

*NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR
Title I, Part A*



Paraprofessional and Teacher Qualification Requirements

Created by the Nevada Department of Education
Title I Team

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Paraprofessional and Teacher Qualifications Guidance

1. Federal Certification Requirements under ESSA

1.1. State Certified Qualifications for Teachers and Paraprofessionals

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 required that paraprofessionals working in programs supported by Title I, Part A funds be highly qualified. The qualifications necessary to be considered highly qualified were prescribed by NCLB and included requirements for minimum education and subject matter competency. These requirements in NCLB have been replaced by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 (ESSA Sections 111, 1112.) The ESSA now defers teacher qualification requirements in Title I programs to applicable State law.

Please contact the Nevada Department of Education's [Educator Licensure Office](#) for further details around State qualification requirements required specifically for teachers.

Also, per Section 1112 (c) LEAs are required to provide the following assurances:

- Ensure that all teachers and paraprofessionals working in a program supported with funds under this part meet applicable State certification and licensure requirements, including any requirements for certification obtained through alternative routes to certification.

1.2. Paraprofessional Qualification Requirements

The Nevada Department of Education recommends that LEAs and charter schools adopt local hiring policies that set requirements for paraprofessionals equivalent or similar to those outlined below.

Instructional paraprofessionals should possess specific skills and knowledge in reading, writing, mathematics and instruction to serve in schools supported by Title I, Part A funds. At a minimum, instructional paraprofessionals should:

(A) Possess a high school diploma or its equivalent (e.g., the GED);
and

(B) Demonstrate subject matter competency by:

- i. Earning an Associate's (or higher) degree; or
- ii. Completing at least two years (48 credit hours) of study at an institution of higher education; or

- iii. Passing a formal assessment measuring one's knowledge of and ability to assist classroom teachers in reading, writing and mathematics.

Formal assessments should be valid and reliable. An assessment is valid if it measures mathematics, reading, and writing content at a level equivalent to the knowledge obtained by attending two years of college and is applicable to duties being assigned to the paraprofessional. An assessment is reliable if it provides consistent results. Existing assessments that are valid and reliable for the purposes of assessing paraprofessionals' subject matter competency are the [ETS-ParaPro](#) assessments.

Instructional paraprofessionals should be supervised directly by a licensed teacher. An instructional paraprofessional is an individual who provides instruction and support for classroom teachers. The following activities are recommended as appropriate job duties of an instructional paraprofessional:

- Provide one-on-one tutoring for eligible students, if the tutoring is scheduled at a time when a student would not otherwise receive instruction from a teacher
- Assist with classroom management, such as organizing instructional and other materials
- Provide assistance in a computer laboratory
- Provide instructional support in a library or media center
- Provide instructional services to students under the direct supervision of a teacher

1.3. Paraprofessional Qualification: Sample Program Compliance Indicators

LEAs should be prepared to describe the following in their Title I, Part A application. These requirements are collected during fiscal and desktop monitoring through either the eNOTE or ePAGE online monitoring systems.

- Describe the ongoing process of how the LEA coordinates certification and licensure notification between the district's Human Resources department, the Title I Office, and with school administration.
- Describe how the LEA will ensure the certification and licensure status of teachers assigned to Title I schools is maintained.
- Provide an assurance that the LEA certifies that all paraprofessionals in Title I schoolwide schools meet applicable State certification and licensure requirements.
- Provide an assurance and evidence that the LEA certifies that all paraprofessionals paid with Title I funds in targeted assistance schools

meet applicable State certification and licensure requirements.

- Provide copies as evidence that the Title I served districts/schools provide to each individual timely parent “Right to Know” notices that the parent’s child has been assigned, or taught for 4 or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher with limited State certification or licensure and/or right to ask for teacher’s and paraprofessional’s qualifications, when applicable.
- LEA professional development plan and evidence that professional development is aligned to needs and PD evaluations.

2. Equitable Access to Excellent Educator Plan

2.1. District plan to address disparities

Districts who receive Title I, part A funds will be required to identify and address, as required under State plans as described in section 1111(g)(1)(B), any disparities that result in low-income students and minority students being taught at higher rates than other students by ineffective, inexperienced, or out-of-field teachers. Describe any disparities that result in low-income students and minority students being taught by ineffective, inexperienced, or out-of-field teachers at higher rates than other students.

