Even though I have been in the role of resource teacher for the past five years, I had never completed an evaluation of an Educational Assistant before. They were done at the school when I arrived nor was it a practice started while I was there. I do believe however, that EA evaluations were started this year by the ESS team.

While completing part of my practicum I was able to complete an evaluation of an EA. Fortunately for both of us, we knew each other and she had worked as an EA in my classroom when I taught grade 7 English and Social Studies. I asked her permission before observing and evaluating her and she was fine with me doing that.

I observed the EA at work in several different situations and classes. During the day she alternates between supporting one student and working with the teacher in the classroom supporting many students. There were some areas that I needed to discuss with the resource teacher before completing, such as notification when absent and confidential and ethical behaviours. These were not issues I had when working with the EA a few years ago, but that could have changed and I wanted to be sure.

After going over the evaluation with the resource teacher and asking the classroom teachers a few questions, I met with the EA and we discussed the evaluation together. I was very nervous doing this for the first time even though it wasn’t a real evaluation. Since we were trying to squeeze this in during her break, we did not get all of the bottom section of the form completed and I didn’t want to take away from class time.

I believe that EA’s should be evaluated on a regular basis just as teachers are. I am not sure how often – once or twice a year. Should this be dependent on how the first evaluation went? If an EA scored mostly 3’s and 4’s would you only do one? If there are many areas that need improvement, would you evaluate more frequently? Whose role is this? If I were in a small school such as the one I visited, as the resource teacher, I would want to complete the form with some input from the classroom teachers. At the school where I work, there are three resource teachers and 10 EA’s. Is this then the role of the SPR- Resource? Would the evaluations be divided? I am very curious to know how other schools handle this aspect of the role.