

CHAPTER 5.00: STUDENTS

TEACHER ASSISTANTS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS

6.144*

Teacher assistants and paraprofessionals are persons assigned by the School Board to assist instructional staff members in performing their instructional or professional duties or responsibilities. A paraprofessional has additional responsibilities consistent with the requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act.

- I. The conditions of employment of a teacher assistant or paraprofessional shall include the following:
 - A. A teacher assistant shall have a high school diploma or hold a high school equivalency diploma issued pursuant to State Board of Education rules.
 - B. A paraprofessional shall meet one of the following requirements:
 1. Hold an associate's or higher degree;
 2. Two (2) years of study at an institution of higher education; or
 3. A rigorous state or local assessment of knowledge of and the ability to assist in instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics or reading readiness, writing readiness, or mathematics readiness.
 - C. Be at least eighteen (18) years of age.
 - D. Present a complete set of fingerprints taken by a law enforcement agency or properly trained District personnel and the appropriate processing fee. The fingerprints shall be acceptable for processing by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The director of human resources or designee shall initiate a records check by the two (2) agencies.
 - E. A drug test shall be required of all educational support applicants recommended for hire and shall be administered by the Board- approved testing laboratory.
- II. The principal shall ensure that the teacher assistant or paraprofessional assigned to the school possesses a clear understanding of state and District rules relating to his or her responsibilities and to the safety, welfare, and health of students. It shall be the principal and the instructional staff member's responsibility to ascertain that a teacher assistant or paraprofessional possesses the necessary knowledge about rules to perform duties of a special nature in a proper and reasonable manner.
- III. It shall be the principal's responsibility to assure the School Board and the Superintendent that each teacher assistant or paraprofessional possesses a clear understanding of all State and District instructional practices and rules relevant to

CHAPTER 5.00: STUDENTS

his or her responsibilities if he or she is expected to assist a teacher in promoting learning activities. When a teacher assistant is assigned duties requiring knowledge of instructional practices and policies or providing prescribed physical care of a specialized nature for students, it is the instructional staff member's responsibility to ascertain in advance whether the assistant possesses the necessary knowledge and skills.

- IV. The teacher assistant or paraprofessional shall complete a period of supervised practice when assigned to a new instructional staff member or assigned a type of duty which he or she has not previously performed. The length of such supervised practice may vary depending upon previous experiences of the teacher assistant or paraprofessional. A record shall be maintained in each school to show the length, nature, and inclusive dates of each supervised practice assignment for each aide or paraprofessional.
- V. An education paraprofessional may administer or proctor statewide standardized assessments or assessments associated with Florida Approved Courses in accordance with Florida Statutes and State Board of Education rules. Paraprofessionals must complete required training prior to performing these tasks.
- VI. A teacher assistant or paraprofessional shall not perform any of the following:
 - A. Establish instructional objectives;
 - B. Render decisions regarding the relevancy of certain activities or procedures to achieve instructional objectives;
 - C. Make decisions regarding the appropriateness of training materials for accomplishing instructional objectives; and,
 - D. Evaluate a student's attainment of instructional objectives unless clear and objective criteria such as a specific achievement standard on an objective test are defined.
- VII. The principal and instructional staff members who are assigned aides or paraprofessional personnel shall be responsible for assigning duties which are consistent with Florida Statutes, State Board of Education rules, School Board rules, and other controlling regulations.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 1001.41, 1012.22, 1012.23, F.S.
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