

INSTRUCTIONAL and IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE:

COMPLETING A RIGOROUS STANDARD OF QUALITY THROUGH FORMAL ASSESSMENT

(updated September 19, 2002)

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 established a set of employment criteria for paraprofessionals serving in schools receiving Title I funds. These employment criteria included possession of an associate's degree or having two years (48 semester hours) of study at an institute of higher education. For paraprofessionals who do not have an earned associate's degree or two years of study at an institution of higher education or may not be interested in pursuing either of these employment options, other options exist.

A paraprofessional may choose to meet employment criteria in schools supported with Title I funds by completing a State or local assessment. These assessments must meet a rigorous standard of quality and allow the paraprofessional to "demonstrate knowledge of, and the ability to assist in instructing reading, writing and mathematics, or to assist in instructing reading readiness, writing readiness and mathematics readiness." Paraprofessionals and their immediate building level supervisor (principal or assistant principal) should select the assessment option that best fits the needs of the students, the school and the paraprofessional's career goals. For this reason, as well as for factors associated with budgetary matters, various assessment options are available for use.

Please be aware that paraprofessionals hired after January 8, 2002 must successfully complete one of the testing options or have 48 semester hours of college credit, or an associate's degree. Those paraprofessionals hired prior to January 8, 2002 are eligible to select the staff development options and have additional choices. Paraprofessionals hired prior to January 8, 2002 have until January 2006 to complete their requirements.

The following guide includes the [assessment of a rigorous standard of quality](#) options available for [paraprofessionals](#). Several are related to successfully completing a standardized test or tests related to reading, writing and mathematics proficiency, and [completion of continuing education hours of training](#). [Training hours are applicable with the date of the passage of the legislation on January 8, 2002](#). There is also an assessment that is a test of the skills and abilities associated with teacher assistants. [This assessment is also connected to continuing education hours of training completed after passage of the federal legislation](#). Finally, there are two staff development options that are available.

In short, paraprofessionals may "demonstrate knowledge...and the ability to assist in instructing..." by completing testing and staff development options or by entering into an established staff development training program. Which option to select depends on the resources, interests, availability of programs and career aspirations of the paraprofessional, and the goals of the school system in which they are employed.

I. ASSESSMENT OPTIONS (TESTS AVAILABLE TO ALL PARAPROFESSIONALS):

(Option 1) Placement tests:

The North Carolina Community College System offers three placement tests for entering students. Paraprofessionals who are going to pursue a four-year degree program or an associate's degree program may select the **COMPASS**, **ASSET** or the **ACCUPLACER** tests. **(Paraprofessionals who do not wish to pursue further education are not to select these placement tests.)** Paraprofessionals would have to meet the minimum placement score established by the community college in reading, writing and pre-algebra. The

minimum scores are those that are established to place a student out of developmental or remedial classes. There may be some variance between the community colleges, so individuals should confer with their community college system for exact minimum scores.

Upon successful completion of the placement tests, the paraprofessional [employed after January 8, 2002](#) is to earn a minimum of 48 hours of continuing education or staff development in each of his/her first two years of employment. These credits may be earned by completing **ONE** three (3) semester hour course at the community college or four-year college or university, or through 48 contact hours of staff development training. The training may be provided by professional organizations, school districts, Regional Education Service Alliance programs, institutions of higher education or other supervisor approved activities. The building level supervisor must approve all staff development.

[Paraprofessionals employed prior to January 8, 2002, the effective date of the legislation, are to complete all testing and continuing hours of education prior to January 2006. Staff development training can be taken before, after and in concert with the testing requirements. However, successful completion of the placement tests and all continuing education hours must be fulfilled by January 2006.](#)

(Option 2) Occupational Profile Assessment:

Work Keys is a national system developed by ACT, Inc. and offers comprehensive skills assessments in various occupations. Skills that are deemed to be essential for job success, including those for teacher assistants, are measured and assessed through a variety of tests. Professionals who are not continuing their education through formal attendance at an institute of higher education, or earn additional degrees are encouraged to complete the **Work Keys Occupational Profile Assessment for Teacher Aides**. Assessments are to be completed in **Reading for Information, Writing and Applied Mathematics** and paraprofessionals must meet the minimum scores for Level I proficiency. Order information is provided with this guide for school system use.

