

CHAPTER 24
PARAEDUCATOR CERTIFICATES
[Prior to 1/14/09, see Educational Examiners Board[282] Ch 22]

282—24.1(272) Paraeducator certificates. Iowa paraeducator certificates are issued upon application filed on a form provided by the board of educational examiners.

282—24.2(272) Approved paraeducator certificate programs. An applicant for an initial paraeducator certificate who completes the paraeducator preparation program from a recognized Iowa paraeducator approved program shall have the recommendation from the designated certifying official at the recognized area education agency, local education agency, community college, or institution of higher education where the preparation was completed. A recognized Iowa paraeducator approved program is one which has its program of preparation approved by the state board of education according to standards established by the board of educational examiners.

282—24.3(272) Prekindergarten through grade 12 paraeducator generalist certificate.

24.3(1) Applicants must possess a minimum of a high school diploma or a graduate equivalent diploma.

24.3(2) Applicants shall be disqualified for any of the following reasons:

- a. The applicant is less than 18 years of age.
- b. The applicant has been convicted of child abuse or sexual abuse of a child.
- c. The applicant has been convicted of a felony.
- d. The applicant's application is fraudulent.
- e. The applicant's certification from another state is suspended or revoked.
- f. The applicant fails to meet board standards for application for an initial or renewed certificate.

24.3(3) Qualifications or criteria for the granting or revocation of a certificate or the determination of an individual's professional standing shall not include membership or nonmembership in any teacher or paraeducator organization.

24.3(4) Applicants shall have successfully completed at least 90 clock hours of training in the areas of behavior management, exceptional child and at-risk child behavior, collaboration skills, interpersonal relations skills, child and youth development, technology, and ethical responsibilities and behavior.

24.3(5) Applicants shall have successfully completed the following list of competencies so that, under the direction and supervision of a qualified classroom teacher, the paraeducator will be able to:

a. Support a safe, positive teaching and learning environment including the following competencies:

- (1) Follow prescribed health, safety, and emergency school and classroom policy and procedures.
- (2) As directed, prepare and organize materials to support teaching and learning.
- (3) Use strategies and techniques for facilitating the integration of individuals with diverse learning needs in various settings.

(4) Assist with special health services.

(5) Assist in adapting instructional strategies and materials according to the needs of the learner in content areas including, but not limited to, reading, writing and mathematics.

(6) Assist in gathering and recording data about the performance and behavior of individuals.

(7) Assist in maintaining a motivational environment.

(8) Assist in various instructional arrangements (e.g., large group, small group, tutoring).

(9) Demonstrate knowledge in the content areas of reading, writing and mathematics.

b. Assist in the development of physical and intellectual development including the following competencies:

(1) Assist with the activities and opportunities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem solving that are appropriate to the development levels and needs of all children.

(2) Actively communicate with children and provide opportunities and support for children to understand, acquire, and use verbal and nonverbal means of communicating thoughts and feelings.

(3) Actively communicate and support high expectations that are shared, clearly defined and appropriate.

(4) Make and document observations appropriate to the individual with specific learning needs.

(5) Use strategies that promote the learner's independence.

(6) Assist in monitoring progress and providing feedback to the appropriate person.

c. Support social, emotional, and behavioral development including the following competencies:

(1) Provide a supportive environment in which all children, including children with disabilities and children at risk of school failure, can begin to learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviors as individuals and groups.

(2) Assist in developing and teaching specific behaviors and procedures that facilitate safety and learning in each unique school setting.

(3) Assist in the implementation of individualized behavior management plans, including behavior intervention plans for students with disabilities.

(4) Model and assist in teaching appropriate behaviors as a response to inappropriate behaviors.

(5) Use appropriate strategies and techniques in a variety of settings to assist in the development of social skills.

(6) Assist in modifying the learning environment to manage behavior.

d. Establish positive and productive relations including the following competencies:

(1) Demonstrate a commitment to a team approach to interventions.

(2) Maintain an open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child's family, sharing information in a positive and productive manner.

(3) Communicate with colleagues, follow instructions and use problem-solving skills that will facilitate working as an effective member of the school team.

