

July 11, 2008

TO THE ADMINISTRATOR ADDRESSED:

SUBJECT: Paraprofessional Requirements Under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act

Section 1119 of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act requires that any paraprofessional with instructional support duties working in a Title I, Part A program must have a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent. Additionally, these paraprofessionals also must meet one of three additional criteria specified in Section 1119:

- Two years of study at an institution of higher education [defined as completion of 48 semester hours (or equivalent trimester hours) of college coursework or an applicable number of semester hours as defined by the institution of higher education attended, whichever is less]; or
- An associate's degree or higher; or
- Meet a rigorous standard of quality and can demonstrate, through a formal state or local academic assessment –
  - knowledge of, and the ability to assist in instructing, reading, writing and mathematics; or
  - knowledge of, and the ability to assist in instructing, reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness, as appropriate.

Paraprofessionals whose duties consist solely of parental involvement activities or translation services are exempt from meeting one of the three additional criteria. These paraprofessionals must have a high school diploma or its equivalent, but do not have to meet the other educational requirements.

Paraprofessionals with instructional duties and working in a Title I, Part A program who were hired before January 8, 2002, were required to satisfy the Section 1119 requirements by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. Paraprofessionals with instructional support duties hired after January 8, 2002, and working in a Title I, Part A program must meet one of the criteria in statute at the time of hire. At the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year, LEAs must have 100% of their instructional Title I paraprofessionals meeting Section 1119 requirements. Additional information regarding Title I paraprofessionals is available in the Guidance Document included as Attachment 1.

Paraprofessionals with instructional support duties who do not meet the paraprofessional Section 1119 requirements may not perform instructional support duties in a Title I, Part A program. LEAs are responsible for ensuring that they are in compliance with the Title I paraprofessional requirements. This includes maintaining auditable documentation that instructional Title I paraprofessionals meet one of the criteria specified in statute.

Beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has moved the reporting of Title I, Part A paraprofessional qualifications to be included in the Highly Qualified Teacher Compliance Report (PR1100). Paraprofessional requirements are currently reported on the Title I, Part A Compliance Report (PR1000) as part of the NCLB Consolidated Compliance Report. This reporting change will allow LEAs to report their compliance status regarding the paraprofessional and the highly qualified teacher requirements in a single compliance report. The PR 1100 will open on September 15, 2008, and is due on **November 3, 2008**. Districts are to report the status of Title I paraprofessional requirements as of September 15, 2008. A sample form for the 2008-2009 report and instructions are included as Attachments 2 and 3.

After the PR 1100 submission due date, TEA staff will contact LEAs reporting less than 100% of their Title I paraprofessionals meeting Section 1119 requirements. To meet monitoring requirements of the U.S. Department of Education, the Division of NCLB Program Coordination will implement a random validation process of the Title I paraprofessional requirements during the 2008-2009 school year.

The TEA is providing LEAs with a Paraprofessional Determination worksheet as tool to facilitate the LEAs' compliance with the instructional paraprofessional requirements. Using this form is not a requirement, but rather a resource to assist your LEA in this process. A copy of this form is included as Attachment 4. It is also available on the TEA website at [www.tea.state.tx.us/nclb](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/nclb).

If you have questions concerning the paraprofessional requirements under NCLB, please contact the Division of NCLB Program Coordination at (512) 463-9374.

Sincerely,

Sharon Jackson  
Associate Commissioner for Standards and Programs

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