

## How does the No Child Left Behind Act impact paraprofessionals?

In an effort to ensure that students who need the most help receive instructional support only from qualified paraprofessionals, Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act, requires that paraprofessionals meet high standards of qualification.

## What is a paraprofessional?

For the purposes of Title I, a paraprofessional is an employee of a district who provides instructional support in a program supported with Title I funds.

“Paraprofessionals who provide instructional support,” includes those who

- provide one-on-one tutoring if such tutoring is scheduled at a time when a student would not otherwise receive instruction from a teacher,
- assist with classroom management, such as by organizing instructional materials,
- provide instructional assistance in a computer laboratory,
- conduct parental involvement activities,
- provide instructional support in a library or media center,
- act as a translator, or
- provide instructional support services under the direct supervision of a highly qualified teacher.

Individuals who work in food services, cafeteria or playground supervision, personal care services, non-instructional computer assistance, and similar positions are not considered paraprofessionals under Title I.

## What is a Title I school?

Title I is a federal program that provides supplementary funding to improve academic achievement for low-income students. Title I schools are provided this supplementary funding based upon the percentage of students in their attendance area who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. [Click here to see a list of the ASD’s Title I schools.](http://www.asdk12.org/NCLB/everyone/faq.asp#schools) ([www.asdk12.org/NCLB/everyone/faq.asp#schools](http://www.asdk12.org/NCLB/everyone/faq.asp#schools))

## What are the qualification requirements for Title I paraprofessionals?

1. All Title I paraprofessionals must have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.
2. Additionally, except as noted below, paraprofessionals working in a program supported with Title I funds must have
  - a. Completed at least two years (48 semester hours) of study at an institution of higher education; **or**
  - b. Obtained an associate’s (or higher) degree; **or**

- c. Met a rigorous standard of quality and be able to demonstrate, through a formal State or local academic assessment, knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing, reading, writing, and mathematics.

Paraprofessionals who only serve as translators or who only conduct parental involvement activities must have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent but do not have to meet the additional requirements.

### **What is Alaska’s “formal assessment” for Title I paraprofessionals?**

The Alaska Department of Education’s formal assessment option for meeting Title I paraprofessional requirements has two parts:

1. A passing score (459) on the *ETS ParaPro Assessment* \* **and**
2. Completion of the *Alaska Paraprofessional Qualifications Form* by the supervising principal. The *APQ Form* documents the principal’s assessment of the paraprofessional’s ability to assist with instruction.

\* Prior to January of 2010, the *HELP Test* was accepted for meeting part one of the formal assessment option; however, the publisher of *HELP* no longer distributes it. Therefore, the Alaska Department of Education adopted the *ETS ParaPro Assessment* as the replacement test. With official documentation, a passing *HELP* score is still accepted for meeting part one of the formal assessment option.

### **Is there support for paraprofessionals trying to meet the NCLB requirements?**

The Anchorage School District is committed to supporting paraprofessionals who are trying to meet NCLB paraprofessional requirements. Forms of support include:

1. Individualized consultation for understanding the requirements and clarifying the options available. Step-by-step guidance and support in meeting a requirement option.
2. An *ETS ParaPro Assessment Study Guide* is available for check out.
3. Periodically, the ASD organizes test preparation study groups (at no cost to the participant) that are led by exemplary instructors.
4. The ASD reimburses the *ETS ParaPro Assessment* fee to eligible employees.

### **Who is the ASD contact for providing NCLB paraprofessional support?**

Contact Zareena Clendaniel at 742-7819 or [Clendaniel\\_Zareena@asdk12.org](mailto:Clendaniel_Zareena@asdk12.org).

## **To whom do NCLB paraprofessional requirements apply?**

The requirements apply to all paraprofessionals who provide instructional support in ASD Title I schools.

A paraprofessional with duties that consist solely of conducting parental involvement activities must have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent but does not have to meet the other educational requirements.

A paraprofessional, who is proficient in English and a language other than English and acts solely as a translator to enhance the participation of limited English proficient children under Title I, must have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent but does not have to meet the other educational requirements.

The other educational requirements do not apply to a paraprofessional working in a school that does not receive Title I funds; however, all paraprofessionals must have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent regardless of whether the school receives Title I funds.

## **What are the requirements for the supervision of paraprofessionals?**

Paraprofessionals who provide instructional support must work under the direct supervision of a highly qualified teacher.

A paraprofessional works under the direct supervision of a teacher if

1. the teacher prepares the lessons and plans the instructional support activities the paraprofessional carries out, and evaluates the achievement of the students with whom the paraprofessional is working, **and**
2. the paraprofessional works in close and frequent proximity with the teacher.

A program where a paraprofessional provides instructional support and a teacher visits a site once or twice a week but otherwise is not in the classroom, or a program where a paraprofessional works with a group of students in another location while the teacher provides instruction to the rest of the class would also be inconsistent with the requirement that paraprofessionals work in close and frequent proximity to a teacher.