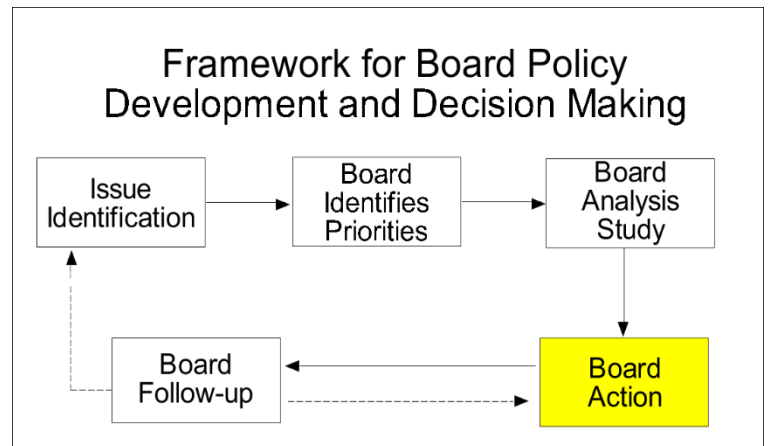


Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

January 12, 2023



Agenda Item: University of Iowa Paraeducator Preparation Program Approval

State Board Priority: Improving Teacher and Leader Preparation

State Board Role/Authority: Iowa Administrative Code section 281—80 grants authority to the State Board of Education to set standards and procedures for the approval of programs for individuals who seek a paraeducator certification issued by the Board of Educational Examiners.

Presenter(s): Kelly Faga, Program Consultant
Bureau of Community Colleges

Attachment(s): One

Recommendation: It is recommended that the State Board approve University of Iowa Paraeducator Preparation Program through the next review scheduled for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Background: University of Iowa has submitted a request for approval of the paraeducator generalist certificate. Upon review of the evidence, it is determined that the University of Iowa has met each of the program standard requirements in IAC 281-80, and has submitted the appropriate curriculum exhibits to meet the Board of Educational Examiners Requirements in IAC 282-24.

January 12, 2023



University of Iowa Paraeducator Preparation Programs Report

Board Report – AY 2022-2023

State of Iowa
Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
400 E. 14th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319-0146

State Board of Education

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Review Team Members

Dr. Kelly Faga, Iowa Department of Education

Ms. Geri McMahon, Iowa Board of Educational Examiners

Recommendation to the Board

Program	Recommendation
Generalist Certificate	Approval

The report includes a selected summary of suggestions for improvements and compliance concerns for each area. A copy of the program application with links to evidence of compliance is maintained in Department files and copies are available upon request. It is recommended that the State Board of Education approve this program through AY 2024-2025.

Program Representative(s)

Dr. Mark McDermott

A Brief History/Overview Shared by the Program

The University of Iowa College of Education proposes to offer paraeducator preparation as an option for its teacher candidates. The proposed paraeducator preparation pathway will allow the University of Iowa's teacher candidates to become eligible for the Paraeducator Certificate on the way to becoming eligible for the Initial License for teaching. The proposed pathway uses existing foundational courses of the University of Iowa's elementary and secondary teacher education programs, and the established resources and practices of the educator preparation "Unit" that have State Board of Education approval under Chapter 79, to meet the Chapter 80 paraeducator standards for resources, diversity, faculty, assessment and clinical experiences. Existing foundational courses of the teacher education program related to orientation to the profession, classroom management, educational psychology and special education cover all of the standards of the Paraeducator Generalist Certificate, and prepare the teacher candidates both for service as paraeducators and for their future classroom teacher role working with paraeducators.

The goals of this paraeducator preparation program include adding value to the University of Iowa's teacher preparation programs in the form of an additional opportunity for classroom experience that is also paid work; making a contribution to meeting school district needs for part-time and substitute paraeducators; and being available as a potential element in possible future teacher preparation pathways.

