

Guidance for Title I Paraprofessionals

A paraprofessional is one who assists teachers and students under the direction of a professional teacher. The U.S. Department of Education's (USDE) guidance defines a paraprofessional as an employee who provides instructional support by reinforcing a teacher's instruction in the classroom.

Title I Requirements

- Title I targeted assistance setting, these requirements pertain to all Title I-paid instructional paraprofessionals.
- In a Title I schoolwide program, Title I funds support all teachers and paraprofessionals. Therefore, the requirements apply to all paraprofessionals with instructional duties, regardless of whether the position is supported with Title I funds. This includes all instructional paraprofessionals paid with district, Title I, school improvement, Special Education, BIA, or other funding sources.

Please note: The requirements for teacher paraprofessionals are not meant to apply to those persons who are in training or hold non-instructional positions, such as student teachers, interns, technology assistants, behavior monitors, etc.

Exceptions to the ESSA requirements:

- A paraprofessional who serves only as a translator;
- A paraprofessional who only conducts parental involvement;
- Separate programs that are physically located in the Title I school, but are not part of the school's overall organizational structure or schoolwide program (e.g., preschool, district wide Special Education, etc.) and these programs are not supported with Title I funds.

Qualifications

As part of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title I paraprofessionals must have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and meet one of the following three requirements to be employed in a Title I program:

- Obtained a working knowledge in reading, mathematics, and writing by completing two years of study (48 semester hours) at an institution of higher education; or
- Obtained an associate's (or higher) degree; or
- Met a rigorous and objective standard of quality, which includes a North Dakota approved assessment of skills in reading, mathematics, and writing.

Individuals holding a North Dakota educator's professional license meet the requirements under ESSA and the teaching license number could be used in lieu of the paraprofessional certificate of completion number.

Paraprofessionals must obtain certificates prior to hire or work with students.

North Dakota Approved Assessments

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) has approved five options for meeting the assessment requirement for paraprofessionals under ESSA. Any paraprofessional needing to meet the qualifications by taking one of these the state approved assessments must complete all necessary requirements. For each of the assessment choices, the applicant must complete and pass assessments in the areas of reading, mathematics, and writing.

1. ParaPro® Assessment

The ParaPro® Assessment was developed by Educational Testing Service (ETS), for prospective and practicing paraprofessionals. The test measures skills and knowledge in reading, mathematics, and writing, as well as the ability to apply those skills and knowledge to assist in classroom instruction. For additional information about the test, visit [ParaPro® Assessment](#).

Requirement: The required score for this exam is a composite score of 464 in the reading, mathematics, and writing section, as set by a 2003 standard setting study.

Cost: The approximate cost of the exam is \$55.

Scoring: Individuals can view their score upon completion of the online exam and will receive an official score report from the ETS approximately two weeks after the test date. A copy of your scores are also shared with the North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board, the state's teacher licensing board; however, NDDPI does not have access to these records.

Registering for and Taking the Test: Candidates interested in the ParaPro® Assessment should contact their school district's administrative office to get information regarding testing availability. No pre- registration is required. Candidates will provide their personal information and test fees at the test center on test day.

Testing at the School: School districts administering the ParaPro® Assessment must enroll with the ETS by completing an [application](#). School districts or regional offices of education that are interested in administering the Internet-based ParaPro Assessment must enroll with the [Education Testing Service](#) (ETS). Within three to five business days, you will receive a user name and password that allows you to access the secure ParaPro Assessment Administration website. This site is used to purchase, administer, and manage the assessment. This enrollment application is NOT used for those who wish to take the assessment. Test takers must contact their district's administrative office for test dates and locations.

If your district has registered for the Internet-based ParaPro Assessment in the past and has been issued a user name and password, but is unable to find this documentation, please contact ETS with the following information:

- Contact First and Last Name
- Contact Title
- School District
- City, State, & Zip Code
- Telephone number
- E-mail address

For more information on enrolling for the Internet-based version of the ParaPro Assessment, contact [ETS](#) at or (609) 406-5622.

Test Preparation Materials: The ETS is committed to helping you do your best on the ParaPro® Assessment by offering a variety of [test preparation materials](#). They offer both free and low-cost test preparation materials including study companions, online tutorials, practice tests, and other resources to help you feel ready and confident on test day.

Contact: For more information, contact [ParaPro® Assessment](#) at (800) 772-9476.

2. Praxis CORE® Assessment

The Praxis® Core Academic Skills for Educator (CORE®) tests replaced the Praxis I® (PPST®) effective January 1, 2014. The CORE® tests measure academic skills in reading, mathematics, and writing. These tests are designed to provide comprehensive assessments that measure the skills and content knowledge of candidates entering teacher preparation programs.

