

# ESSA

## Fact Sheet



The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), passed by Congress in December, 2015, is the newest version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), replacing No Child Left Behind. Congress also provided a transition period that will lead to ESSA's full implementation for the 2017-18 school year. In the interim most of NCLB will remain in effect.

## Paraprofessionals

Here is a summary of how ADE expects LEAs to use Title I, Part A funds for paraprofessionals.

### Development of State Standards for Paras

ESSA no longer contains the language describing the qualifications for paraprofessionals that work in Title I programs (NCLB Section 1119). Instead, ESSA says that Arizona must develop its own minimum state standards that will include those requirements that are currently contained in NCLB.

As part of the ESSA State Plan, ADE will be including the development of standards that Title I program paraprofessionals will need to meet for the 2017-18 school year.

Until ESSA is fully implemented LEAs will continue to use the same requirements as defined in NCLB with some modifications for the 2016-17 school year.

### Current Paraprofessionals Requirements

Title I instructional paraprofessionals are employees that provide instructional supports, which may include tutoring at a time when the *classroom*\* teacher is not directly instructing, assisting with instruction in a computer lab or library, assisting with classroom materials management, or providing other instructional supports as directed by the *classroom* teacher.

Title I instructional paraprofessionals must have the following credentials:

1. *High school diploma (or equivalent) and*
2. *One of the following:*
  - a. *Associate's degree (or higher),*
  - b. *2 years of college-level instruction, or*
  - c. *Passing score on one of the approved paraprofessional assessments*

### Availability of the Paraprofessional Assessments (TBA)

Non-instructional paraprofessionals in Title I programs may serve as translators or conduct parent engagement activities with only a high school credential (# 1).

LEA classified staff that solely perform foodservice or playground supervision are not subject to Title I requirements.

### Schoolwide Requirements

In a Targeted Assistance Title I school only those paraprofessionals that are funded through Title I must meet the requirements. In Schoolwide schools all staff are considered to be a part of the Title I program and all instructional paraprofessionals in those schools must meet the requirements.

### Special Education Paraprofessionals in Title I Schools

Additionally, instructional paraprofessionals that provide instructional supports in both special education and Title I programs must meet the Title I requirements.

LEAs still have the option of requiring additional credentials when hiring paraprofessionals for their schools.

### Other Requirements

The *classroom* teacher is responsible for preparing the lessons and materials for the paraprofessional to use with students and evaluating the performance of the students being served by the paraprofessional. This requires the paraprofessional to work in "close proximity" to the *classroom* teacher.

### Allowable Uses of Funds

In addition to salaries and benefits for paraprofessionals an LEA may use Title I funds (and Title II) to reimburse the testing fees and for professional development activities. It is expected that paraprofessionals will be included in the professional learning plans of the school and LEA for the purposes of individual growth and to ensure the instructional delivery at the school is consistent. The LEA may choose to support a paraprofessional to earn teaching credentials.

\*Replaces "highly qualified"