

## Title I Paraprofessionals Guidance

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. To view the entire guidance document, go to [www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/paraguidance.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/paraguidance.pdf).

### Qualifications

As part of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act, 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:

1. 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
2. Obtained an associate's (or higher) degree; or
3. 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 the NCLB Act and the teaching license number could be used in lieu of the paraprofessional certificate of completion number.

### North Dakota Approved Assessments

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

1. The ParaPro® Assessment was developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) for prospective and practicing paraprofessionals. It 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. North Dakota's composite passing score is 464.
2. 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. North Dakota's passing scores are 156 in Reading, 150 in Mathematics, and 160 in Writing.
3. The ACT WorkKeys® is a job skills assessment system that measures foundational and soft skills, as well as specialized assessments to target specific needs. North Dakota's passing scores are 4 in Reading for Information, 4 in Applied Mathematics, and 3 in Writing/Business Writing.
4. The ParaEduator PD Now!® assessments provide districts with a measure of the knowledge and ability for para-educators in reading, mathematics, and writing instruction. North Dakota's passing scores are 65% in Reading, Mathematics, and Writing – Instructional Support (Assessment 1) and 65% in Reading, Mathematics, and Writing – Knowledge & Application (Assessment 2).
5. 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. *Although this exam is no longer available, if an individual has taken this in the past, these results could be submitted for review.* North Dakota's passing scores are 173 in Reading, 170 in Mathematics, and 173 in Writing.
6. The HELP® (Higher Education Learning Profile), published by the Educational Resources, Inc., is an approved assessment to meet the paraprofessional requirements. *Although this exam is no longer available, if an individual has taken this in the past, these results could be submitted for review.* North Dakota's passing scores for this exam are 67 in Reading Comprehension, 67 in Essential Math Skills, and 66 in Written Expression.

### **Who Must Meet the Requirements**

- In a Title I targeted assistance setting, these requirements pertain to all Title I-paid 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 or not the position is supported with Title I funds. This includes all instructional paraprofessionals paid with district, Title I, SIG, 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:

- A paraprofessional who only serves as a translator, but does not have to meet the additional educational requirements.
- A paraprofessional who only conducts parental involvement does not have to meet the additional educational requirements.
- When 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 (i.e., preschool, district wide Special Education, etc.) **AND** these programs are not supported with Title I funds, paraprofessionals working in these programs are not required to meet the NCLB Act qualifications.

### **Allowable Duties for Paraprofessionals**

Allowable Title I paraprofessional duties include:

1. Providing one-on-one tutoring for eligible students, only at a time when a student would not receive instruction from a teacher;
2. Assisting with classroom management in a schoolwide setting or, in a targeted assistance program, assisting with classroom management in the Title I room only;
3. Providing computer lab assistance (for identified Title I students in a targeted assistance program);
4. Conducting parental involvement activities (for identified Title I students in a targeted assistance program);
5. 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;
6. Serving as a translator (for identified Title I students in a targeted assistance program); and
7. 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 the NCLB Act. 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:

1. 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
2. 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.

### **Certificate of Completion**

The Federal Title Programs office designed a certificate of completion which will be issued to paraprofessionals who have met the NCLB Act requirements. The Application for a Paraprofessional Certificate of Completion (SFN 53923) is available at [www.nd.gov/dpi/forms/](http://www.nd.gov/dpi/forms/) on the department's website.

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

### **Monitoring**

The Federal Title Programs office 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.

### **Contact Information**

Question or concerns regarding the Title I paraprofessional requirements can be directed to:

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