.

OSD Schools has taken all possible precautions to maintain safety of all users and these guidelines are written and enforced in the interest of all users' safety and effective use of the internet.

### **OSD Instructional Assistants**

There are several ways instructional assistants help to improve the quality of educational programs and instructional activities. Probably the most important contribution they make is to enable teachers to concentrate on meeting instructional objectives for the students as well as small groups of children.

Instructional assistants enhance the quality of various program activities in the following ways:

- The educational program becomes more child oriented and flexibility within the classroom or other education setting is increased.
- Children benefit from extra "eyes and ears" that are alert to individual needs and problems.
- Teachers and other professional practitioners have more time to study and assess the needs of each child, confer with parents, diagnose problems, prepare and plan for individual instruction, try a broader range of teaching techniques, and evaluate the progress of each child.

**The instructional assistant's primary role is to assist the teacher and promote more effective use of the teacher's abilities and professional knowledge. It is the teacher's responsibility to assure that students are meeting challenging content and performance standards. Instructional assistants assist the teacher in helping to meet this goal for each student. In order for instructional assistants to provide direct instruction to students, teachers plan the instruction for the student. Teachers assist the instructional assistant in the specifics of the instruction, evaluate student progress, and monitor the effectiveness of the instructional assistant's implementation of the instructional strategies.**

### **Instructional Assistant Ethics**

In order to protect the rights of students and parents, the instructional assistant must be aware of and practice appropriate ethical behavior. As members of the OSD team, instructional assistants have special relationships with teachers and other colleagues, with children and their parents, and with other members of the community. The effectiveness of these relationships depends not only on the quality of the work performance, but also on professional and ethical behavior demonstrated on the job. The professional behaviors and attitudes expected at OSD do not end at the close of the school day. Please remember instructional assistants, like all school personnel, are representatives of OSD.

As an OSD instructional assistant you are expected to:

- maintain confidentiality about all personal information and educational records concerning children and their families
- respect the legal and human rights of children and their families
- follow district or agency policies for protecting the health, safety and well-being of children
- follow directions of teachers and other supervisors
- maintain a record of regular attendance, arrive and depart at specified contract times and notify appropriate personnel when you must be absent
- demonstrate honesty, loyalty, dependability, integrity, and a willingness to learn
- demonstrate respect for cultural diversity and individuality of all students
- follow the chain of command for various administrative procedures
- demonstrate a willingness to participate in opportunities for continuing education provided by OS
- follow the OSD contract and staff handbook expectations

### **Electronic Devices (belonging to students)**

Electronic devices confiscated from students must be treated with reasonable care:

- Do not use the device
- Place item in an envelope
- List contents/owner

Bring device to the office for administrators to process.

### **Social Networking**

It is highly recommended that school personnel refrain from becoming “Friends” or regular communicators with any OSD students on social networking websites. One option for a reply if a student asks school personnel to be a “friend” is...”Today I am your teacher. Once you have graduated I’ll be happy to become your friend.” (See Policy GCAB)

These are the guidelines for social media in the OSD School District. If you’re an employee contributing to blogs, wikis, social networks, virtual worlds, or any other kind of social media both on and off the District network- these guidelines are for you. We expect all who participate in social media to understand and follow these guidelines. Failure to do so could put you at risk. These guidelines will continually evolve as new technologies and social networking tools emerge- so check back once in a while to make sure you’re up to date.

### **It’s Your Responsibility.**

What you write is ultimately your responsibility. If it seems inappropriate, use caution. If you’re about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, don’t shrug it off and hit “send”. Take time to review these guidelines and try to figure out what’s bothering you and fix it. If you’re still unsure, you might want to discuss it with your supervisor. Ultimately, what you publish is your responsibility. What you publish is widely accessible and

will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully. Trademark, copyright, and fair use requirements must be respected.

### **Ensure the Safety of Students**

When employees, especially coaches/advisors, choose to join or engage with these social networking groups, they do so as an employee of the District and have responsibility for monitoring content and addressing inappropriate behavior or activity on these networks. This includes acting to protect the safety of minors online. Employees shall annually disclose to their supervisor the existence and participation in such networks.

### **Be Transparent**

Your honesty-or dishonesty- will be quickly noticed in the social media environment. If you are posting about your work, use your real name and identify your employment relationship with the District. Be clear about your role; if you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, be the first to point it out. If you publish to a site outside the District's network, please use a disclaimer to state in clear terms that the views expressed are the employee's alone and that they do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ontario School District.