(4) Foster respectful and beneficial relationships between families and other school and community personnel.

(5) Function in a manner that demonstrates a positive regard for the distinctions among roles and responsibilities of paraprofessionals, professionals, and other support personnel.

e. Integrate effectively the technology to support student learning including the following competencies:

(1) Establish an environment for the successful use of educational technology.

(2) Support and strengthen technology planning and integration.

(3) Improve support systems for technical integration.

(4) Operate computers and use technology effectively.

f. Practice ethical and professional standards of conduct on an ongoing basis including the following competencies:

(1) Demonstrate a commitment to share information in a confidential manner.

(2) Demonstrate a willingness to participate in ongoing staff development and self-evaluation, and apply constructive feedback.

(3) Abide by the criteria of professional practice and rules of the board of educational examiners.

24.3(6) An applicant for a certificate under these rules shall demonstrate that the requirements of the certificate have been met, and the burden of proof shall be on the applicant.

282—24.4(272) Paraeducator area of concentration. An area of concentration is not required but optional. Applicants must currently hold or have previously held an Iowa paraeducator generalist certificate. Applicants may complete one or more areas of concentration but must complete at least 45 clock hours in each area of concentration.

24.4(1) Early childhood—prekindergarten through grade 3. The paraeducator shall successfully complete the following list of competencies so that, under the direction and supervision of a qualified classroom teacher, the paraeducator will be able to:

a. Reinforce skills, strategies, and activities involving individuals or small groups.

b. Participate as a member of the team responsible for developing service plans and educational objectives for parents and their children.

c. Listen to and communicate with parents in order to gather information for the service delivery team.

d. Demonstrate knowledge of services provided by health care providers, social services, education agencies, and other support systems available to support parents and provide them with the strategies required to gain access to these services.

e. Demonstrate effective strategies and techniques to stimulate cognitive, physical, social, and language development in the student.

f. Gather information as instructed by the classroom teacher about the performance of individual children and their behaviors, including observing, recording, and charting, and share information with professional colleagues.

g. Communicate and work effectively with parents and other primary caregivers.

24.4(2) *Special needs—prekindergarten through grade 12.* The paraeducator shall successfully complete the following list of competencies so that, under the direction and supervision of a qualified classroom teacher, the paraeducator will be able to:

a. Understand and implement the goals and objectives in an individualized education plan (IEP).

b. Demonstrate an understanding of the value of serving children and youth with disabilities and special needs in inclusive settings.

c. Assist in academic subjects using lesson plans and instructional strategies developed by teachers and other professional support staff.

d. Gather and maintain data about the performance and behavior of individual students and confer with special and general education practitioners about student schedules, instructional goals, progress, and performance.

e. Use appropriate instructional procedures and reinforcement techniques.

f. Operate computers and use assistive technology and adaptive equipment that will enable students with special needs to participate more fully in general education.

24.4(3) *English as a second language—prekindergarten through grade 12.* The paraeducator shall successfully complete the following list of competencies so that, under the direction and supervision of a qualified classroom teacher, the paraeducator will be able to:

a. Operate computers and use technology that will enable students to participate effectively in the classroom.

b. Work with the classroom teacher as collaborative partners.

c. Demonstrate knowledge of the role and use of primary language of instruction in accessing English for academic purposes.

d. Demonstrate knowledge of instructional methodologies for second language acquisition.

e. Communicate and work effectively with parents or guardians of English as a second language students in their primary language.

f. Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate translation and interpretation procedures.

24.4(4) *Career and transitional programs—grades 5 through 12.* The paraeducator shall successfully complete the following list of competencies so that, under the direction and supervision of a qualified classroom teacher, the paraeducator will be able to:

a. Assist in the implementation of career and transitional programs.

b. Assist in the implementation of appropriate behavior management strategies for career and transitional students and those students who may have special needs.

c. Assist in the implementation of assigned performance and behavior assessments including observation, recording, and charting for career and transitional students and those students who may have special needs.

d. Provide training at job sites using appropriate instructional interventions.

e. Participate in preemployment, employment, or transitional training in classrooms or at off-campus sites.

f. Communicate effectively with employers and employees at work sites and with personnel or members of the public in other transitional learning environments.

