

Voluntary Paraprofessional Credential

Portfolio Guidance Document

In Minnesota, paraprofessionals can obtain a Voluntary Paraprofessional Credential, which recognizes that the paraprofessional has completed additional training and preparation.

It is up to the candidate to build their competencies and decide how to demonstrate each one. The following grid offers ideas to help candidates start thinking about how they might approach each competency.

The following are ideas only. There is no number of document/trainings/letters/experiences needed for each standard—candidates need to show that they meet each standard in its entirety. For some standards, that might be a single training. For others, it might mean multiple experiences. This is not an exhaustive list but is intended to get candidates thinking.

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Guidance: Documenting Competencies

General ideas for documenting competencies (this is not a comprehensive list—these ideas are designed to get candidates thinking of options. There will be helpful and appropriate ideas that are not included here:

- Transcripts for courses you've completed.
- interviews with specialists (submit questions, your own notes, and a letter from the person you interviewed, including that person's contact information)
- your district evaluations where they speak directly to the competency.
- book studies, with written documentation of the competencies covered, including specific examples.
- volunteer experiences, with specific descriptions of the competencies covered, including specific examples.
- letters from specialists, attesting to conversations, presentations, observed work, or interviews, including specific descriptions of the competencies covered.
- educational awards, including specific attention to how each part of the competency is covered, or which parts of each competency are covered.
- committee work, again, with specific examples given that are directly tied to the competencies, as written.
- community engagement work experience, with letters/job descriptions attesting to that work.
- Previous work experience, with letters/job descriptions attesting to that work.
- professional development (district offered, Infinitec, through Education Minnesota's MEA online or in person trainings, TIES Center trainings, and other PD opportunities). Again, be sure to address the entire competency. If a training only covers part of the competency, find other ways to meet the rest of each.

It is fine to use the same experience for more than one standard. But be sure to reference it for each standard and show specifically how it met the precise language of the standard you are working on.

Competency 1: Philosophical, history, and legal foundations of education

Competency 1	Philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of education, including,
<p>1.1: Sensitivity to the beliefs, traditions, and values across cultures and how these impact the relationships between children, families, and schooling.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any kind of training in cultural responsiveness, deepening cross-cultural understanding, deepening awareness. • Book studies, cultural awareness, workshops, coursework • Anything related on your paraprofessional evaluation form from the districts (might say “sensitive to diversity”) Again, not just one thing, but enough to show each thing listed in the standard. • Interview specialists in the field, and include questions you asked, notes you took, and a letter from that specialist, including their contact information. • Interview licensed staff in your building who have expertise in this area. Note the specific content of the conversation and ask for a letter detailing the content covered, the date, and contact information of the person interviewed. <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural Competency, Also a new module is being developed. <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally-Responsive Training Through a Racial Justice Lens • Cultural Competency • LGBTQ+ Advocacy and Support Training • Community Engagement • Student-centered mindset • Interrupting Whiteness • Understanding Students with Challenges Related to Homelessness, Mental Health, and Adverse Childhood • English Language Learners
<p>1.2: Awareness of the human and legal rights and responsibilities of parents and children</p>	<p>Consider anything you’ve done that teaches you of the role of paraprofessionals related to human and legal rights and responsibilities of youth and families.</p>

Competency 1	Philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of education, including,
<p>and youth as the rights and responsibilities relate to students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If that is something that is a part of your evaluation, use that. • Any kind of training you've had that covers all or part of this standard. Include that evidence and make a clear connection to the standard, • Consider asking a SPED director or a SPED teacher to work with you for an hour to cover this content, and include a letter from that person, including the specific content discussed, date, time, and contact information for that person. • Your district orientation/onboarding • Paraprofessional district training • Your district evaluation <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FERPA – Understanding Student Confidentiality; Harassment Prevention; New Title IX Protections Against Sexual Assault <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Practices: Public, Private, Confidential, Nonpublic, Protected. What does this all mean? • Maltreatment and Mandatory Reporting • Special Education Survival Guide for Paraprofessionals • Supporting Transgender Students and Staff: Legal issues and best practices
<p>1.3: Understanding the distinctions between roles and responsibilities of professionals, paraprofessionals, and support personnel.</p>	<p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaming for Success: Strategies for Teacher-Paraeducator Collaboration; Power to the Para 4:27-21:02. <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maltreatment and Mandatory Reporting • Special Education Survival Guide for Paraprofessionals

Competency 1	Philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of education, including,
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Practices: Public, Private, Confidential, Nonpublic, Protected. What does this all mean? • Special Education Survival Guide for Paraprofessionals • Teachers and ESPs: Building a Healthy Working Relationship
<p>1.4: Understanding the purposes and goals of education and instruction for all students.</p>	<p>Onboarding/orientation/staff evaluation. Any PD related to instruction for all students.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Categorical Disabilities for Special Education 101 (covers FAPE, IDEA, & each category) <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Educators Working Together: Collaboration Strategies for Special Education Teams • Trauma: Understanding Trauma and the Developing Brain • Understanding Students with Challenges Related to Homelessness, Mental Health, and Adverse Childhood • English Language Learners • Culturally-Responsive Training Through a Racial Justice Lens • Cultural Competency • LGBTQ+ Advocacy and Support Training • Special Education Survival Guide for Paraprofessionals • The Language of Equity: How We Can Speak Up • English Learners
<p>1.5: Knowledge of relevant laws, rules, regulations, and local district policies and procedures to ensure paraprofessionals work within these parameters.</p>	<p>Part of this competency is specific to your district, so use your employee handbook, orientation/onboarding trainings, district-specific professional development.</p> <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p>