Requirement: Title I paraprofessionals must receive the following required passing score on this exam:

- Reading Test Code #5712, Cut Score is 156
- Mathematics Test Code #5732, Cut Score is 150
- Writing Test Code #5722, Cut Score is 160

Please Note: North Dakota has instituted a composite score of 466 based on the CORE® Reading, Mathematics, and Writing tests providing the candidate has met the minimum passing score currently in place for two of the three tests.

Cost: Fees vary depending on the test for which you register. Costs range from \$90 – \$150.

Scoring: Score reports are available online thru the individual's ETS account 2 to 3 weeks after the testing window closes or 2 to 3 weeks after the test date for those tests that are offered continuously.

Taking the Test: All CORE® tests are delivered by computer. The CORE® tests are offered continuously throughout the calendar year. Please review the Test Centers and Dates for more information.

Test Centers and Dates: CORE® tests are delivered by computer at an international network of test centers that include Prometric® test centers, some universities and other locations. Use the [ETS test center search](#) to locate the test centers near you. A test center map and driving directions to the test center is available as part of your search results for most of the test centers.

Test Preparation Materials: Praxis® has free study companions available as well as Interactive Practice Tests for purchase online. More information can be found on [North Dakota's Praxis testing](#).

Contact: Visit [Praxis® CORE®](#) for more information or to register for the tests.

3. WorkKeys® Assessment

The ACT WorkKeys® is a job skills assessment system that measures foundational and soft skills as well as specialized assessments to target specific needs. Since North Dakota school districts have access to provide WorkKeys® assessments to their students, the NDDPI has joined other states by adding the WorkKeys® to the list of approved assessments to meet the Title I paraprofessional requirements.

Requirement: Title I paraprofessionals must receive the following required passing score on this exam:

- Workplace Documents (previously known as Reading for Information), Level Score 4 of 7
- Applies Mathematics, Level Score 4 of 7
- Writing or Business Writing, Level Score 3 of 5

Please Note: The levels required by the NDDPI are based on the average scores established by other states using this exam for the same paraprofessional qualifications. Candidates must meet the minimum level for all three assessments.

Cost: Fees vary depending on the number of tests needed.

Scoring: The ACT will send a printout detailing what levels you achieved and what skills are associated with those levels. The WorkKeys® Internet Version Reading for Information and Applied Mathematics test scores are available immediately. The writing scores can take up to 10 days to score. Paper-and-pencil scoring can take place at a WorkKeys® Solutions Provider, or directly through the ACT. In general, assessments are scored and reports shipped within 10 working days after the date in which the ACT receives the assessments.

Taking the Test: The WorkKeys® tests are available in print and delivered by computer. The WorkKeys® test is administered at many locations throughout the state. Interested applicants are encouraged to contact their school district's administrative office to get information regarding testing availability.

Test Preparation Materials: The ACT does not publish a study guide for the WorkKeys®; however, the publisher [Key Train](#) provides study guides for the assessment online or at (877) 842-6205. ACT does provide [practice tests](#).

Contact: Visit [WorkKeys®](#) for more information or to register or call (888) 967-5539.

4. Paraeducator Online Training® Assessment

The Paraeducator Online Training® assessments (formerly known as the Paraeducator Learning Network and Paraeducator PD Now!) provide districts with a measure of the knowledge and ability for paraeducators in reading, mathematics, and writing instruction.

Requirement: Title I paraprofessionals must receive the following required passing score on this exam:

- Assessment 1: Reading, Mathematics and Writing - Instructional Support, Percentage Cut Point 65%
- Assessment 2: Reading, Mathematics, and Writing - Knowledge and Application, Percentage Cut Point 65%

Please Note: The levels required by the NDDPI to constitute passing scores on Paraeducator Online Learning® are based on the average scores established by other states using this exam for the same paraprofessional qualifications. Candidates must meet the minimum cut point for both assessments.

Cost: Fees vary depending on the assessments and training provided. Average cost is \$45.

Scoring: The Paraeducator Online Training® assessment administrators can access and print assessment results at any time. To do so, they must log in as a User Administrator, click the *Reports* tab, select the *Report for Grades by User* (an assessment is classified as a course). Documentation proving the reliability and validity of the assessments is available upon request through contacting the district's Paraeducator Online Training® consultant for details.

Taking the Test: The Paraeducator Online Training® assessment is available to school districts participating in the Master Teacher professional development series.

Test Preparation Materials: The Paraeducator Online Training® Assessments 1 and 2 are required to meet paraprofessional requirements in North Dakota. Along with the assessments, the Paraeducator Online Training® series provides 13 training courses to assist paraeducators in preparing for the assessments. Additionally, the program offers online practice assessments.

Contact: Visit [Paraeducator Online Training®](#) for more information or call (800) 669-9633.

5. Project PARA Assessment

Project PARA is a school-based instructional resource that is designed to give schools optimal flexibility in how they decide to use the program. It contains fourteen units and three assessments that cover a variety of topics to aid paraeducators with the development of skills needed to work effectively in a classroom setting. Project PARA offers a series of six tests that must be completed to satisfy Title I requirements. The tests are aggregated and averaged into one composite score.

