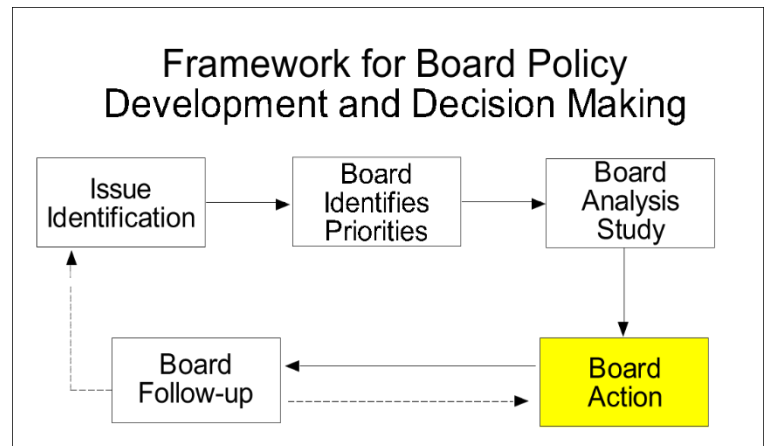


Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

November 16, 2022



- Agenda Item:** Kirkwood Community College (KCC)
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 School Improvement
- Attachment(s):** One
- Recommendation:** It is recommended that the State Board approve the Kirkwood Community College Paraeducator Preparation Program through the next review scheduled for the 2027-2028 academic year.
- Background:** KCC has submitted a request for approval of the paraeducator generalist, early childhood prekindergarten through grade 3, special needs prekindergarten through grade 12, career and transitional programs and autism spectrum disorders. Upon review of the evidence, it is determined that KCC 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.
Attached to this executive summary is a board report with specific details of the program standards and how Kirkwood has met these standards, including recommendations for approval for all Kirkwood paraeducator programs.



Kirkwood Community College Paraeducator Preparation Programs

Board Report – Review 2027-2028

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

Recommendations to the Board

Kirkwood Community College Paraeducator Programs Recommended for Approval

Program	Recommendation
Generalist Certificate	Approval
Early Childhood Prekindergarten through grade 3	Approval
Special Needs Prekindergarten through grade 12	Approval
Career and Transitional Programs-grades 5 through 12	Approval
Autism Spectrum Disorders	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.

Program Representatives

Patrice Becicka

A Brief History/Overview Shared by the Program

Our Mission: Kirkwood Community College identifies community needs; provides accessible, quality education and training; and promotes opportunities for lifelong learning. Our Vision: To be the community college leader in regional, national and global education.

The Kirkwood mission and vision connect to our work in strengthening our paraeducator courses. We have moved rapidly in the past year to move our Exploring Teaching and Behavior Management courses into a format that makes them more accessible for currently employed paraeducators in school districts through the counties served by us. Changes have included moving the courses to completely online and the students can complete both courses within one semester, including our summer semester.

Program Standards

281—80.9 Organizational & 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.

Standard Met

Kirkwood has met the organizational and resources standard. All full-time faculty have access to annual professional development funds. Since 2020 many professional development opportunities have been available through virtual conferences, many of these have been provided free of charge. Professional development funds have been used to extend best practice within education. Professional development activities are tracked through budget reports and requests for fund requisitions. In addition, students are provided information regarding accommodations in multiple ways. These include new student orientations, small and large group orientation presentations, statements written in syllabi and faculty working with students to connect them with Learning Services when needs become apparent as the semester progresses.

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.

Standard Met

Through a review of the report, it is evident that Kirkwood Community College has met the diversity standard. Kirkwood Community College has a Diversity, equity and inclusion department to support both students and faculty and staff. Through this department and in conjunction with human resources, professional development—both mandatory and choice-based—are available to all faculty and staff. Kirkwood also has an autism specialist on campus and the dean of students and staff provide support, as requested, to faculty, staff and students. All faculty are required to complete unconscious bias training prior to serving on any hiring committee. All positions are advertised on the Kirkwood Career Page website, LinkedIn, Indeed, Google Jobs, Diverse Jobs and Local Jobs.

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.

Standard Met

Kirkwood Community College has met the faculty standard. Kirkwood faculty are observed and reviewed annually during the first three years with the college, then at a minimum of every three years. Students provide feedback through Blue Class surveys toward the end of each semester and the student feedback is reviewed by the dean, and a follow-up with faculty is scheduled, if warranted. All syllabi (which includes grading activities and course schedules) are submitted and reviewed at the beginning of each semester to ensure consistency across the college. Full-time Kirkwood faculty have built and maintain a working relationship with local school districts and regularly observe students in their assigned service learning classroom settings. In addition, classroom teachers provide faculty a written evaluation of students completing service learning.

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

Through a review of the report, it is evident that Kirkwood Community College has met the assessment and evaluation standard. Students are evaluated on the Kirkwood student learning Outcomes for each course and the State of Iowa Paraeducator state competencies. Data is collected through class assignments, discussions and assessments. These are evaluated using rubrics and students are expected to score at proficient or above (C average). Students access written feedback, rubric ratings and grades through the Kirkwood learning management system (Talon). Faculty also provide feedback to students through a variety of methods, depending if the course is face to face, online, or hybrid. This includes personal conversations, written feedback on rubrics, email, and Zoom meetings. The Education faculty (full time and adjunct) have formed a Professional Learning Community similar to those used in public schools in Iowa. The goal of the PLC is to meet to discuss assignments, assessments, and questions to bring consistency to the education courses as well as to share ideas. Feedback from the group is used when revising assignments.

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

Kirkwood Community College has provided evidence that they have met the clinical practice standard through a review of the application. Kirkwood Community College candidates are also required to report on what was learned by observing and interviewing the licensed teacher and other school personnel during the clinical experience. At the conclusion of the clinical experience, the licensed teacher and/or other school personnel complete an evaluation of the paraeducator candidates.

Unit Response

None

Compliance Concerns

None