Competency 1	Philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of education, including,
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data Practices: Public, Private, Confidential, Nonpublic, Protected. What does this all mean?• Maltreatment and Mandatory Reporting• Special Education Survival Guide for Paraprofessionals• Supporting Transgender Students and Staff: Legal issues and best practices

Competency 2: Characteristics of students

Competency 2	Characteristics of students, including,
<p>2.1: Knowledge of the similarities and differences between cognitive, communicative, physical, social, and emotional needs of students and the factors that influence these different needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What you know about social and emotional development is a good place to start. • Book studies, trainings, coursework, previous experience with developmental differences in students you work with • (go to an EL teacher, go to SPED director or the teacher you work with and as for an hour training one your specific students’ needs). • There are books out there too that are very helpful. Yardsticks, for example, is right on this topic. Anything about physical, social, cognitive, communicative needs and the factors that influence the different needs. <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Para Series (5) Promoting Social Emotional Growth; 03 Impact of ASD on Learning; • Developmental Cognitive Disability (DCD) Overview for Minnesota; • Not About Social Cues: Strategies to Build Social Executive Function Skills in Kids with ADHD; • Executive Functioning - Actionable Strategies to Help Students with Disabilities Succeed 2 parts <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a Student-Centered Mindset • Special Educators Working Together: Collaboration Strategies for Special Education Teams • Trauma: Understanding Trauma and the Developing Brain • Culturally-Responsive Training Through a Racial Justice Lens • Understanding Students with Challenges Related to Homelessness, Mental Health, and Adverse Childhood • LGBTQ+ Training

Competency 2	Characteristics of students, including,
<p>2.2: Awareness of the effects that exceptional conditions have on a student's life, family, school, and community.</p>	<p>Books, trainings on the impacts of poverty, bi-lingual learning, cultural competency, trauma. NEA has great classes on students with special needs/exceptional students, too. District-specific professional development, onboarding/orientation. Previous work/community experience. Interviews with special educators or special education directors.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging All Families 07: Acknowledging Family Concerns <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Survival Guide for Paraprofessionals
<p>2.3: Knowledge of and respect for the diverse backgrounds, such as cultural, linguistic, and environmental backgrounds, of students and how these characteristics affect the student's life and learning.</p>	<p>Again, consider books, trainings, community service, committee work, courses, and professional development.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging All Families 02: Recognizing Diversity; Understanding Diversity in Our Schools <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma: Understanding Trauma and the Developing Brain • Culturally-Responsive Training Through a Racial Justice Lens • Understanding Students with Challenges Related to Homelessness, Mental Health, and Adverse Childhood • LGBTQ+ Training • Cultural Competency • English Learners

Competency 2	Characteristics of students, including,
2.4: Understanding the effects and side effects of medications commonly prescribed for students.	Request a training or conversation with a school nurse focused on the questions of the competency: what are the commonly prescribed meds, what are side effects, what should we look for, what should we communicate to teachers about? How side effects connect to behavior and expectations.
2.5: Awareness of the potential implications of various student characteristics on learning and achievement.	<p>Consider how various student characteristics student learning. What are the different types of learners? How do learning disabilities impact learning? Consider experiences, interviews with specialists, district-level PD, orientation/onboarding, staff evaluations, and so on</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADHD; Not About Social Cues: Strategies to Build Social Executive Function Skills in Kids with ADHD; Executive Functioning Struggles (1) How Do I Recognize EF Struggles in My Students? Auditory Processing Disorder; An Overview for Paras: TBI, OHD, PI, DCD, DHH, DB (the series for MN) <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Survival Guide for Paraprofessionals • Trauma and the Developing Brain • Understanding Students with Challenges Related to Homelessness, Mental Health, and Adverse Childhood • Reading

Competency 3: Assessment, diagnosis, and evaluation

Competency 3	Assessment, diagnosis, and evaluation, including,
<p>3.1: Awareness of the tools used by a district for student assessment, diagnosis, and evaluation.</p>	<p>For 3.1 and 3.2 consider a letter on district letterhead from a licensed teacher or special education director or reading/academic coach speaking to what assessments and evaluations you used. What methods of assessment, what screenings, what identifications does your school use?</p> <p>Consider your staff evaluations, district-specific PD, orientation/onboarding, or an interview with a specialist:</p>
<p>3.2: The ability to collect and record performance data on students under the direction of a licensed teacher, while respecting student confidentiality and the laws regarding ethical practices of assessment.</p>	<p>Evidence that you know how to collect data and know who to share it with. Also use your district evaluation. Anything showing you can collect and keep records accurately and exhibit organizational skills, that you can assist with preparation of classroom and program or department materials. Maintain confidentiality. If you don't do any of that in your job, go to somebody and learn about it and have them write you a letter that specifically echoes the language of the standards.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data: Doable, Usable and Used - Data Collection for Paraprofessionals; • The Importance of Prompting and Data Collection; • Para Series (6) Data Management, Adult Accountability and the Power of Meetbacks <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Practices: Public, Private, Confidential, Nonpublic, Protected. What does this all mean? • Maltreatment and Mandatory Reporting