### **Protect Confidential Information**

Be thoughtful about what you publish. You must make sure you do not disclose or use confidential information. Students, parents, and colleagues should not be cited or obviously referenced without their approval. For example, ask permission before posting someone's picture in a social network (student photos require parental consent) or publishing a conversation that was meant to be private. It is acceptable to discuss general details about projects, lessons, or events and to use non-identifying pseudonyms for an individual (e.g., Teacher A) so long as the information provided does not make it easy for someone to identify the individual or violate any privacy laws. Furthermore, public social networking sites are not the place to conduct school business with students or parents.

### **Respect Your Audience and Your Coworkers**

Always express ideas and opinions in a respectful manner. Make sure your communications are in good taste. Do not denigrate or insult others, including other schools or competitors. Remember that our communities reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Be respectful. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory. Be sensitive about linking to content. Redirecting to another site may imply an endorsement of its content.

### **Perception Can be Reality**

In online networks, the lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred. Just by identifying yourself as a District employee, you are creating perceptions about your expertise and about the District by community members, parents, students, and the general public; and you are creating perceptions about yourself with your colleagues and managers. If you choose to join or engage with District students and families in a social media context, do so

in a professional manner, ever mindful that in the minds of students, families, colleagues and the public, you are a district employee. Be sure that all content associated with you is consistent with your work and with the District's beliefs and professional standards.

### **Are You Adding Value?**

There are millions of words out there. The best way to get yours read is to write things that people will value. Communication associated with our District should help fellow educators, parents, students, and co-workers. It should be thought-provoking and build a sense of community. If it helps people improve knowledge or skills, do their jobs, solve problems, or understand education better, then it's adding value.

### **Keep Your Cool**

One of the aims of social media is to create dialogue, and people will not always agree on an issue. When confronted with a difference of opinion, stay cool. If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. Express your points in a clear, logical way. Don't pick fights, and correct mistakes when needed. Sometimes, it's best to ignore a comment and not give it credibility by acknowledging it with a response.

### **Be Careful with Personal Information**

Make full use of privacy setting. Know how to disable anonymous postings and use moderating tools on your social media site(s). Astute criminals can piece together information you provide on different sites and then use it to impersonate you or someone you know, or even re-set your passwords.

### **Be a Positive Role Model**

The line between professional and personal relationships is blurred within a social media contest. Educational employees have a responsibility to maintain appropriate employee-student relationships, whether on or off duty. Both case law and public expectations hold educational employees to a higher standard of conduct than the general public.

### **Don't Forget Your Day Job**

You should make sure that your online activities do not interfere with your job. Remember that District technologies are provided for educational use. Use of social media for personal use during District time or on District equipment is prohibited. Online activities on your own personal electronic devices only allowed during breaks.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES**

The roles of the teacher and the instructional assistant should complement each other. Take some time to initiate discussions of role expectations. Even if the partnership is a veteran one, the following expectations should be discussed and additional thoughts could be generated.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT ROLE CLARITY**

1. Use your initiative. Once the routine is established, be ready to move to the next activity, help prepare materials, support a particular student or anticipate special needs of the teacher. Try to avoid being given directions any more than absolutely necessary. Beyond planning sessions, teachers don't have much time to direct both students and instructional assistants.
2. Be involved and active. Look for ways to actively participate in all learning activities. Sitting on the fringes while individual students struggle can create uncomfortable teacher/instructional assistant relationships. Clerical duties should take second priority to direct student support.
3. Be conscientious of the model or example you are demonstrating. Instructional assistants must say and do the things that students are expected to say and do. When a skill is modeled, it should be modeled correctly the first time. If one is unsure of the proper skill demonstration, be sure to get the directions and practice before an activity is presented.
4. Use positive encouragement with students. Avoid letting how you may feel about a particular student or situation dictate your attitude. Genuine understanding of students and their unique needs will go a long way towards helping instructional assistants interact, positively, under difficult circumstances and emotionally charged situations.
5. Support all OSD school rules and goals even if you do not agree. Be sure to be an extension of the teacher in philosophy, classroom management and student behavioral expectations at any grade level.
6. Be observant of students in aspects of their school day. Find time to initiate discussions with the teacher if problematic behavior is observed. **Ask** for appropriate strategies for dealing with situations before they reoccur.
7. Be prepared and aware of curricular content. Know what curriculum areas are anticipated to be covered next. Be resourceful in helping to locate out of classroom supportive materials.
8. Accept instructional assistant responsibilities. In the absence of a teacher, instructional assistants need to make decisions about classroom management, positive reinforcement, good choices and alternative activities. Instructional assistants are expected to be good decision makers.
9. Express the value you place on education and share it often. Show students that the things they learn in school have relevance to their lives outside of school. Be sure to support education in social situations.
10. Demonstrate loyalty and maintain confidentiality. Loyalty grows out of mutual respect. It cannot be demanded, it must be earned. Confidentiality is the foundation for building that loyalty. Instructional assistants need to demonstrate loyalty to their teacher/partner and maintain confidentiality with information.
11. Do not leave students unattended at any time.

