

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:

a. Foundations. Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will:

- (1) Know and understand young children’s typical and atypical developmental stages and their needs at each stage.
- (2) Recognize multiple influences on young children’s development and learning.
- (3) Recognize developmentally appropriate practices for interactions with and the education of young children.

b. Learning environment. Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will:

- (1) Describe the elements of environments that support children’s learning and well-being.
- (2) Demonstrate skills, strategies, and activities involving an individual child or small groups of children to reinforce instruction from a licensed teacher.
- (3) Set up environments that are safe, inclusive, and responsive to children’s developmental strengths, interests and needs.

c. Content and instruction. Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will:

- (1) Recognize effective strategies and techniques to stimulate cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and language development for each child in a developmentally appropriate way.
- (2) Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Iowa Early Learning Standards by describing what young children know and do in order to provide experiences and interactions to promote learning.
- (3) Gather information, as instructed by the classroom teacher, about an individual child’s development, learning and behaviors including observing, recording, and charting.

d. Emotional and behavioral competencies. Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will:

- (1) Gather information, as instructed by the classroom teacher, to identify children’s skills and provide appropriate levels of support needed for the children to access, participate and engage in activities.
- (2) Implement teacher-designed intervention plans to promote positive social relationships, interactions and behaviors that are age- and developmentally appropriate.

e. Professional relationships. Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will:

- (1) Demonstrate the ability to collaborate with an educational team to systematically and regularly exchange information to support problem solving, planning, and the implementing of instruction and individualized interventions.
- (2) Demonstrate the ability to establish relationships with all children and their families that are respectful, supportive and sensitive.
- (3) Demonstrate a collaborative relationship with the teacher to support children’s learning.
- (4) Demonstrate knowledge of community services and agencies available to assist families.

f. Ethical and professional practice. Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will:

(1) Demonstrate knowledge of Iowa Early Learning Standards and the preschool program standards being implemented, which may include the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, Head Start Program Performance Standards and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria.

(2) Reserved.

24.4(2) *Special needs—prekindergarten through grade 12.* The paraeducator shall successfully complete the following list of competencies.

a. Foundations. Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will demonstrate an understanding of an IEP.

b. Learning environment. Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will demonstrate an understanding of the value of serving children and youth with disabilities and special needs in inclusive settings.

c. Content and instruction. Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will:

(1) Implement the activities assigned by a teacher to meet the goals and objectives in an IEP.

(2) Assist in academic subjects through use of lesson plans and instructional strategies developed by teachers and other professional support staff.

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

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

d. Emotional and behavioral. Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will:

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

(2) Use appropriate instructional procedures and reinforcement techniques as specified in the IEP or by the behavior team.

e. Professional relationships. Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will, if asked, participate as a member of the IEP team responsible for developing service plans and educational objectives.

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.

24.4(6) *Speech-language pathology (SLP)—prekindergarten through grade 12.* The speech-language pathology paraeducator shall successfully complete the following list of competencies so that, under the direction and supervision of a qualified speech-language pathologist, the paraeducator will be able to:

- a. Understand the roles and responsibilities of the speech-language pathology paraeducator.
- b. Demonstrate a basic understanding of the four areas of communication, including articulation, language, fluency, and voice, and how they occur through typical development.
- c. Demonstrate an understanding of articulation/phonological disabilities.
- d. Demonstrate an understanding of language disabilities.

- e. Use appropriate instructional procedures and reinforcement techniques when working with children with articulation/phonological disabilities.
- f. Use appropriate instructional procedures and reinforcement techniques when working with children with language disabilities.
- g. Gather information as directed by the speech-language pathologist regarding the performance of children, including recording and charting responses.

24.4(7) *Vision impairments—prekindergarten through grade 12.*

- a. Demonstrate knowledge of the impact of vision loss on learning and concept development for students who are blind or visually impaired.
 - (1) Demonstrate introductory knowledge of expanded core curriculum (ECC) and the ability to support ECC skills as directed by the supervising professional.
 - (2) Demonstrate introductory knowledge of functional vision assessments (FVA) and learning media assessments (LMA) of students who have vision impairments.
- b. Demonstrate knowledge of and skills in technology appropriate to the needs of students with vision impairments.
 - (1) Operate and use assistive technology that supports students who have vision impairments.
 - (2) Support and strengthen each student's capability to access and utilize assistive technology.
- c. Demonstrate introductory knowledge of instructional strategies unique to students who have vision impairments.
 - (1) Demonstrate the ability to adapt educational materials by using varied learning media as determined by student needs.
 - (2) Demonstrate an introductory knowledge of Braille in relation to identified or expressed student needs or both.
 - (3) Demonstrate introductory skills in operating transcription software and equipment.
- d. Demonstrate introductory knowledge of motor skills, movement, orientation, and mobility for students with vision impairments.
- e. Demonstrate knowledge of the role of paraeducators in student plans including individualized education programs (IEPs) and individualized family service plans (IFSPs).
- f. Demonstrate knowledge about and skills in fostering independence, self-determination, social skills, self-advocacy, and appropriate behaviors for students with vision impairments.
- g. Demonstrate professionalism and ethical practices, including appropriate communication skills in relation to students with vision impairments and the students' service providers and families.

24.4(8) *Autism spectrum disorders.* Under the direction and supervision of a qualified classroom teacher, the paraeducator shall successfully complete the following list of competencies.

- a. *Foundations.* Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will:
 - (1) Demonstrate an understanding of the components of education plans (individualized education program (IEP), behavior intervention plan (BIP), functional behavioral analysis (FBA), and Section 504 Plan).
 - (2) Identify common characteristics of students with autism spectrum disorder (communication, social, restricted interest and behavior) and how these characteristics compare to those of typical children.
- b. *Learning environment.* Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will:
 - (1) Assist in structuring the environment to meet the needs of students with autism spectrum disorder.

(2) Implement with integrity schedules and educational programs prescribed by the licensed teacher.

c. Content and instruction. Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will:

(1) Implement the educational, academic, and communication accommodations, adaptations, and supports assigned by a teacher.

(2) Provide opportunities for students with autism spectrum disorders to initiate and respond to large interactions and small interactions in academic settings.

(3) Provide opportunities for students with autism spectrum disorders to initiate, respond to, and participate in interactions in large groups and small groups in authentic situations.

(4) Gather and maintain data on student academic performance as directed by a licensed teacher.

(5) Assist educational staff in developing accommodations and adaptations and self-determination skills to increase student independence.

d. Emotional and behavioral. Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will:

(1) Understand and identify the function of a behavior (e.g., antecedents, behaviors, consequences).

(2) Collect data on student behavior and related environmental stimuli, based on the concepts of antecedents, behaviors and consequences.

(3) Implement antecedent strategies on student behavior, as defined by the licensed educator.

(4) Reinforce and practice replacement behaviors, as defined by the licensed educator.

(5) Respond to problem behaviors in a consistent manner, as defined by the licensed educator.

(6) Gather and maintain data on student social and behavioral performance, as directed by a licensed teacher.

e. Professional relationships. Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will:

(1) Demonstrate the ability to support the viewpoints and perspectives of students with autism and be empathetic to the students' learning styles.

(2) Respond to challenging behaviors in a respectful, empathetic manner.

f. Ethical and professional practice. Under the supervision of a licensed education professional, the paraeducator will:

(1) Know and understand the expectations of confidentiality in regard to student information and social media usage.

(2) Know and understand the legal constructs of the IEP and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).