If there are disparities that result in low-income students and minority students being taught at higher rates than other students by ineffective, inexperienced, or out-of-field teachers, describe how the LEA will identify and address the disparities.

Please contact the [Office of Educator Development and Support](#) for further information with regards to the requirements needs in the District’s Equitable Access to Excellent Educator Plan.

Appendix

Appendix A: ESSA Paraprofessional Provision Grid

Source: <https://www.congress.gov/114/bills/s1177/BILLS-114s1177enr.pdf>

Title I – Improving Basic Programs Operated By State and Local Education Agencies (pg. 13-112)

Title & Section Reference	ESSA Bill Page #	Provision	Summary
SEC. 1005/1111 State Plans (a)(1)(A)	19	For any State receiving a grant under this part, the SEA shall file a plan that is – (A) developed by the State educational agency with timely and meaningful consultation with the Governor, members of the State legislature and State board of education (if the State has a State board of education), local educational agencies (including those located in rural areas), representatives of Indian tribes located in the State, teachers, principals, other school leaders, charter school leaders (if the State has charter schools), specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals , administrators, other staff, and parents;	SEA Plans – paraprofessionals included in list of those that SEA must consult with when developing plan.
SEC. 1005/1111 State Plans (g)(2)(J)	44	(J) the State educational agency will ensure that all teachers and paraprofessionals working in a program supported with funds under this part meet applicable State certification and licensure requirements, including any requirements for certification obtained through alternative routes to certification;	Assurances - SEA will ensure that paraprofessionals meet applicable State certification and licensure requirements.
SEC. 1005/1111 State Plans (g)(2)(M)	44-45	(M) the State has professional standards for paraprofessionals working in a program supported with funds under this part, including qualifications that were in place on the day before the date of enactment of the Every Student Succeeds Act;	Assurances-SEA has professional standards (entry level requirements) for paraprofessionals including “qualifications that were in place on the day before the date of enactment of ESSA”
SEC. 1006/1112 Local Plans (a)(1)(A)	52	“(A) is developed with timely and meaningful consultation with teachers, principals, other school leaders, paraprofessionals , specialized instructional support personnel, charter school leaders (in a local educational agency that has	LEA Plans – paraprofessionals included in list of those that LEA must consult with when developing

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		charter schools), administrators (including administrators of programs described in other parts of this title), other appropriate school personnel, and with parents of children in schools served under this part;	plan.
SEC. 1006/1112 Local Plans (b)(9)	53	(9) how teachers and school leaders, in consultation with parents, administrators, paraprofessionals , and specialized instructional support personnel, in schools operating a targeted assistance school program under section 1115, will identify the eligible children most in need of services under this part;	Plan Provisions —To ensure that all children receive a high-quality education, and to close the achievement gap... ,each local educational agency plan shall describe— how teachers and school leaders, in consultation with paraprofessionals, etc., will identify eligible children most in need of services under this part.
SEC. 1006/1112 Local Plans (c)(6)	55	(6) ensure that all teachers and paraprofessionals working in a program supported with funds under this part meet applicable State certification and licensure requirements, including any requirements for certification obtained through alternative routes to certification;	Assurances - LEA will ensure that paraprofessionals meet applicable State certification and licensure requirements, including alternative certification requirements.
SEC. 1006/1112 Local Plans (e)(1)(A)(ii)	56	(A) IN GENERAL, - At the beginning of each school year, a local education agency that receives funds under this part shall notify the parents of each student attending any school receiving funds under this part that the parents may request, and the agency will provide the parents on request (and in a timely manner), information regarding the professional qualifications of the student’s classroom teachers, including at a minimum, the following: (ii) Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.	Parents Right-to-Know- LEA must notify parents that they can request (and agency will provide) info regarding the qualifications of the student’s teachers, including if the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and their qualifications.
SEC. 1008/1114 Schoolwide Programs (b)(2)	62	Schoolwide Program Plan - (2) is developed with the involvement of parents and other members of the community to be served and individuals who	School Wide Program Plan is developed with involvement of