The following chart delineates the role of the teacher from that of the instructional assistant and illustrates their complementary effects.

<b>The Teacher</b>		<b>The Instructional Assistant</b>
	<b>Classroom organization</b>	
Plans weekly schedule		Implements plans as specified by teacher.
Plans lessons/activities for the class.		
Plans classroom assignments and learning centers.		Monitors student progress in instructional programs and relates finding to supervision teacher.
	<b>Assessment</b>	
Assesses individual children and diagnoses educational needs.		Assists with universal screenings and progress monitoring.
Administers tests to entire class.		
Evaluates student performance.		
	<b>Sets objectives</b>	
Determines appropriate objectives for class and for individual students.		Implements lessons to meet child's instructional objectives.
	<b>Teaching</b>	
Teaches lessons for the entire class, small groups, and individual students.		Teaches small group lessons and individual lessons.
		Reinforces skills the teacher has already taught.
		Be engaged with students at all times.
	<b>Behavioral Management</b>	
Plans behavioral management strategies for the class and for individual students.		Implements and supports the behavioral management strategies using the same emphasis and techniques as the teacher.
	<b>Individualized Educational Planning for Special Education</b>	
Develops and implements IEP's.		Carries out teacher's plans for the student.



## **Do's and Don'ts for Instructional Assistants**

- If a parent approaches you in a community setting, refer them to the learning specialist/title teacher and/or administrator in your building
- If a student has a behavior plan, ensure it is being followed
- Assist in supervising assemblies and support classroom teachers during group field trips.
- Serve bus duty
- Supervise playgrounds, lunchroom periods, study halls and assist in managing student behavior
- Assist students with personal and hygienic care (e.g., helping with coats and hand washing; bathroom duty)
- Prepare, organize, maintain supplies, materials, equipment and other features of a learning environment
- Accompany students from one place to another (e.g., during field trips, library visits)
- Observe and chart behaviors of students if directed to do so
- Monitor in-school suspension or cool down areas
- If asked, assist certified staff in removing or restraining students for disruptive behavior
- **Inform learning specialists/title teachers of behavioral difficulties beyond the norm**
- Be a team player
- Be flexible
- Be professional
- Be punctual- in addition to being prompt
- Teach academic and behavioral expectations
- Personal issues are dealt with on scheduled break times
- Groups or students cannot be left unattended
- Data collection- be honest
- Follow through on any given tasks
- Teach programs with fidelity

## **Confidentiality**

As part of the job, an instructional assistant will have access to personal information about children and their families. Both the child and the family have an absolute right to expect that all information will be kept confidential, and made available only to personnel in the school or another agency who require it to ensure that the rights, health, safety, and physical well-being of a child are preserved.

Confidentiality must be maintained according to the federal laws, state regulations, and OSD policies. Student rights must not be violated.

Only people who are responsible for the design, preparation, and delivery of education and related services will have access to records.

Other teachers, school staff, well-meaning friends, neighbors or acquaintances should not have access to information about a student's performance level, behavior, program goals, objectives, or progress.

Keep group/independent data accurately for all instructional and behavioral groups.

Information that a student and his/her family have the right to expect OSD to respect the privacy about includes information such as but not limited to:

- \*the results of formal and informal assessments
- \*social and behavioral actions
- \*performance levels and progress
- \*program goals and objectives
- \*financial and other personal or family information

You should share concerns regarding the well-being and safety of a student with administration. You may also share information with the child's teacher or staff member who is designated to play a role in the protection and welfare of that student--and no one else.