Program Standards

281—80.9 Organizational and Resources Standards

Organization and resources shall adequately support the preparation of paraeducator candidates to enable them to meet state standards in accordance with the provisions of this rule.

80.9(1) The unit provides resources and support necessary for the delivery of a quality certification program, including:

- a) A commitment to a work culture, policies and faculty/staff assignments that promote and support best practices in education;
- b) Resources to support a quality hands-on (clinical) experience;
- c) Resources to support professional development opportunities for certified paraeducators and unit faculty;
- d) Resources to support technological and instructional needs to enhance candidate learning; and
- e) A commitment of sufficient administrative, clerical and technical staff to ensure implementation of a quality program.

80.9(2) The unit provides evidence of collaboration with members of the professional community, including the unit's advisory committee comprised of school administrators, classroom teachers, currently employed paraprofessionals and others, to design, deliver and evaluate programs to prepare paraeducators.

80.9(3) When a unit is a part of a college or university, the unit maintains ongoing collaboration with the appropriate departments of the institution, especially regarding content knowledge.

80.9(4) The unit has primary responsibility for all paraeducator preparation programs offered through any delivery model.

80.9(5) The unit has a clearly articulated appeals process for decisions affecting candidates. This process is communicated to all candidates and staff. The unit may use an institution wide appeals process to meet the requirements of this subrule.

80.9(6) The unit's use of staff in teaching roles is purposeful and managed to ensure integrity, quality and continuity of the program(s).

80.9(7) The unit ensures that resources are equitable for all program components, regardless of delivery or location.

Standards Met

The Organizational and Resource Standards have been met by University of Iowa. Programs in the College of Education maintain ongoing collaboration with the other academic departments at the University of Iowa. This includes other departments within the College of Education, as well as the departments of the other 11 colleges at the university. The paraeducator preparation program will be governed by the administration, faculty and staff of the Teacher Education Program.

Compliance Concerns

None.

281—80.10 Diversity Standards

The unit shall ensure that the paraeducator preparation program meets the following diversity standards.

80.10(1) The unit provides an environment and experiences to paraeducator candidates to support candidate growth in knowledge, skills and dispositions to help diverse groups of PK-12 students learn.

80.10(2) The unit establishes and maintains a climate that promotes and supports diversity.

80.10(3) The unit's plans, policies and practices document its efforts in establishing and maintaining a diverse staff and paraeducator candidate pool that strives to represent the diverse makeup of the community at large.

80.10(4) In addition to the requirements of rule 281—80.12, the unit shall gather data about its implementation of this rule, use those data to make program improvements and share those data and improvements with the schools and communities it serves.

Standards Met

Through the evaluation of the program application it is clear the Diversity Standards have been met. Experiences of diversity, equity, and inclusion are addressed in several of the courses that are included in the curriculum. Examples include:

- PSQF:1075 Educational Psychology and Measurement: Includes units on Culture and Diversity, Creating Learning Environments, and Teaching Every Student.
- EDTL:4900 Foundations of Special Education: Includes units on Individualized Education Plans (IEP), Multi-tiered Systems of Support and Response to Intervention (MTSS/RTI), English language learners, accommodations and modifications, among other related topics.
- EDTL:3190 Orientation to Elementary Education: Includes lecture and assignment on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). In addition, in connection with the paraeducator clinical experience, paraeducator candidates complete the form, Learning Environment Assessment for Paraeducator Candidate, which includes prompts for the paraeducator candidate to document, and reflect on, their observation or experience in a classroom of selected aspects of the paraeducator competencies that are readily observable in a short-term classroom observation.

Compliance Concerns

None.

281—80.11 Faculty Standards

Unit staff qualifications and performance shall facilitate the unit's role in the preparation of a professional paraeducator in accordance with the provisions of this rule.

80.11(1) The unit documents the alignment of teaching duties for each faculty member with that member's preparation, knowledge, experiences and skills appropriate for training paraeducators to serve in a school setting.