Title & Section Reference	ESSA Bill Page #	Provision	Summary
		will carry out such plan, including teachers, principals, other school leaders, paraprofessionals present in the school, administrators (including administrators of programs described in other parts of this title), the local educational agency, to the extent feasible, tribes and tribal organizations present in the community, and, if appropriate, specialized instructional support personnel, technical assistance providers, school staff, if the plan relates to a secondary school, students, and other individuals determined by the school;	paraprofessionals (among others).
SEC. 1008/1114 Schoolwide Programs (b)(7)(A)(iii)(IV)	63	(IV) professional development and other activities for teachers, paraprofessionals , and other school personnel to improve instruction and use of data from academic assessments, and to recruit and retain effective teachers, particularly in high- need subjects; and	School wide program plan must include a description of the strategies that the school will implement to address school needs, including how strategies will address needs of all children in school , but particularly those that at risk of not meeting challenging academic standards, through activities which may include: PD and other activities for teachers, paraprofessionals, and other school personnel to improve instruction and use of data from academic assessments and to recruit and retain effective teachers particularly in high need subjects.
SEC. 1010/1116 Targeted Assistance Schools (D)(i)	68	(i) Supporting schools and nonprofit organizations in providing professional development for local educational agency and school personnel regarding parent and family engagement strategies, which may be provided jointly to teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals , early childhood educators, and	Parent and Family Engagement – LEA Use of Funds – funds used for activities that are consistent with the LEA’s parent/family engagement policy, including supporting

Title & Section Reference	ESSA Bill Page #	Provision	Summary
		parents and family members.	schools and non- profits in providing PD for LEA and school personnel regarding family engagement strategies, which may be provided jointly to teachers, principals, other school leaders, SISPs, paraprofessionals, early childhood educators, and parents/family members.
SEC. 1601 General Provisions (c)(2)(H)	112	(H) specialized instructional support personnel and professionals.	State Administration - Each SEA shall create a State Committee of practitioners to advise the State in carrying out its responsibilities. Committee to include paraprofessionals. (pg. 1618-1619 NCLB / 20 U.S.C. 6573)

Appendix B: Sample Parent Right-to-Know Letter: Teacher & Parapro Qualifications

Sample Notification to Parents – Title I, Part A Right to Ask for Teacher’s and Paraprofessional’s Qualifications

[Use LEA or School Letterhead]

[Date]

Dear Parents,

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) the **[insert LEA or school name]** would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student’s teacher(s) or instructional paraprofessional(s).

A. The following information may be requested for teacher(s):

1. Whether the teacher has met Nevada teacher certification requirements for the grade level and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which Nevada’s qualifications or certification criteria have been waived.
3. The college major and any graduate certification or degree held by the teacher.
4. Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

B. The following information may be requested for instructional paraprofessional(s):

Paraprofessionals must work under the supervision of a certified teacher. In schools that operate a schoolwide program, all paraprofessionals must meet professional qualifications. In a Targeted Assistance program, any paraprofessional who is the direct supervision of a certificated teacher must meet the professional qualifications.

Paraeducators can provide a copy of their high school diploma — transcripts are not necessary. Schools that operate a Title I, Part A program must have a high school diploma or GED and completed the following:

1. Completed at least two years of study at an institution of higher education earning a minimum of 48 units; or
2. Obtained an associate’s or higher degree; or
3. Pass the ETS ParaPro Assessment. The assessment measures skills, and content knowledge related to reading, writing and math. ParaPros must have a minimum score of 460.

If you wish to request information concerning your child’s teacher’s and instructional paraprofessional’s qualification, please contact **[Insert Principal or Principal’s Designee name]** at **[Insert phone number or other contact information]**.

Sincerely,

Insert Signature

[Insert Printed Name]

[Insert Title]

Appendix C: Sample Parent Right-to-Know Letter- 4 Week Parent Notification

Sample Notification to Parents – Title I, Part A Right to Ask 4-Week Parent Notification Letter

[Use LEA or School Letterhead]

Dear Parent or Guardian,

On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) into law. The law states that any school that receives funds for educationally disadvantaged students (Title I funds) must inform parents if their child is assigned a teacher for **four** or more consecutive weeks who is has not met applicable State certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which they have been assigned to teach.

As of this writing, your child's teacher,____, [insert credentials held, such as degree or license], but has yet to obtain [insert missing credential(s), such as endorsement]. *He/she* is, however, currently working to obtain [credential] and we have full confidence in *his/her* ability to teach effectively in this assignment.

If you have any questions regarding (*teacher's name*) qualifications, please feel free to contact (me/the district office).

For additional information about the requirements for teacher qualifications under the ESSA, please visit the Nevada Department of Education's website at: [NDE Educator Licensure](#).