

# Instructional Paraprofessional Qualifications

## Overview

A "Paraprofessional" is a person who is not required to have a professional license or certification and who, under the supervision of a teacher or other professional educational service provider, provides instructional or other educational support to a student.

Paraprofessionals can play important roles in improving student achievement where they can reinforce and augment a teacher's effort in the classroom. Alaska requires instructional paraprofessionals meet high standards of qualification under Alaska regulation 4 AAC 04.220.

A paraprofessional is not required to meet the requirements if the paraprofessional

- (1) acts as a translator to enhance the participation of English learners or students with disabilities;
- (2) has instructional-support duties that consist solely of conducting parental involvement activities; or
- (3) has only non-instructional duties, including providing technical support for computers, providing personal care duties, or performing clerical duties.

## Qualifications

Instructional paraprofessionals must meet one of the following qualifications:

Method 1	Method 2	Method 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed at least two years (at least 48 semester hours or the equivalent) at a regionally or nationally accredited institution of higher education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtained an associate degree or higher from a regionally or nationally accredited institution of higher education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A high school diploma or its equivalent and have passed the ParaPro assessment</li> </ul>

Method 4	Method 5	Method 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A high school diploma or its equivalent and have passed the Higher Education Learning Profile (HELP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A high school diploma or its equivalent and have passed the Paraeducator Online Training and Assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A high school diploma or its equivalent and have passed the specific WorkKeys assessments</li> </ul>

Method 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve the qualifying Basic Competency Exam (BCE) scores under 4 AAC 12.310</li> </ul>

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## Assessment Passing Scores

- A score of at least 459 on the ParaPro Assessment, offered by Educational Testing Service (ETS);
- The following minimum scores on the Higher Education Learning Profile (HELP), published by Educational Resources Incorporated:
  - essential math, 54 percent;
  - reading comprehension, 41 percent; and
  - written expression, 55 percent.
- The following minimum scores on the Paraeducator Online Training and Assessments offered by Master Teacher, Inc.
  - Assessment 1 Reading, Writing, and Math: Instructional Support, 65 percent
  - Assessment 2 Reading, Writing, and Math, 70 percent;
- The following minimum scores on the WorkKeys by ACT, Inc.
  - Workplace Documents, Level 4
  - Applied Math, Level 4; and
  - Graphic Literacy, Level 3.
- Qualifying Basic Competency Exam (BCE) scores under 4 AAC 12.310 are available [here](#)

## Assessment Information

- [ParaPro Assessment offered by Educational Testing Service \(ETS\)](#)
- [Paraeducator Online Training and Assessment offered by Master Teacher, Inc.](#)
- [WorkKeys by ACT, Inc.](#)
- [Basic Competency Exam](#)

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## Paraprofessional Standards Checklist

All instructional paraprofessionals should have the paraprofessional standards observed and verified on the Paraprofessional Standards Checklist.

### **(a) A paraprofessional will demonstrate the ability to**

- (1) practice ethical and professional standards of conduct and continued professional improvement;
- (2) understand how students learn and develop and understand how to assist in providing opportunities that support students' intellectual, social and personal development;
- (3) understand the content areas and apply the elements of effective instruction to support teaching and learning activities;
- (4) motivate and assist students to build self-esteem, develop interpersonal skills, and strengthen abilities in order to become more successful;
- (5) understand the distinction between the roles and responsibilities of professionals, paraprofessionals, and support personnel in the areas of assessment, diagnosis, and evaluation;
- (6) adhere to communication protocols with colleagues, community members, and parents including following instructions, sharing information, and using interpersonal skills to become an effective member of the instructional team;
- (7) understand and implement district and state guidelines for protecting the safety, health and wellbeing of students and staff, including the school district's crisis response plan; and
- (8) utilize technology to assist and enhance teaching and learning.

## Reporting

Paraprofessional qualification information is reported in the Paraprofessional and Classified Staff Accounting Data Collection each fall. As part of the Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA) Monitoring, DEED ensures that students participating in Title I programs receive instructional support only from qualified paraprofessionals.

## Timeline

Districts are expected to have all instructional paraprofessionals meet requirements by the 2023-24 school year. DEED has established a transition period allowing districts until the 2021-22 school year to determine whether instructional paraprofessionals meet the requirements.

Further information can be found at <https://education.alaska.gov/esea/TitleI-A#Para>