Competency 4: Instructional content and practice

Competency 4	Instructional content and practice, including,
<p>4.1: The ability to use learning styles theory in supporting instructional practices.</p>	<p>Consider anything that shows how well you know your students and their different needs and learning styles. Culturally responsive teaching, cultural competency, trauma, EL. If you do small groups with teachers, speak to how you would teach a thing given the different learning styles.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's Talk About Designing Instruction for Contemporary Classrooms; UDL Series by Allison Posey
<p>4.2: Awareness of the challenges and expectations of various learning environments.</p>	<p>Basic district procedures communicated via orientation/onboarding, district-specific PD, staff evaluations, interviews with specialists, etc. Any work done on learning about the different learning styles, special education environments, etc.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 07 Structuring the Environment; • Para Series (2) Understanding Student Behavior: School, Community and Home Setting Conditions; • Quick Start: School Setting Conditions that Shape Student Behavior <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Survival Guide for Paraprofessionals
<p>4.3: The ability to establish and maintain rapport with students.</p>	<p>Start by thinking broadly about how you build your relationships with students. Consider what comes easily and what you've had to learn to do with practice.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism Classroom Strategies-Small Time Investment - Big Outcomes: Student Teacher Relationships; MN PBIS Presents: Engaging Youth in PBIS Individual Student Tier 1; Para Series 5 Promoting Social Emotional Growth

Competency 4	Instructional content and practice, including,
	<p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Survival Guide for Paraprofessionals • Trauma and the Developing Brain • Understanding Students with Challenges Related to Homelessness, Mental Health, and Adverse Childhood • Cultural Competency • LGBTQ+ Training • Culturally Relevant Teaching Through a Social Justice Lens • English Learners • True Colors • Interrupting Whiteness • Positive Behavior Interventions • Student Mental Health
<p>4.4: The ability to draw on knowledge and resources regarding a variety of developmental and age-appropriate instructional methods, techniques, and materials when supporting the instruction of the licensed teacher.</p>	<p>Consider how you support teacher’s pedagogy. Provide evidence of how you understand, communicate about, and support the teacher’s pedagogical strategy. Consider letters from the licensed teachers you work with, documentation of interviews with the teachers you work with, district-specific PD, orientation/onboarding, staff evaluations.</p> <p>When you work in small groups or one-on-one with students, how do you adapt to different learning styles and stay focused on the goals of the teacher?</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher led, Teaming for Success: Strategies for Teacher-Paraeducator Collaboration <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and ESPs: Building a Healthy Working Relationship
<p>4.5: The ability to assist in adapting instructional strategies and materials according to the needs of the student and under the direction of a licensed teacher.</p>	<p>How do you use your anecdotal notes and observations about student needs with the licensed teacher? What do you notice and wonder about, and how do you communicate with the licensed teacher? How do you know how and when to adapt instructional strategies</p>

Competency 4	Instructional content and practice, including,
	<p>according to the needs of the student? Consider any PD around learning styles and adapting to the needs of students.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapting on the Fly: Making Complex Academic Learning Accessible for Students with Intellectual Disabilities <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers and ESPs: Building a Healthy Working Relationship
<p>4.6: The ability to follow oral and written direction of licensed teachers, seeking clarification as needed.</p>	<p>If there are meetings with licensed teachers where the teacher explains what the goals are, what the plan is, and what the role of the para is, document those meetings and draw specific connections to the competency.</p> <p>Check your evaluation—you may already be evaluated on this. Consider onboarding/orientation, district-specific professional development.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this requirement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Paraprofessional and Student Success: Four Corners to Super Para Status (covers 4 areas: relationships, performance character, student needs and workplace politics); Teaming for Success: Strategies for Teacher-Paraeducator Collaboration <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers and ESPs: Building a Healthy Working Relationship

Competency 5: Supporting the teaching and learning environment

Competency 5	Supporting the teaching and learning environment, including,
<p>5.1: The ability to assist and reinforce elements that support a safe, healthy, and effective teaching and learning environment.</p>	<p>ER&D training (old AFT training training). Coursework, previous work experience, letters signed by teachers or administrators that can speak to specific language of the competency.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying; • MN PBIS Presents: Engaging Youth in PBIS Individual Student Tier 1; • TASN 10 part Behavior series <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Behavior Interventions • Student Mental Health • Trauma and the Developing Brain • Understanding Students with Challenges Related to Homelessness, Mental Health, and Adverse Childhood • Cultural Competency • LGBTQ+ Training • Culturally Relevant Teaching Through a Social Justice Lens • English Learners • True Colors
<p>5.2: Awareness of the ways in which technology can assist teaching and learning.</p>	<p>Consider any and all ways you have learned about and practiced working with the various types of technology used in your school related to teaching and learning. TIES center typically has very good trainings on educational technology. Consider district-specific, orientation, technical training on smart boards, excel, powerpoint, word, Google, whatever your district uses for learning.</p> <p>Find ways to demonstrate your mastery/training on these things. And how you determine what tools best meet student needs. How to make them relevant for different learning needs.</p>

