

ESSA Certification for Paraprofessionals and Interpreters

***ALL educational assistants/paraprofessionals and interpreters working in programs supported by Title I funding must be “highly qualified” and obtain the AASD designation of ESSA Certified. Only those educational assistants and interpreters (paraprofessionals) certified will be able to post for any open positions in Title I funded school-wide buildings and/or classes/programs. The certification process is explained below.*

Title I supported positions include:

- All educational assistants and interpreters (paraprofessionals) working in a School-wide Title I program (listed below) and providing educational support services.
- Educational assistants and interpreters (paraprofessionals) in a targeted assistance program whose positions are funded by Title I
- Educational assistants and interpreters (paraprofessionals) funded by Title I in a Title I 3-year old preschool (currently Johnston and Lincoln)

Title I funded educational assistants and interpreters (paraprofessionals) working in the Appleton Area School District will need to complete prior to hire, transfer or school year:

- Two years of higher education (48 credits), or
- Obtained a two-year associates' degree or higher, or
- Meet a rigorous standard of quality as defined by an individual performance portfolio (see below)

The portfolio must include:

- Evidence of successful completion of a minimum 24 credits/hours/district points of professional/staff development instruction acquired since August 2006. These items will be presented into the portfolio assembled by the candidate.
- This staff development must include a minimum of the following:
 - 3 hours in math instruction
 - 3 hours in literacy instruction
 - 3 hours of early childhood instruction
 - 3 hours in childhood development and/or behavior management
 - 12 additional hours in areas to support instruction which may include: NYCI training, reading, writing, math, early childhood, special education, ELL, classroom management, technology or those approved by the immediate supervisor or Title 1 coordinator.
 - Each course must be either sponsored by the AASD or pre-approved for rigorous content by the AASD and should be documented within *MyLearningPlan*.

- Within the portfolio, a written reflection must accompany each class, staff/professional development taken with any artifacts as a result of the learning. Candidate should speak to how this learning will benefit his/her work and that of the students.
- A formal evaluation within the last three years that shows evidence of performance meeting or exceeding standard performance in all areas indicated on the AASD educational assistant/paraprofessional/interpreter evaluation instrument. Formal evaluations include observations by the immediate supervisor.
- Letter of recommendation from an immediate supervisor for meeting or exceeding Title I paraprofessional standards.
- The candidate may include any other information which may support their competency status as a highly trained paraprofessional (e.g. district certification in a particular field, professional development certificate, other letters of educational work experience outside of the AASD, etc.)

Upon completion of the portfolio, a formal interview will be scheduled with the Title I coordinator and/or principal. The portfolio will be reviewed as part of the interview process. Written documentation of the interview will be provided with a rubric for meeting the rigorous standards. Proficient or advanced is required in all areas.

****Beginning June 2016, any “newly certified” ESSA Paraprofessionals and Interpreters will need to complete and show evidence of a minimum of 3 hours professional/staff development annually in any of the areas/categories listed above in order to maintain the highly-qualified status. This can be accomplished through school site offerings, during staff development days, Late Starts and/or any items that are located at MyLearningPlan.**

Questions and/or more information can be referred to:

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****Schoolwide Title 1 schools: ABS, Badger, Columbus, Edison, Foster, Highlands, Horizons, Jefferson, Johnston, Lincoln, McKinley (updated 1/2017)**