Upon successful completion of the **Occupational Profile Assessment**, the paraprofessional [employed after January 8, 2002](#) is to earn a minimum of 48 hours of continuing education or staff development in each of his/her first two years of employment. These credits may be earned by completing **ONE** three (3) semester hour course at the community college or four-year college or university each year, or through 48 contact hours of staff development training each year. The training may be provided by professional organizations, school districts, Regional Education Service Alliance programs, institutions of higher education or other supervisor approved activities. The building level supervisor must approve all staff development.

[Paraprofessionals employed prior to January 8, 2002, the effective date of the legislation, are to complete all testing and continuing hours of education prior to January 2006. Staff development training can be taken before, after, and in concert with the testing requirements. However, successful completion of the placement tests and all continuing education hours must be fulfilled by January 2006.](#)

II. ASSESSMENT OPTIONS (STAFF TRAINING AVAILABLE TO PARAPROFESSIONALS HIRED BEFORE JANUARY 2002 or [PARAPROFESSIONALS HIRED AFTER JANUARY 8, 2002 UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES](#)):

(Option 1) The North Carolina Department of Labor Teacher Assistant Certification Program :

The North Carolina Department of Labor Teacher Assistant Certification Program is designed to prepare and train paraprofessionals for teacher assistant positions in the public schools. This program combines formal training, community college coursework, and a comprehensive assessment of skills by a building-level supervisor. Community college or university coursework can be combined with locally approved staff

development. The competency evaluations are to be completed by the building-level supervisor and by completion of the coursework, and all ratings must be “Competent.”

Paraprofessionals must earn at least 288 contact hours in areas related to Educational Foundations, Childhood Development, Teaching Methods, Technology, and Electives. These hours can be earned by completing **six** outlined courses at the community college level **or** by completing at least four courses at the community college level and the remaining contact hours through specific related staff development. A list of the courses and corresponding hours is provided with this guide. For those paraprofessionals who select the North Carolina Department of Labor Teacher Assistant Certification Program and wish to become certified teachers, six specific courses in the program areas must be successfully completed. For community college courses that are outlined, a community college may substitute an equivalent course that is on the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement with the Community College System.

Paraprofessionals hired after January 8, 2002 may pursue North Carolina Department of Labor Teacher Assistant Certification only if they complete Work Keys, ASSET, COMPASS or Accuplacer testing first. For paraprofessionals hired after January 8, 2002, the successful completion of one of the testing options becomes a prerequisite for employment. Once successful scores are earned from one of the assessment tests, the paraprofessional may then be employed and enter into the Department of Labor program.

(Option 2) North Carolina Association of Teacher Assistants Professional Development Plan: Level I-Instructional Associate:

The Professional Development Plan outlined by the North Carolina Teacher Assistant Association provides a comprehensive program for paraprofessionals to reach their full potential as teacher assistants. The program combines community college coursework with continuing education units. This program also requires that the building-level supervisor completes a competency evaluation and that the paraprofessional be rated “Competent” upon completion of the program.

Formalized training includes a minimum of 18 semester hours or its equivalent in continuing education units. Paraprofessionals pursuing this option will need to contact the North Carolina Association of Teacher Assistants for full details and course outlines. Total contact hours will equal 288 hours of study. The program requires that a plan of study be approved in advance.

Paraprofessionals hired after January 8, 2002 may pursue North Carolina Association of Teacher Assistants Professional Development Plan only if they complete Work Keys, ASSET, COMPASS or Accuplacer testing first. For paraprofessionals hired after January 8, 2002, the successful completion of one of the testing options becomes a prerequisite for employment. Once successful scores are earned from one of the assessment tests, the paraprofessional may then be employed and enter into the North Carolina Teacher Assistants Professional Development Plan.

III. RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS:

The following is a list of contact information. Additional information can also be obtained from visiting the Department of Public Instruction web site at www.ncpublicschools.org/esea/ or contacting Gary Jarrett at 919-807-3364 or gjarrett@dpi.state.nc.us.

North Carolina Department of Labor
Marilynn Anselmi, Apprenticeship Consultant
PO Drawer 2037
Roanoke Rapids, NC 27870-1237

Phone: 252.535.1998

Email: marilynnanselmi@hotmail.com

North Carolina Association of Teacher Assistants (NCATA)

Attn: Professional Development Plan Committee

893 US Highway 70 West, Suite 202

Garner, NC 27529-2597

Phone: 919.779-5709

Fax: 919.779.5642

<http://www.teacherassistants.org/>

WorkKeys

ACT Educational Services

2201 North Dodge Street

P.O. Box 168

Iowa City, IA 52243-0168

Phone: 1.800.967.5539

<http://www.act.org>

WorkKeys Customer Services

2727 Scott Blvd.

P.O. Box 1008

Iowa City, IA 52243-1008

Phone: 319.337.1550

Fax: 319.337.1467

NCAE (North Carolina Association of Educators, Inc.)

P.O. Box 27347

700 South Salisbury Street

Raleigh, NC 27611

Phone: 919-832-3000

Fax: 919-829-1626

www.ncae.org



North Carolina Department of Labor Teacher Assistant Certification Program
List of recommended coursework
North Carolina Community College System

Cohort I: For teacher assistants who wish to remain a teacher assistant and are pursuing NC DOL Teacher Assistant Certification, a minimum of 4 of the 6 courses must be completed. Remaining contact hours are to be completed through staff development, professional training or continuing education approved by the immediate building-level supervisor.

RECOMMENDED COURSES	HOURS OF COURSES			
	Class	Lab	Credit	Cont. Hrs.
I) EDUCATION FOUNDATION COURSES (Choose <u>one</u> course):				
EDU 118, Teacher Associate Principles & Practices	3	0	3	48
EDU 119, Early Childhood Education	4	0	4	64
EDU 116, Introduction to Education	3	2	4	64
II) CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT COURSES (Choose <u>one</u> course):				
EDU 145, Child Development II	3	0	3	48
PSY 245, Child Development II	3	0	3	48
III) TEACHING METHODS COURSES (Choose <u>two</u> courses):				
EDU 177, Instructional Methods	2	2	3	48
EDU 185, Cognitive & Language Activities	3	0	3	48
EDU 186, Reading & Writing Methods	3	0	3	48
EDU 251, Exploration Activities	3	0	3	48
EDU 252, Math & Science Activities	3	0	3	48
EDU 257, Math Methods & Materials	2	2	3	48
EDU 259, Curriculum Planning	3	0	3	48
EDU 275, Effective Teacher Training	2	0	2	32
IV) TECHNOLOGY COURSES (Choose <u>one</u> course):				
CIS 110, Introduction to Computers	2	2	3	48
EDU 171, Instructional Media	1	2	2	32
EDU 172, Education Tools	2	2	3	48
EDU 271, Media Techniques for Teachers	2	2	3	48
V) ELECTIVE COURSES (Choose <u>one</u> course):				
EDU 131, Child, Family & Community	3	0	3	48
EDU 146, Child Guidance	3	0	3	48
EDU 147, Behavior Disorders	3	0	3	48
EDU 148, Learning Disabilities	4	2	5	80
EDU 162, Early Experience/Prospective Teachers	1	2	2	32
EDU 221, Children with Special Needs	3	0	3	48
EDU 235, School-Age Development & Program	2	0	2	32

Cohort two: For teacher assistants who are pursuing their NC DOL Teacher Assistant Certification and who wish to become certified teachers, these courses, or their equivalent, are required. The coursework will come from the curriculum programs in the Associate in Arts. Coursework will include (but is not limited to) the following courses. Students must complete six courses to qualify for NC DOL Teacher Assistant Certification.