Competency 5	Supporting the teaching and learning environment, including,
	<p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting Reading with Technology - What is my role? Digital Text for Paraprofessionals; • An Overview of AT Tools to Support Writing for Paraprofessionals; • An Overview of AT Tools to Support Reading for Paraprofessionals; • Assistive Technology Overview for Paraprofessionals
5.3: Understanding strategies for assisting with the inclusion of students in various settings.	<p>Start by thinking broadly about all the strategies you use to make sure you are being inclusive of all students. Look at your district/school handbook for policies on inclusion, inclusive environments for all learners. Include district policies you follow, and any PD you've had related to them. Consider classes/trainings/readings on learning disabilities, EBD, DD, and autism. Homelessness, trauma, gifted and talented, English learners, anything that impacts their learning. And with whom do you collaborate? How do you find out who needs what?</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodations and Modifications 3-part series; • UDL is Where It's AT- Making Inclusion Work with Related Service Providers <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Behavior Interventions • Student Mental Health • Trauma and the Developing Brain • Understanding Students with Challenges Related to Homelessness, Mental Health, and Adverse Childhood • Cultural Competency • LGBTQ+ Training • Culturally Relevant Teaching Through a Social Justice Lens • English Learners • True Colors • Reading

Competency 5	Supporting the teaching and learning environment, including,
<p>5.4: The ability to use strategies that promote the student's independence.</p>	<p>This competency is focused on developing and promoting student independence. What do you do in your work that helps promote student independence? What are the learning strategies you use? The social emotional strategies you use? How do you support the licensed teacher's strategies for promoting inclusion? Consider an interview with the licensed teacher or other specialist about how the school promotes independence. Consider PD, previous experiences, your daily practice.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 06 The Importance of Independence; • 11 The Importance of Prompting and Data Collecting; • AAC Series for Paraprofessionals (6) Prompting Strategies <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Behavior Interventions • Student Mental Health • Trauma and the Developing Brain
<p>5.5: Awareness of how paraprofessionals can impact the overall learning environment for students and staff.</p>	<p>How can you be most helpful to the teacher—whether pulling students out of the classroom or working within the classroom? Consider how you communicate with the licensed teacher about the needs of students, the overall learning objectives, and how to support that environment. Consider documenting interviews, letters attesting to your competency, staff evaluations that may already evaluate you on this competency, any related PD.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Paraprofessional and Student Success: Four Corners to Super Para Status (covers 4 areas: relationships, performance character, student needs and workplace politics); • Putting the Pro into Paraprofessionals (1): Building Relationships <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p>

Competency 5	Supporting the teaching and learning environment, including,
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Behavior Interventions • Teachers and ESPs: Building a Healthy Working Relationship • English Learners
5.6: The ability to prepare and organize materials to support teaching and learning, as directed by a licensed teacher.	<p>Consider your own staff evaluation, onboarding/orientation, how you communicate with the licensed teacher in relation to the organization and preparation of materials to support learning. Consider a letter from a teacher who can speak to following directions, following procedures.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher led, Using Google Slides to Create Visual Supports; • Using Technology When Working 1-1 with Students for Paraprofessionals <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and ESPs: Building a Healthy Working Relationship

Competency 6: Managing Student Behavior and Social Interaction Skills

Competency 6	Managing student behavior and social interaction skills, including,
<p>6.1: Understanding applicable laws, rules, and regulations, and procedural safeguards regarding the management of student behaviors.</p>	<p>Consider any kind of learning/certificate/training about behavior management knowledge. Use school handbook, orientation/onboarding, staff evaluation.</p> <p>What are the different types of behavior management tools are at your school? Show that you know them and use them.</p> <p>Show your training in it. Show you know what safety procedures are in place at your school around behavior.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TASN Behavior Series (10 modules) <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Issues for ESPs • Maltreatment and Mandatory Reporting • Special Education Survival Skills for Paraprofessionals • Trauma and the Developing Brain • Restorative Practices
<p>6.2: Understanding ethical considerations inherent in the management of student behaviors.</p>	<p>Consider any training and practice you have around privacy, talking with teachers about IEP behavior, anything around ethics with the teacher, examples of how you show and uphold dignity and respect for all students. Any training around behavior, trauma, dysregulation, your staff evaluation, and your district’s student behavior policies.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TASN Behavior Series (10 modules) <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p>