These online tests include:

- Assisting with Reading Instruction
- Assisting with Written Language Skills
- Assisting with Fundamental Mathematics Skills
- Content Skills Assessment for Reading
- Content Skills Assessment for Writing
- Content Skills Assessment for Mathematics

Requirement: Title I paraprofessionals must receive a passing score on this exam in order to meet the third option stated in the requirements. The required score for this exam is a composite score of 69%.

Scoring: For participants who have completed the North Dakota Department of Instruction requirements for Title I, certificates of completion can be downloaded when a participant has met the following steps:

1. The requirements for Title I as shown above have been met.
2. The assigned instructor has verified this by reviewing their scores and submitting the verification form. The instructor can verify these scores on the Unit Progress for the specific group. (The instructor of a participant needs to go to Instructor Resources, chose Group, see columns labeled 'Verify NCLB'.

Contact: Visit [Project PARA](#) for more information.

Although the following exams are no longer available, if an individual has taken one of these exams in the past, the score could be submitted for review.

- The Praxis I® (PPST®) was a basic academic skills assessment covering reading, mathematics, and writing. The Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educator (CORE) Tests replaced the Praxis I® (PPST®) effective January 1, 2014. North Dakota's passing scores are 173 in Reading, 170 in Mathematics, and 173 in Writing.
- The HELP® (Higher Education Learning Profile), published by the Educational Resources, Inc., is an approved assessment to meet the paraprofessional requirements. North Dakota's passing scores for this exam are 67 in Reading Comprehension, 67 in Essential Math Skills, and 66 in Written Expression.

Allowable Duties for Paraprofessionals

Allowable Title I paraprofessional duties include:

- Providing one-on-one tutoring for eligible students, only at a time when a student would not receive instruction from a teacher;
- Assisting with classroom management in a schoolwide program or assisting with classroom management in a targeted assistance program in the Title I room only;
- Providing computer lab assistance (for identified Title I students in a targeted assistance program);
- Conducting parental involvement activities (for identified Title I students in a targeted assistance program);
- Providing support in a library or media center. In a targeted assistance program, any services provided by a Title I-paid paraprofessional would have to be supplemental and target identified students;
- Serving as a translator (for identified Title I students in a targeted assistance program); and
- Providing instructional support services under the direct supervision of a teacher. In a targeted assistance program, Title I-paid paraprofessionals must be under the direct supervision of a certified Title I teacher.

Schools and districts are required to have a job description for all staff employed. The job description must outline whether an individual is employed as a paraprofessional or as a teacher. It is the responsibility of schools and districts to ensure their staff possess the knowledge and skills sufficient to assist all students in meeting the educational goals of ESSA. When feasible, paraprofessionals are to be included in professional development activities.

Because paraprofessionals provide instructional support, they should not be providing planned direct instruction or introduce new skills, concepts, or academic content to students. Paraprofessionals cannot carry student caseloads.

Direct Supervision of Paraprofessionals and Management of Program

Direct supervision means:

- The teacher prepares the lessons, plans the instructional support activities the paraprofessional carries out, and evaluates the achievement of the students with whom the paraprofessional is working; and
- The paraprofessional works in close and frequent proximity with the teacher.

A Title I program must employ highly qualified teachers to carry the entire caseload of students and administer the Title I program. In both Title I targeted assistance and schoolwide settings, programs staffed only by paraprofessionals are not permitted (i.e., school day program, before school programs, after school programs, summer school programs, computer assisted programs, etc.). Title I paraprofessionals may only assist students by reinforcing a certified teachers' direct instruction.

Application Process

Please complete and submit the Application for a Paraprofessional Certificate of Completion (SFN 53923) with all required supporting documentation.

Please note: The Certificate of Completion issued by the NDDPI Special Education office does not suffice for a Title I Certificate of Completion as outlined under ESSA.

Monitoring

The Office of Educational Equity & Support is required to monitor all Title I schools and districts to ensure compliance with this regulation. To avoid being cited, ensure that:

- All individuals employed as a Title I-paid paraprofessional in a targeted assistance school and all paraprofessionals with instructional duties, regardless of whether the position is funded with Title I funds in a schoolwide school, hold a Paraprofessional Certificate of Completion or current teaching license number; and
- All paraprofessionals are reported accurately on the PER02. Individuals working in Title I, Part A should be reported under position code 71 – “Aide/Paraprofessional” and responsibility code 113 – “All Title I Services”. Other paraprofessional positions may need to meet extra requirements based on the nature of duties. You may need to verify the instructional-based duties of an individual for monitoring purposes.

Questions

Question or concerns regarding the Title I paraprofessional requirements can be directed to the [Office of Educational Equity & Support](#) at (701) 328-2282.