

**8710.9000 VOLUNTARY CREDENTIAL FOR EDUCATION PARAPROFESSIONALS.**

Subpart 1. **In general.** The Board of Teaching shall grant a credential, which is not considered a license, to applicants who meet all requirements of this part. An applicant must provide evidence of satisfactory demonstration of the nine core competencies listed in subpart 4. Submission of an application for a paraprofessional credential is voluntary and is not a state requirement for employment as a paraprofessional.

Subp. 2. **Scope of practice.** A paraprofessional holding a credential under this part is recognized by the state of Minnesota as having demonstrated additional training and preparation in competencies consistent with subpart 4 to assist a licensed teacher in providing student instruction for any state and federally funded birth through grade 12 programs including transition programs.

Subp. 3. **Credential requirements.** A candidate for a paraprofessional credential must submit documentation for verification of:

- A. 60 clock hours of training reflecting each of the nine competency areas in subpart 4;
- B. a minimum of two consecutive years of service in the same school district as a paraprofessional; and
- C. passage of a state-approved examination in reading, writing, and mathematics for paraprofessionals.

Subp. 4. **Competencies.** A candidate for a paraprofessional credential must provide verification of training to assist and support a licensed teacher in items A to I:

- A. competency 1: philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of education, including:
  - (1) sensitivity to the beliefs, traditions, and values across cultures and how these impact the relationships between children, families, and schooling;
  - (2) awareness of the human and legal rights and responsibilities of parents and children and youth as the rights and responsibilities relate to students;
  - (3) understanding the distinctions between roles and responsibilities of professionals, paraprofessionals, and support personnel;
  - (4) understanding the purposes and goals of education and instruction for all students; and
  - (5) knowledge of relevant laws, rules, regulations, and local district policies and procedures to ensure paraprofessionals work within these parameters;

B. competency 2: characteristics of students, including:

(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;

(2) awareness of the effects that exceptional conditions have on a student's life, family, school, and community;

(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;

(4) understanding the effects and side effects of medications commonly prescribed for students; and

(5) awareness of the potential implications of various student characteristics on learning and achievement;

C. competency 3: assessment, diagnosis, and evaluation, including:

(1) awareness of the tools used by a district for student assessment, diagnosis, and evaluation; and

(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;

D. competency 4: instructional content and practice, including:

(1) the ability to use learning styles theory in supporting instructional practices;

(2) awareness of the challenges and expectations of various learning environments;

(3) the ability to establish and maintain rapport with students;

(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;

(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; and

(6) the ability to follow oral and written direction of licensed teachers, seeking clarification as needed;

- E. competency 5: supporting the teaching and learning environment, including:
- (1) the ability to assist and reinforce elements that support a safe, healthy, and effective teaching and learning environment;
  - (2) awareness of the ways in which technology can assist teaching and learning;
  - (3) understanding strategies for assisting with the inclusion of students in various settings;
  - (4) the ability to use strategies that promote the student's independence;
  - (5) awareness of how paraprofessionals can impact the overall learning environment for students and staff; and
  - (6) the ability to prepare and organize materials to support teaching and learning, as directed by a licensed teacher;
- F. competency 6: managing student behavior and social interaction skills, including:
- (1) understanding applicable laws, rules, and regulations, and procedural safeguards regarding the management of student behaviors;
  - (2) understanding ethical considerations inherent in the management of student behaviors;
  - (3) understanding district and building behavior management plans for students;
  - (4) awareness of the primary factors that influence student behavior;
  - (5) the ability to effectively employ a variety of strategies that reinforce positive behavior;
  - (6) the ability to collect objective and accurate information on student behavior provided to licensed professionals, as appropriate, and directed by a licensed teacher;
  - (7) awareness of the social skills needed for current and future environments;
- and
- (8) the ability to reinforce the development of student social skills by using appropriate strategies to modify the environment;
- G. competency 7: communication and collaboration partnerships, including:
- (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;

(2) the ability to use ethical practices for confidential communication about students;

(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;

(4) awareness of the roles of students, parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, and other school and community personnel in planning an individualized program, when relevant;

(5) the ability to employ constructive communication strategies and approaches in working with and responding to students, students' families, and school and community personnel;

(6) the ability to follow teacher instructions while conferring and collaborating with teachers about student schedules, instructional goals, and performance; and

(7) the ability to understand and use appropriate educational terminology regarding students, roles, and instructional activities;

H. competency 8: professionalism and ethical practices, including:

(1) demonstrating a commitment to assisting students in reaching the students' highest potential, including the modeling of positive behavior;

(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;

(3) performing duties within the context of written standards and policies of the school, state, or agency where the candidate is employed;

(4) performing duties in a manner that demonstrates the ability to separate personal issues from the candidate's employment responsibilities;

(5) showing respect for the diversity of students;

(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; and

(7) showing a willingness to participate in ongoing staff development, self-evaluation, and apply constructive feedback; and

I. competency 9: academic instructional skills in:

(1) mathematics, including:

(a) supporting and reinforcing the instruction of students in mathematics following written and oral lesson plans developed by licensed teachers;

(b) utilizing effective developmental, age-appropriate, and culturally sensitive instructional strategies in mathematics that support the instruction of licensed academic teachers;

(c) 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;

(d) 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;

(e) knowing terminology related to the instruction of mathematics; and

(f) understanding how Minnesota Academic Standards and Assessment, including state and local testing, direct the teaching of mathematics;

(2) reading, including:

(a) supporting and reinforcing the instruction of students in reading following written and oral lesson plans developed by licensed teachers;

(b) utilizing effective developmental, age-appropriate, and culturally sensitive instructional strategies in reading that support the instruction of licensed teachers;

(c) 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;

(d) 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;

(e) knowing terminology related to the instruction of reading; and

(f) understanding how Minnesota Academic Standards and Assessment, including state and local testing, direct the teaching of reading; and

(3) writing, including:

(a) supporting and reinforcing the instruction of students in writing following written and oral lesson plans developed by licensed teachers;

(b) utilizing effective developmental, age-appropriate, and culturally sensitive instructional strategies in writing that support the instruction of licensed teachers;

(c) 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;

(d) 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;

(e) knowing terminology related to the instruction of writing; and

(f) understanding how Minnesota Academic Standards and Assessment, including state and local testing, direct the teaching of writing.

Subp. 5. **Verification of core competencies.** The Board of Teaching must verify an applicant's completion of training in the nine core competencies under subpart 4; verification must be based on a minimum of 60 clock hours reflecting all of the competency areas and may include multiple types of experiences and information including academic coursework, professional development and training experiences, workshops, work experiences, examinations, and other professional activities. The Board of Teaching may establish policies including submission windows and use of review panels for the verification of competencies.

Subp. 6. **Procedures for state issuance of a paraprofessional credential.** An applicant for a paraprofessional credential must submit to the officials designated by the board to receive such applications:

A. verification by the Board of Teaching of the requirements under subpart 5;

B. verification of a minimum of two consecutive years of service in the same school district as a paraprofessional;

C. verification of passage of a state-approved examination in reading, writing, and mathematics for paraprofessionals; and

D. an application for a credential including an application fee commensurate with the fee established in Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.21, subdivision 1, for the issuance, renewal, or extension of a license to teach, plus any surcharges authorized by law.

Subp. 7. **Paraprofessional credential.** A credential must include the date it was granted. A credential is valid on the date issued by the Department of Education and does not expire.

**Statutory Authority:** *L 2007 c 146 art 2 s 34*

**History:** *35 SR 349*

**Published Electronically:** *September 2, 2010*