Competency 6	Managing student behavior and social interaction skills, including,
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma and the Developing Brain • Positive Behavior Interventions • Legal Issues for ESPs • Special Education Survival Skills for Paraprofessionals • Restorative Practices
6.3: Understanding district and building behavior management plans for students.	<p>This competency is district-specific, so be sure you demonstrate that you know your district’s policies around student behavior and management. Look to handbooks, district evaluations, in-service trainings, any time a teacher taught you something—document that.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TASN Behavior Series (10 modules)
6.4: Awareness of the primary factors that influence student behavior.	<p>CC, trauma, EL, what knowledge do you have that proceeds the behavior-what leads to it. Appropriate interventions.</p> <p>Restorative—any practices like that in your school or that you can weave into your own one-on-one work with students.</p> <p>Any training on social skills.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TASN Behavior Series (10 modules) <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma and the Developing Brain • Positive Behavior Interventions • Special Education Survival Guide for Paraprofessionals

Competency 6	Managing student behavior and social interaction skills, including,
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Students With Challenges Related to Homelessness, Mental Health, and Adverse Childhood
6.5: The ability to effectively employ a variety of strategies that reinforce positive behavior.	<p>There is significant overlap here with competency 6.4, though the first focuses on your understanding of the factors that impact behavior, and the second focuses on your skillset in employing strategies to enforce positive behaviors. Look to your staff evaluation, district-specific PD, the district-specific behavior plans and policies.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TASN Behavior Series (10 modules) <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culturally Relevant Teaching with a Social Justice Lens Trauma and the Developing Brain Positive Behavior Interventions Special Education Survival Guide for Paraprofessionals Understanding Students With Challenges Related to Homelessness, Mental Health, and Adverse Childhood
6.6: The ability to collect objective and accurate information on student behavior provided to licensed professionals, as appropriate, and directed by a licensed teacher.	<p>This competency focuses on how you gather important information related to student behavior, and how you communicate with the licensed or other, appropriate specialists about that behavior. Again, look to your district policy, your onboarding or orientation if those covered this material. Consider, with whom do you collaborate and report about student behavior? When you are taking notes—how do you make sure you are using those to develop or find better interventions for students, not just to complain? Consider a letter from licensed teacher or specialist speaking to this skillset, and/or a reflection on a specific student behavior (redacted so that no data privacy practices are violated) that shows your reflection on what might help, what next things to try.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p>

Competency 6	Managing student behavior and social interaction skills, including,
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data: Doable, Usable and Used - Data Collection for Paraprofessionals; • 11 The Importance of Prompting and Data Collection; • Para Series (6) Data Management, Adult Accountability and the Power of Meetbacks
6:7: Awareness of the social skills needed for current and future environments.	<p>Consider all the ways in which you have learned about student social skills development and its and impact on daily skills. Look to staff evaluations, school policy/handbooks, reading groups, coursework, previous work experience, trainings, letters from teacher, a collaboration with a group of educators about a student’s needs.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism Classroom Strategies-Small Time Investment - Big Outcomes; • Teaching the Home Base or Break Card; • 07 Structuring the Environment, Hidden Curriculum series; • Not About Social Cues: Strategies to Build Social Executive Function Skills in Kids with ADHD <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma and the Developing Brain
6.8: The ability to reinforce the development of student social skills by using appropriate strategies to modify the environment.	<p>Again, consider PBIS and other social emotional development strategies—giving examples of something you’ve done that made a positive change. After dysregulation. Consider and document the ways in which you help students who are dysregulated, the ways in which you help students develop mindfulness and self-awareness, build vocabulary around emotions, breathing techniques, sensory input options, and teaching self-regulation. Show that you follow your school’s behavior policy when using strategies, either through evaluations, interviews, or letters.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p>

Competency 6	Managing student behavior and social interaction skills, including,
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism Classroom Strategies-Small Time Investment - Big Outcomes: The Power Card Strategy; • Autism Classroom Strategies-Small Time Investment - Big Outcomes: Teaching the Home Base or Break Card; • 07 Structuring the Environment, Hidden Curriculum series; • Not About Social Cues: Strategies to Build Social Executive Function Skills in Kids with ADHD <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Behavior Interventions • Trauma and the Developing Brain

Competency 7: Communication and Collaboration Partnerships

Competency 7	Communication and collaboration partnerships, including,
<p>7.1: The ability to participate as a member of the educational team when requested to attend conferences with families or primary caregivers, with an understanding of some of the concerns of parents.</p>	<p>Start by considering broadly how you continue to grow in your ability to work as a member of a team in conferences/meetings with families and primary caregivers. Consider any and all training, district-specific policies, staff evaluations if they cover this skill. Consider how you grow in learning about the concerns families have. If there is a student behavior committee, consider joining it. If your school has a family or community engagement committee, consider spending time on it. If you work in a community school, read the community needs assessment. Consider any PLCs you are on and whether that work overlaps with this competency.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick Start SPED Mod 5: Relationships - Parents and Caregivers <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally Relevant Teaching Through a Social Justice Lens • Cultural Competency • LGBTQ+ Training • True Colors • Trauma and the Developing Brain • Restorative Practices • Student Mental Health
<p>7.2: The ability to use ethical practices for confidential communication about students.</p>	<p>Consider your school policy, onboarding, evaluation, any training around confidentiality, any legal training relevant to ethical practices for confidential communication. Perhaps consider an example of when a student or family shared something confidential with you and how you were able to use it to help the student and still keep it confidential. Show how you know about mandatory reporting and how to keep it confidential. If you've done mandatory reporting, reflect on that.</p>

