

Boulder Valley School District

Paraeducators and No Child Left Behind

March 2004

Pursuant to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) federal legislation, all school districts must ensure that paraeducators in a program supported with Title I, Part A funds meet the definition of “highly qualified.” The goal of this text is to provide information on NCLB paraeducator requirements, and the district’s plan to become compliant with the NCLB criteria, by addressing anticipated questions.

Who is affected by the paraeducator “highly qualified” requirements?

Currently only paraeducators who work in an instructional capacity at schools with a ‘school-wide’ Title I program are affected. School-wide Title I schools for the 2004/05 school year include: Columbine, Creekside, Pioneer, Sanchez, and University Hill Elementary Schools. Emerald Elementary School may become a school-wide Title I school, while Lafayette and Whittier Elementary Schools will no longer be school-wide Title I schools.

What if I do not work at a school-wide Title I school?

The NCLB “Highly Qualified” requirements do not apply to you.

What are the requirements for a paraeducator in a school-wide Title I school to be considered “highly qualified?”

Paraeducators must have:

- graduated from high school or passed a high school equivalency exam,

AND ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- forty-eight or more college credits *, (if you are unsure of the number of college credits you have taken, request transcripts from all applicable colleges and/or universities), **OR**
- an Associates degree or higher *, **OR**
- demonstrate knowledge through a formal academic assessment in writing, reading, and mathematics.

* Submit all supporting official transcripts to Human Resources.

How will I be informed of my “highly qualified” status?

Human Resources administrators will visit every school-wide Title I school and individually meet with each paraeducator. At these meetings, you will be informed of the qualifications HRD has on record based on a review of your employment application. These meetings will take place in April and May, 2004.

What if I don't meet the "highly qualified" criteria?

You may 1) take the WorkKeys assessment through BVSD, which will be available toward the end of this school year; or 2) take classes for college credit; or 3) request a transfer to a school that is not school-wide Title I.

What can you tell me about the test?

You may take the WorkKeys assessment either on the computer in English, or as a written exam in English or Spanish. You need to pass each of the three assessment areas (reading, writing, & mathematics). Each of the three assessment areas takes approximately one hour. You may take all three subject area assessments in one sitting or at separate times.

If you take the assessments during your regular work hours, you will be paid for that time. The assessment will be administered through Human Resources at the Education Center.

How can I prepare for the test?

You may choose to attend a series of preparatory "basic knowledge" classes in the fall of 2004 which will be provided by the district. The series consists of two 2-hour sessions for each content area. These classes will help prepare you for all three areas of the WorkKeys assessment. There is no fee for the classes, but unfortunately the district is not able to pay you to attend these classes.

What if I don't pass the WorkKeys assessment?

If you do not pass one or more of the three areas of the assessment, you only need to retake that particular subtest. You may take the assessment as many times as you choose. The first two assessments will be provided at no cost to you; however, a fee will be incurred for third and subsequent assessments.

How long do I have to become "highly qualified?"

The district is asking that you meet or make significant progress toward the "highly qualified" requirements by **May 1, 2005**. To minimize building disruptions, HRD will make any necessary reassignments prior to the 2005/06 school year.

What if I don't meet the "highly qualified" requirements by May 1, 2005?

If you have not been successful in meeting or making significant progress toward meeting the "highly qualified" criteria by May 1, 2005 a reassignment will be necessary.

You are encouraged not to be overly concerned with the NCLB paraeducator "highly qualified" requirements. The district will assist and support you in your efforts to become "highly qualified" if that is your choice. Every BVSD paraeducator is a valued asset to our district and your contribution to students and teachers is truly appreciated.

Questions may be directed to J. Marie at 303.447.5140 or jmarie.sage@bvsd.k12.co.us