COURSES

ENG 111, Expository Writing	3	0	3	48
COM 231, Public Speaking	3	0	3	48
MAT 161, College Algebra	3	0	3	48
PSY 150, General Psychology	3	0	3	48
HIS 111, World Civilizations I	3	0	3	48
BIO 110, Principles of Biology	3	3	4	64



**NORTH CAROLINA TESTING FOR ASSISTANT TEACHERS
MATERIALS ORDER FORM
Effective 6/21/2002**

- ◆ WorkKeys® orders should be received at ACT **at least two weeks** prior to your scheduled test date.
- ◆ Materials will be shipped without charge via UPS (or comparable method) to arrive approximately one week prior to your scheduled test date. You will be assessed actual shipping charges if your order requires **RUSH** or **EXPRESS** shipping methods. Check the appropriate box on page 2.
- ◆ **Institutions pay for the return of the materials.**
- ◆ Fees for WorkKeys assessments are assessed at the time of scoring, based on the number of assessments scored.

All assessment materials must be returned to ACT immediately following administration of the WorkKeys assessments. The ordering authority who signs this order is responsible for the security of the WorkKeys assessment materials from receipt until return to ACT.

- Request assessment booklets based on the number of examinees expected to complete each assessment.
- Request audio tapes based on the number of testing rooms you expect to use at any one time.
- Administration instructions suggest that audio-based assessments be administered in groups of 20-25 examinees. One audio tape will be provided based on these guidelines.

In addition to the current Operational (A) Form which has always been available, a Re-Test (B) Form is also available for all assessments. To order the current Operational Form, write the quantity in Column A. Use a separate order form to order the Re-Test Form. Write the quantity in Column B.

Have you ordered WorkKeys materials previously? No Yes – Enter your WorkKeys site code _____

List the date(s) you expect to test _____ Materials must arrive at your site by _____

Assessment Name	Fee (at time of scoring)	Quantity	
		Operational (A)	Re-Test (B)
Reading for Information A (041 185 010) B (041 191 020)	\$3.20 per assessment Booklet format; Multiple-choice		
Applied Mathematics A (041 186 010) B (041 192 020)			
Writing only A (041 108 000) B (041 107 000)	\$12.50 per assessment Audio tape format; Constructed response		

**Special accommodation formats are available for all WorkKeys assessments.
Contact WorkKeys Customer Services
319/337-1550 for specific information on what is available.**



Enter quantity needed in last column:

Combined Answer Booklet (041 159 01B) Each examinee will require only one Combined Answer Booklet.	For constructed response assessment Writing, administered with multiple-choice assessments. Educational reports are generated from scoring this document.	
Test Coordinator Manual (041 016 02A)	Planning, security, coordination, and administration information. One needed per test coordinator.	
Directions for Administration Manual (041 016 020)	Verbal instructions for administration of the assessments. One needed for each administrator.	

CHECK ONE:

- UPS Ground
ACT pays shipping
- 2nd Day Shipping
Customer pays shipping;
ACT will invoice
- Next Day Shipping
Customer pays shipping;
ACT will invoice

<i>Ship test materials to the following street address:</i>		
Name:		
Title:		
Institution:		
Street Address:		
City:	ST:	ZIP:
Telephone:		
Fax:		

Phone: 319/337-1550

FAX: 319/337-1467
Attn: ACT WorkKeys

Mail:
ACT WorkKeys Customer
Services-70
2727 Scott Blvd.
P.O. Box 1008
Iowa City, IA 52243-1008

NOTE: When documents are submitted for scoring they must be accompanied by a *NC Assistant Teachers Scoring and Reporting Order Form* which will be included in your shipment. That form will include a place for you to provide your score report shipping and billing addresses.

I agree to adhere to all of ACT's policies and procedures as outlined in the official *WorkKeys® Test Coordinator Manual*. I also verify that I and/or others I may designate (check appropriate box/s):

- have sufficient training and knowledge of measurement principles
- have received ACT test administration training
- will be working under the supervision of trained personnel

to responsibly administer these test materials. I further certify that no examinee will have access to testing materials at any time without adequate supervision and that the principles of fair testing practices will be upheld.

Name (Please Print)

Signature

Title

Date