Competency 7	Communication and collaboration partnerships, including,
	<p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FERPA - Understanding Student Confidentiality; Harassment Prevention; New Title IX Protections Against Sexual Assault <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maltreatment and mandatory reporting • Social Media, Legal Issues for Educators • Special Education Survival Guide for Paraprofessionals • Blurred Lines: Addressing Boundaries • Data Practices: Public, Private, Confidential, Nonpublic, Protected. What does This all Mean?
<p>7.3: The ability to be sensitive and respectful in communications regarding all children and families, regardless of differences in cultural heritage, lifestyle, values, and home environment.</p>	<p>Consider broadly at first. What are all the ways you have learned and continue to learn to be sensitive and respectful in all avenues of communication? Consider joining a community or family engagement committee, and if you work in a community school, reflect on the community needs assessment. Look to your own staff evaluation, which might cover some of this competency, and consider letters from or interviews with appropriate staff.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging All Families 03: Ongoing Communication, • Quick Start: SPED Mod 5 Relationships Parent/Caregivers, • Cultural Competency (new module) <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGBTQ+ training • Culturally Responsive Teaching Through a Social Justice Lens • Cultural Competency • Developing a Student-Centered Mindset

Competency 7	Communication and collaboration partnerships, including,
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma and the Developing Brain • True Colors • English Learners
<p>7.4: Awareness of the roles of students, parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, and other school and community personnel in planning an individualized program, when relevant.</p>	<p>Paras are not in this process outside of special education. If you are not in a special education setting, ask to meet with a special education teacher or director either for an overview of the roles that the various professionals play or to interview them about those roles. Look to any training you’ve had via onboarding/orientation, district policies and procedures, and PLCs. Think of who you can ask, with whom you can collaborate to show a basic understanding of this.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick Start: SPED Mod 2, Individualized Education Program Management <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Survival Guide for Paraprofessionals • Teachers and ESPs: Building a Healthy Working Relationship
<p>7.5: The ability to employ constructive communication strategies and approaches in working with and responding to students, students' families, and school and community personnel.</p>	<p>Consider any and all training and learning opportunities you have had that relate to active listening, knowledge, problem-solving strategies, cultural competency, cultural responsiveness, self-awareness, lgbtq issues awareness, English Language and cultural knowledge, any kind of listening strategies you use (there are several—identify those and who how you can implement them). Consider and document how you are aware of your own listening default and which students that works for and which that will miss, and, therefore, where you need to pivot.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p>

Competency 7	Communication and collaboration partnerships, including,
	<p>Communication and collaboration partnerships, including,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging All Families 03: Ongoing Communication; • Quick Start: SPED Mod 5 Relationships Parent/Caregivers, • Cultural Competency (also new module coming) <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • True Colors • Cultural Competency • Culturally Relevant Teaching Through a Social Justice Lens • LGBTQ+ Training • English Learners
<p>7.6: The ability to follow teacher instructions while conferring and collaborating with teachers about student schedules, instructional goals, and performance.</p>	<p>For this competency, you might consider going including a letter from a licensed teacher with whom you work, but also consider documenting with examples your own daily examples of how you follow directions while collaborating with teachers.</p> <p>How do you demonstrate collaborating with you team? Have you worked as a member of a PLC? Once you have instructions, how to you organize and get ready for and implement that? What is your positive impact to the team. Use your job description and specific examples. If you have had any training on teamwork, collaboration, or mediation/conflict resolution, document that.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaming for Success: Strategies for Teacher-Paraeducator Collaboration <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Survival Guide for Paraprofessionals • Teachers and ESPs: Building a Healthy Working Relationship

Competency 8: Professional and ethical practices

Competency 8	Professionalism and ethical practices, including,
<p>8.1: Demonstrating a commitment to assisting students in reaching the students' highest potential, including the modeling of positive behavior.</p>	<p>Broadly consider documenting the ways in which you help students reach their highest potential. How do you strive to be a positive role model? How do you model self-regulation? How else do you show up for students in a way that encourages them to grow? Every student and family embodies a wealth of knowledge and skills—how do you identify those strengths and help life them up? Show how you do that.</p> <p>Consider documenting with specific descriptions, with letters from licensed staff and specialists, with interviews, with trainings, with your staff evaluation.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MN PBIS: School-wide PBIS Overview/What is PBIS? • Positive Behavior Change Series, part 1 Increasing Positive Behaviors; • Supporting Positive Behavior: Tips for Support Staff Working with Students with Special Needs <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Behavior Interventions • Trauma and the Developing Brain
<p>8.2: Carrying out responsibilities in a manner that demonstrates knowledge of, and a positive respect for, the distinctions between the roles and responsibilities of paraprofessionals, professionals, and other support personnel.</p>	<p>Consider a letter from people with whom you work collaboratively, especially those who have different roles and responsibilities than yours. When you submit such letters, make sure they are on letterhead where possible, and that they speak to the specific language of the competency. Look at your own staff evaluation, and also consider documenting your completion of courses and training having to do with collaboration.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaming for Success: Strategies for Teacher-Paraeducator Collaboration; • The Paraprofessional and Student Success: Four Corners to Super Para Status,

