

July 9, 2003

(X) Action Required
() Informational

MEMORANDUM NO. 43-03 LEARNING AND TEACHING

TO: Educational Service District Superintendents
Chief School District Superintendents
School Principals
District Personnel Officers
District Title I Program Coordinators

FROM: Dr. Terry Bergeson, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: Updated Information and Guidance on Identification and Reporting of
ESEA Requirements for Title I Paraprofessionals

Title I requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) require that Title I funded paraprofessionals or paraprofessionals employed in a Title I schoolwide building **and** assist with instruction meet specific qualification requirements. As part of this requirement, OSPI must establish a baseline and set a performance indicator (goal) for the number of qualified paraprofessionals. Data on this performance indicator must be collected and reported to the Department of Education.

BASELINE CALCULATION

Data collection will begin with school year 2002-03 to establish district and state baselines reported in the September 1st submission of the State Consolidated Application to the Department of Education. The data collection for each school district will include the following:

1. The number of Title I paraprofessionals or paraprofessionals in a Title I schoolwide building who meet the requirements of Section 1119.
2. The number of Title I paraprofessionals or paraprofessionals in a Title I schoolwide building who do not meet the requirements of Section 1119.

DATA COLLECTION

The data collection form is attached to this communication. Please complete the form and return by e-mail to Sue Lisk at slisk@OSPI.wednet.edu by August 10, 2003. If

MEMORANDUM NO. 43-03

July 9, 2003

Page Two

you have questions about completion of the form, please contact Sue. If you have other questions related to the qualifications of paraprofessionals, please contact Mary Jo Johnson at maryjo@ospi.wednet.edu. Both Sue and Mary Jo can be reached by telephone at 360-725-6340.

To assist you with your data collection, listed below are three ways in which paraprofessionals may qualify to meet the Title I requirements. **Detailed information on how to meet these requirements is included in the *Paraprofessional Advisory Task Force Findings and Recommendations for Meeting ESEA Title I Requirements* attachment with this memorandum.**

1. Completed at least two (2) years of study at an institution of higher education; **or**
2. Hold an Associate's degree; **or**
3. Meet a rigorous standard of quality and can demonstrate, through a formal state or local academic assessment, knowledge of and ability to assist in instructing reading, writing, and mathematics; or knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing in reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness.

A Paraprofessional Advisory Task Force has convened since July 2002, to identify options for paraprofessionals to meet the formal assessment requirement and other areas related to the new law. The task force is recommending that paraprofessionals who do not meet the Title I requirement through two years of college or an Associate's degree, meet the requirement through one of the following three (3) options designated as the formal assessment of rigorous standard of quality.

- ParaPro Assessment developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS); **or**
- A portfolio assessment process; **or**
- A process whereby school districts can evaluate their current assessment procedures to determine if they meet the rigorous standard of quality, as defined by Section 1119 and the non-regulatory guidance for Title I Paraprofessionals.

Paraprofessionals, who are funded with Title I or employed in a Title I schoolwide building and hired after January 8, 2002, are required to meet the Title I qualification requirements upon hiring. For paraprofessionals who did not meet the requirement through two years of study at an institution of higher education or an Associates degree, one of the three formal assessment processes must now be followed. Paraprofessionals new to the profession will most likely need to complete the ETS assessment.

Existing paraprofessionals or paraprofessionals hired on or before January 8, 2003, have until **January 8, 2006**, to meet the Title I requirement. Existing or experienced

MEMORANDUM NO. 43-03
July 9, 2003
Page Three

paraprofessionals will most likely be the paraprofessionals who will qualify to meet the Title I requirements through the portfolio assessment. The portfolio assessment and the school district assessment process are in refinement stages but are expected to be finalized and available for use by September 2003.

If you have questions related to the Title I paraprofessional requirements, please contact Mary Jo Johnson, Chair of the ESEA Paraprofessional Advisory Task Force, 360.725.6340 or maryjo@ospi.wednet.edu.

Additional information related to the federal requirements and non-regulatory guidance for Title I Paraprofessionals and Title II Part A can be obtained by accessing OSPI's website at www.k12.wa.us/ESEA/default.asp. OSPI will continue to update the website as information becomes available. The agency TTY number is 360.664.3631.

LEARNING AND TEACHING

Mary Alice Heuschel
Deputy Superintendent
Learning and Teaching

Dawn Billings
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Professional Development

Mary Jo Johnson
Director, Title II

MAH:sl
Attachments