Confidentiality is one of the most critical and important aspects of your job as a instructional assistant. It's your legal responsibility to observe both the rights of individuals with disabilities and of parents in regard to privacy. Follow these guidelines where issues of confidentiality are concerned:

- Never refer to other students or clients by name in another staffing or conference or with other parents.
- Don't share specific information about an individual's program or unique needs in the lounge or out in the community. Only share confidential information with those who require knowing.
- Take questions you have about the organization's policies on confidentiality to the evaluator or principal.
- Access individual records for the sole purpose of being more effective in your work with the individual.
- Go through the proper channels to access confidential information. Make sure you're authorized to do so.
- If you question policies and procedures used with an individual, discuss this privately with your evaluator. There is often confidential information that directs specific programming of which you may not be aware.
- Speak and write responsibly when passing on information. Be aware of who might hear you or read what you have written.

### **TIPS INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS CAN USE TO BUILD EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN**

As members of the education team instructional assistants play important roles in the lives of the children with whom they work. There are many ways they can assist children to acquire effective communication, social, and problem solving skills, learn to become more independent, build self-esteem, and develop and maintain friendships. To accomplish this, instructional assistants are expected to:

- \* Respect the human rights and individuality of all children.
- \* Reach out to children. Learn what they like and dislike, how they prefer to spend free time. Look for and share information about games, music, pets and special events individual children enjoy.
- \* Use positive communication. Listen carefully, maintain eye contact, ask questions, and respond to the ideas, concerns and needs children share with you.
- \* Treat children in the ways you want them to treat others. Be fair, kind and polite. Do not yell or use abusive language. Use humor but avoid using sarcasm or making fun of others.
- \* Encourage the development of independence, autonomy, and individuality by providing opportunities for children to make choices.
- \* Encourage children to assist each other when help is needed.
- \* Reinforce the use of appropriate social skills. Model and teach methods children can use to strengthen their ability to monitor and control their behavior, share emotions/feelings, make and maintain friendships, cope with peer pressure.
- \* Promote the legal rights of children. Maintain confidentiality, report signs of abuse to teachers.

### **ENCOURAGING STUDENTS TO LEARN**

- Students are more likely to want to learn when they appreciate the value of classroom activities and when they believe they will succeed if they apply reasonable effort.
- A supportive environment.
- Moderation/optimal use. (Don't overdo any particular strategy because it loses its effectiveness, if is used too often, or too routinely.)
- Program for success. Success in learning for all. End teaching session on a positive note, with students being successful.
- Teach goal setting, performance appraisal, and self-reinforcement skills.
- Help students to recognize link between effort and outcome.
- Call attention to the instrumental value of academic activities. Let them know how the knowledge will prepare them for success in an occupation, or enable them to partake of other opportunities in the present and future. .
- Provide opportunities for all students to respond actively.
- Use appropriate wait time, then complete correction procedures as directed in curriculum.
- Model interest in learning and motivation to learn.
- Communicate desirable expectations and attributions about students' motivation to learn. Routinely project positive attitudes, beliefs, expectations and attributions concerning reasons for learning. Help them see that what they are learning is meaningful and applicable to their lives.
- Minimize students' performance anxiety during learning activities.

- Project intensity, especially when introducing new content, demonstrating skills, or giving instructions for assignments.
- **Teach programs with fidelity and enthusiasm.**

**Behaviors- Choose your Battles!**

<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Actions/Suggestions</b>
Attention Seeking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ignore the negative behaviors</li> <li>• Praise other students for positive behaviors</li> <li>• Praise student when they demonstrate positive behavior</li> </ul>
Gain Peer Attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move other students</li> <li>• Preferential seating (next to teacher)</li> <li>• Allow student opportunity to earn seat back</li> <li>• Remove student/time out</li> </ul>
Power seeking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give controlled choices</li> <li>• Give additional responsibilities</li> <li>• Teach students how to negotiate for their needs</li> <li>• Teach self-regulation strategies</li> </ul>
Avoidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modify assignments (discuss with Learning specialist prior to modifying assignment/work task.)</li> <li>• Loss of recess to complete task</li> <li>• If/then statements</li> <li>• Provide additional assistants</li> <li>• Reinforcement System</li> <li>• Teach student to recognize and communicate needs</li> <li>• Teach students how to address needs independently</li> <li>• Teach problem solving strategies</li> </ul>