Competency 8	Professionalism and ethical practices, including,
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick Start: Special Education Module 10: Relationships – Special and General Education Colleagues <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Survival Guide for Paraprofessionals • Teachers and ESPs: Building a Healthy Working Relationship
<p>8.3: Performing duties within the context of written standards and policies of the school, state, or agency where the candidate is employed.</p>	<p>Think about each element in this standard. Consider how you know that you are following the standards and policies? Can you show this by sharing a specific part of your staff evaluation? By showing you completed required and/or relevant trainings? Do you need to consider working with your supervisor to get to a letter that attests to your performance within the context of specific policies?</p>
<p>8.4: Performing duties in a manner that demonstrates the ability to separate personal issues from the candidate's employment responsibilities.</p>	<p>Consider any training/classes on separating personal from professional life. How do you draw a line between healthy processing with friends and family and unhealthy oversharing of work-related information? Also consider self-care and wellness. Consider your skillset in working with difficult colleagues. Provide examples of how you worked things out. Consider how you develop boundaries and how you manage conflict. In what way do you reflect on your own impact on others, and then know how to improve it? Are you always negative? How can you be a more effective team member? Consider ways of documenting your continued growth in these areas.</p> <p>Infinitac Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Paraprofessional and Student Success: Four Corners to Super Para Status <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media, Legal Issues for Educators • Blurred Lines: Addressing Boundaries

Competency 8	Professionalism and ethical practices, including,
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Practices: Public, Private, Confidential, Nonpublic, Protected. What Does This All Mean?
<p>8.5: Showing respect for the diversity of students.</p>	<p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Competency (a new module is being developed.) • Understanding Diversity <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • True Colors • Cultural Competency • Culturally Relevant Teaching Through a Social Justice Lens • LGBTQ+ Training • English Learners <p>Note: these trainings are not the only ways you learn to respect student diversity, but there are many rich materials here. You might also use letters, interviews showing how you continue to learn more, district-specific PF, and so on.</p>
<p>8.6: Demonstrating proficiency in academic skills, including oral and written communication, while knowing how to self-evaluate one's own knowledge of the content being taught.</p>	<p>This is what the ParaPro test is designed to assess, so use your results on that assessment. Write about any experience you have working on a PLC. If you've written grants, served in specific roles on committees that include oral and written skills, document that. If you have taken English courses or Communications courses, use those. Don't forget the last part of this competency: reflect on how you evaluate your own knowledge.</p>
<p>8.7: Showing a willingness to participate in ongoing staff development, self-evaluation, and apply constructive feedback.</p>	<p>Consider all the ways you are intentional about continuing to learn and grow. Learn the difference between a fixed mindset and a growth mindset. Offer reflections on how you push yourself to continue to learn, and offer specific examples. Show your commitment to continual learning via professional development, school community engagement, and so</p>

Competency 8	Professionalism and ethical practices, including,
	on. Show any examples of roles you have where you have been able to learn and grow from constructive feedback.

Competency 9.1: Mathematics

Competency 9:	Mathematics, Reading, and Writing
<p>9.1.1 supporting and reinforcing the instruction of students in mathematics following written and oral lesson plans developed by licensed teachers.</p>	<p>For this competency, consider a letter from a licensed teacher attesting to how you support and reinforce the instruction of students in mathematics, using the language of the competency.</p> <p>Self-reflection tools: Explain with specific examples how you support and reinforce the lessons in small groups and in one-on-one settings with students.</p> <p>If you have had the opportunity to co-teach various lessons, attend trainings, document those experiences and share specific examples of how they help you support and reinforce mathematics instruction.</p> <p>Ask a teacher to observe you as you work one-on-one or in small groups.</p> <p>If your current position does not include working with students on mathematics, consider how you would learn to do this (support and reinforce...). Interview with a licensed teacher. Attend a training. Ask if you can observe some lessons.</p>
<p>9.1.2 utilizing effective developmental, age-appropriate, and culturally sensitive instructional strategies in mathematics that support the instruction of licensed academic teachers.</p>	
<p>9.1.3 accessing and effectively using available resources, including technology, for supporting teacher instruction in the subject of mathematics, such as Internet resources, instructional manuals, tangibles, and colleagues.</p>	

Competency 9:	Mathematics, Reading, and Writing
9.1.4 supporting a licensed teacher in the gathering and recording of data regarding student performance in the area of mathematics, such as rubric instruments and curriculum-based measurement.	<p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data: Doable, Usable and Used - Data Collection for Paraprofessionals; • The Importance of Prompting and Data Collection; Para Series (6) • Data Management, Adult Accountability and the Power of Meetbacks
9.1.5 knowing terminology related to the instruction of mathematics.	
9.1.6 understanding how Minnesota Academic Standards and Assessment, including state and local testing, direct the teaching of mathematics.	