24.4(5) School library media—prekindergarten through grade 12. The school library media paraeducator shall successfully complete the following list of competencies so that, under the direct supervision and direction of a qualified school library supervisor or school librarian, the paraeducator will be able to:

- a. Be aware of, implement, and support the goals, objectives, and policies of the school library media program.
- b. Assist the school library supervisor or school librarian in general operations, such as processing materials, circulating materials, performing clerical tasks, assisting students and staff, and working with volunteers and student helpers, and to understand the role of the paraeducator in the library setting in order to provide efficient, equitable, and effective library services.
- c. Demonstrate knowledge of library technical services including, but not limited to, cataloging, processing, acquisitions, routine library maintenance, automation and new technologies.
- d. Be aware of and support the integration of literacy initiatives and content area standards, e.g., visual information and technology in support of the curriculum.
- e. Be aware of the role school libraries play in improving student achievement, literacy, and lifelong learning.
- f. Demonstrate an understanding of ethical issues related to school libraries, such as copyright, plagiarism, privacy, diversity, confidentiality, and freedom of speech.
- g. Assist in the daily operations of the school library program, such as shelving, working with volunteers and student helpers, inventory, materials repair and maintenance.
- h. Exhibit welcoming behaviors to all library patrons and visitors to encourage use of the library and its resources.
- i. Demonstrate knowledge of the school library collection and the availability of other resources that will meet individual student information or research needs.
- j. Demonstrate a general knowledge of basic technology skills and assist in troubleshooting basic hardware and software problems.

282—24.5(272) Prekindergarten through grade 12 advanced paraeducator certificate. Applicants for the prekindergarten through grade 12 advanced paraeducator certificate shall have met the following requirements:

- 24.5(1)** Currently hold or have previously held an Iowa paraeducator generalist certificate.
- 24.5(2)** Possess an associate's degree or have earned 62 semester hours of college coursework from a regionally accredited institution of higher education.
- 24.5(3)** Complete a minimum of 2 semester hours of coursework involving at least 100 clock hours of a supervised practicum with children and youth. These 2 semester hours of practicum may be part of an associate's degree or part of the earned 62 semester hours of college coursework.

282—24.6(272) Renewal requirements.

24.6(1) The paraeducator certificate may be renewed upon application, payment of a renewal fee as established in 282—Chapter 12, and verification of successful completion of coursework totaling three units in any combination listed below.

- a. One unit may be earned for each semester hour of credit which leads to the completion of the requirements for an area of concentration not currently held.
- b. One unit may be earned for each hour of credit that will assist a paraeducator to demonstrate the knowledge of and the ability to assist in reading, writing, or mathematics.
- c. One unit may be earned for each hour of credit completed which supports either the building's or district's career development plan.
- d. One unit may be earned for each semester hour of college credit.

24.6(2) All applicants renewing a paraeducator certificate must submit documentation of completion of the child and dependent adult abuse training approved by the state abuse education review panel. A waiver of this requirement may apply under the following conditions with appropriate documentation of any of the following:

- a. A person is engaged in active duty in the military service of this state or of the United States.
- b. The application of this requirement would impose an undue hardship on the person for whom the waiver is requested.
- c. A person is practicing a licensed profession outside this state.
- d. A person is otherwise subject to circumstances that would preclude the person from satisfying the approved child and dependent adult abuse training in this state.

282—24.7(272) Issue date on original certificate. A certificate is valid only from and after the date of issuance.

282—24.8(272) Validity. The paraeducator certificate shall be valid for five years.

282—24.9(272) Certificate application fee. All fees are nonrefundable.

24.9(1) Issuance of certificates. The fee for the issuance of the paraeducator certificate shall be as established in 282—Chapter 12.

24.9(2) Adding areas of concentration. The fee for the addition of each area of concentration to a paraeducator certificate, following the issuance of the initial paraeducator certificate and any area(s) of concentration, shall be as established in 282—Chapter 12.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code chapter 272.

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