80.11(2) The institution shall hold unit staff accountable for teaching the critical concepts and principles of the discipline.

80.11(3) For the purpose of implementing each of the requirements of this chapter, unit faculty shall maintain ongoing, actual involvement in settings where paraeducators are employed.

Standards Met

The University of Iowa has met the Faculty Standards. Faculty policies establish the expectation that instructors for teacher education program courses will complete four clock hours of ongoing involvement in teaching settings each academic semester, for a total of 40 hours over a five-year period. Compliance is monitored through annual faculty evaluations. Additionally, instructors receive regular evaluation by the Department Executive Officer (DEO) of their academic department, consistent with policies that govern the type of appointment they hold.

Compliance Concerns

None.

281—80.12 Program Assessment and Evaluation Standards

The unit's assessment system shall appropriately monitor individual candidate performance and use that data in concert with other program information to improve the unit and its programs in accordance with the provisions of this rule.

80.12(1) Each paraeducator candidate's knowledge and skills shall be measured against state certification standards adopted by the board of educational examiners under Iowa Code section 272.12 and the unit's learning outcomes for any certificate for which the unit may recommend the candidate.

80.12(2) Programs shall submit curriculum exhibits for approval by the department.

80.12(3) The unit shall establish a standard of satisfactory performance of paraeducator candidates, which shall comply with the following requirements.

- a) The unit uses measures for candidate assessment that are fair, reliable and valid.
- b) The unit assesses candidates on their demonstration and attainment of unit standards.
- c) The unit uses a variety of assessment measures for assessment of candidates on each unit standard.
- d) The unit provides candidates with formative feedback on their progress toward attainment of unit standards.
- e) The unit assesses content knowledge and its application as candidates work with students, teachers, parents and other professional colleagues in school settings.
- f) The unit assesses candidates at the same level of performance across programs, regardless of the place or manner in which the program is delivered.

80.12(4) The unit shall conduct a survey of graduates and their employers to ensure that its graduates are well prepared for their assigned roles.

80.12(5) The unit shall have a clearly defined, cohesive assessment system and regularly review, analyze and revise its assessment practices.

80.12(6) The unit shall collect and analyze aggregated candidate and program data, use those data to make program improvements and share those data and improvements with stakeholders on a regular basis.

80.12(7) An annual report including a composite of evaluative data collected by the unit shall be submitted to the department by September 30 of each year.

80.12(8) When it publicly reports data, the unit shall comply with all applicable privacy laws, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g.

Standard Met

The University of Iowa has developed an extensive assessment and evaluation system that exceeds the Assessment and Evaluations Standard. Completers of the paraeducator preparation program are surveyed following completion of the Teacher Education Program through the novice teacher survey that is conducted in compliance with the teacher preparation assessment standard. Along with survey data, aggregated data are generated and analyzed by the College of Education's Director of Assessment and Continuous Improvement, and shared at regular monthly meetings with the Associate Dean for Teacher Education and Student services, and with other stakeholders as appropriate.

Compliance Concerns

None.

281—80.13 Clinical Practice Standards

The unit and its school partners shall provide clinical experience opportunities that assist candidates in becoming successful paraeducators in accordance with the provisions of this rule.

80.13(1) Paraeducator clinical experiences support learning in the context in which paraeducators will practice.

80.13(2) Paraeducator clinical experiences include the following:

- a) A minimum of ten hours of experience in a state-approved school or educational facility under the supervision of a licensed educator.
- b) Opportunities for paraeducator candidates to observe and be observed by others in the application of skills and knowledge.

Standard Met

The University of Iowa has provided evidence through the program application that they have met the Clinical Standards. Multiple field experiences provide opportunities for engagement in authentic school settings with educational stakeholders. Further, students are observed demonstrating a variety of skills and dispositions in the course work aligned with the standards of the state paraeducator preparation requirements.

Compliance Concerns

None.