Competency 9.2: Reading

Competency 9	Reading
<p>9.2.1 supporting and reinforcing the instruction of students in reading following written and oral lesson plans developed by licensed teachers.</p>	<p>Consider your literacy training. Consider submitting letters from reading coach about the strategies you are using, a letter from a licensed teacher on your participation in SMART goals that the school is using around literacy. Document the literacy assessments you use, and if you don't do literacy assessments, interview a literacy or reading teacher on what assessments the school uses. Show your understanding of how the assessments work and how the literacy strategies your school uses work. Use any certificates in reading and literacy. Get in the room for literacy training.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting Reading with Technology - What is My Role? • Digital Text for Paraprofessionals; An Overview of AT Tools to Support Reading for Paraprofessionals; • Dyslexia and Classroom Concepts, parts 1 & 2, Follow My Lead: Supporting Emergent Readers with Shared Reading; • Project Core Modules (complex needs) Modules 7-12; • Science of Reading 2 parts
<p>9.2.2 utilizing effective developmental, age-appropriate, and culturally sensitive instructional strategies in reading that support the instruction of licensed teachers.</p>	<p>Consider your literacy training. Consider submitting letters from reading coach about the strategies you are using, a letter from a licensed teacher on your participation in SMART goals that the school is using around literacy. Document the literacy assessments you use, and if you don't do literacy assessments, interview a literacy or reading teacher on what assessments the school uses. Show your understanding of how the assessments work and how the literacy strategies your school uses work. Use any certificates in reading and literacy. Get in the room for literacy training.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You Can Make A Difference and Know It: Evidence Based Practices in Reading; • Understanding the Literacy Learning Profiles of Students with Disabilities Series (1) • Instructional Profiles for Reading Instruction; • Science of Reading 2 parts; • Free or Low Cost Strategies to Increase Reading & Writing <p>Education Minnesota MEA Trainings that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading
<p>9.2.3 accessing and effectively using available resources, including technology, for supporting teacher instruction in the subject of reading, such as Internet resources, instructional manuals, tangibles, and colleagues.</p>	<p>Similar guidance as above, but with a focus on your use of available resources and technology for supporting teacher instruction in reading. What do you use, and how does it support the Teacher’s instruction? Self-reflection, letters from licensed teachers, professional development, district-specific professional development. Look at your staff evaluation-this may be assessed in that document.</p> <p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting Reading with Technology - What is my role? Digital Text for Paraprofessionals; • An Overview of AT Tools to Support Reading for Paraprofessionals; • Dyslexia and Classroom Concepts, parts 1 & 2; • Follow My Lead: Supporting Emergent Readers with Shared Reading; • Project Core Modules (complex needs) Modules 7-12; Science of Reading 2 parts
<p>9.2.4 supporting a licensed teacher in the gathering and recording of data regarding student performance in the area of reading, such as rubric instruments and curriculum-based measurement.</p>	<p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data: Doable, Usable and Used - Data Collection for Paraprofessionals; • 11 The Importance of Prompting and Data Collection; • Para Series (6) Data Management, • Adult Accountability and the Power of Meetbacks

<p>9.2.5 knowing terminology related to the instruction of reading.</p>	<p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You Can Make A Difference and Know It: Evidence Based Practices in Reading; • Science of Reading 2 parts
<p>9.2.6 understanding how Minnesota Academic Standards and Assessment, including state and local testing, direct the teaching of reading.</p>	

Competency 9.3: Writing

<p>Competency 9</p>	<p>Writing</p>
<p>9.3.1 supporting and reinforcing the instruction of students in writing following written and oral lesson plans developed by licensed teachers.</p>	<p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Core modules 9, 10, 12; • Writing for Students with Significant Disabilities for the New Writing Teacher; • Developmental Writing Scale (Part 1): Drive Instruction and Measure • Progress for Students with Complex Learning Needs
<p>9.3.2 utilizing effective developmental, age-appropriate, and culturally sensitive</p>	<p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Core modules 9, 10, 12;

Competency 9	Writing
instructional strategies in writing that support the instruction of licensed teachers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing for Students with Significant Disabilities for the New Writing Teacher; • Developmental Writing Scale (Part 1): Drive Instruction and Measure Progress for Students with Complex Learning Needs; • Free or Low Cost Strategies to Increase Reading & Writing
9.3.3 accessing and effectively using available resources, including technology, for supporting teacher instruction in the subject of writing, such as Internet resources, instructional manuals, tangibles, and colleagues.	<p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Overview of AT Tools to Support Writing for Paraprofessionals, teacher-led
9.3.4 supporting a licensed teacher in the gathering and recording of data regarding student performance in the area of writing, such as rubric instruments and curriculum-based measurement.	<p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data: Doable, Usable and Used - Data Collection for Paraprofessionals; 11 The Importance of Prompting and Data Collection; Para Series (6) Data Management, Adult Accountability and the Power of Meetbacks
9.3.5 knowing terminology related to the instruction of writing.	<p>Infinitec Training Videos/Modules that partially meet this competency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental Writing Scale (Part 1): Drive Instruction and Measure Progress for Students with Complex Learning Needs; teacher-led instruction grade level content
9.3.6 understanding how Minnesota Academic Standards and Assessment, including state and local testing, direct the teaching of writing.	