Paraprofessional Qualification Standards

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)
as amended December 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

§1111. State Plans
(g)(2) Assurances

(J) the State educational agency will ensure that all teachers and paraprofessionals working in a program supported with funds under this part [Title I, Part A] meet applicable State certification and licensure requirements, including any requirements for certification obtained through alternative routes to certification;

ESSA deleted the section in ESEA about teachers and paraprofessionals being “highly qualified.” Generally shifts from Federal to State qualification standards. Assurance applies only to educators in a Title I program, not all teachers of core subjects as was required under NCLB.

(M) the State has professional standards for paraprofessionals working in a program supported with funds under this part [Title I, Part A],

Minnesota does not currently have standards for paraprofessionals.

including qualifications that were in place on the day before December 10, 2015;

NCLB options for qualifying as a paraprofessional in a Title I program are still posted on the Federal and MDE websites.

From MDE website: MDE > Districts, Schools and Educators > Paraprofessionals

Title I Paraprofessional Requirements

Paraprofessionals who work in a Title I program must meet Federal qualification requirements even if the position is not paid with Title I funds. In a Targeted Assistance Title I school, this applies to paraprofessionals who provide Title I-supported services to students identified for assistance. In a Schoolwide Title I school, this applies to all paraprofessionals including paraprofessionals supporting students receiving special education services.

All paraprofessionals who work in the Title I program must have a high school diploma or its equivalent. Paraprofessionals who assist with instruction must meet additional requirements with one of three options currently available in Minnesota:

Option A
Completed at least two years of study at an institution of higher education (a minimum of 60 semester credits or the amount required to complete two years of full-time enrollment as defined by the institution attended); or

Option B
Obtained an associate's (or higher) degree; or

Option C
Demonstrate knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing reading, writing, and mathematics (or, as appropriate, readiness for each of these subject areas) by passing the ParaPro test with a minimum score of 460. The test is administered by appointment in participating school districts, regional offices of education, and other agencies. Go to ParaPro Assessment for more information.

For questions about Title I requirements, please contact Wayne Kuklinski or Sara George.
## Paraprofessional Qualification Standards

**Minnesota Statutes**

### 120B.363 Credential for Education Paraprofessionals.

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| The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board **must adopt rules** to implement a statewide credential for education paraprofessionals who assist a licensed teacher in providing student instruction. | The statute grants rule-making authority to establish qualification standards for a paraprofessional credential. 
The result to date has been the voluntary credential. Though perhaps the original intent, the statute does not specify this restriction. |

Any paraprofessional holding this credential or working in a local school district after meeting a state-approved local assessment is **considered to be highly qualified under federal law**. 

ESSA deleted all requirements and references to “highly qualified.” 

Over 15 years, a relatively small number have applied for the voluntary credential with little or no incentive to do so.

Under this subdivision, the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board, in consultation with the commissioner, **must adopt qualitative criteria for approving local assessments** that include an evaluation of a paraprofessional's knowledge of reading, writing, and math and the paraprofessional's ability to assist in the instruction of reading, writing, and math. The commissioner must approve or disapprove local assessments using these criteria. The commissioner must make the criteria available to the public.

No current process exists to approve local assessments of paraprofessional competence.

**History:** [2003 c 129 art 1 s 10; 1Sp2017 c 5 art 3 s 1](#)