

Frequently Asked Questions

Paraeducator Minimum Employment and Training Requirements

Validation Tool

Use of the Validation Tool

Is this validation tool required to be used?

Yes. This validation tool is intended to inform and assist Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in ensuring that instructional paraeducators in Title I schools meet the state's minimum employment and training requirements. During the Title I, Part A Program Review, the program office will use this tool to verify that all instructional paraeducators in Title I schools meet the minimum employment and training requirements.

Do we have to report all instructional paraeducators' employment and training information to OSPI?

No. This validation tool is not intended to require LEAs to report instructional paraeducator information to OSPI.

If we have other ways of tracking paraeducator employment and training requirements, is that sufficient?

Yes. It is sufficient if you have other methods to track the required information and can present that information during the Program Review.

Data and Data Sources

Do we have to report or update all instructional paraeducators hired during a school year?

No. Because most paraeducators are part-time employees and/or late hires, LEAs are not required to report or update all instructional paraeducators in S-275 or CEDARS. To reduce the amount of data verification required during the Program Review, paraeducators are strongly encouraged to report their Fundamental Course of Study (FSC) completion dates to eCertification. These dates are reflected in the tool on a weekly basis.



How do we enter the completion date of the Fundamental Course of Study into eCertification?

Each paraeducator must create an Education Data System (EDS) account and login to the eCertification. They should report 28 or more clock hours and select the Professional Development type "Paraeducator Fundamental Course of Study" and click "Next" button on the lower right on the screen.

The screenshot shows a web form titled "EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CLOCK HOURS)". On the left is a navigation sidebar with the following items: "NAVIGATION STEPS", "TYPE OF HOURS", "PROVIDER INFORMATION", and "HOURS & CONTENT". The main form area contains the following fields and options:

- "Begin Date:" followed by a date input field and a calendar icon, with "(Optional)" to the right.
- "Completed Date:" followed by a date input field and a calendar icon, with an asterisk "*" to the right.
- "Professional Development Type:" followed by a list of radio button options:
 - Semester Credit
 - Clock Hours
 - Quarter Credit
 - Other Hours
 - Professional Growth Plan Hours (through June 30, 2018)
 - Professional Growth Plan Hours (beginning July 1, 2018)
 - Paraeducator Fundamental Course of Study
 - Continuing Education Units - CEU
 - STARS Hours
 - Government to Government Hours

At the bottom right of the form are "Cancel" and "Next" buttons, each with a square icon.

After submitting, check back after Saturday to confirm that the information is reflected in the validation tool. The validation tool is updated every Saturday.

Why is the number of instructional paraeducators in the validation tool different from what we have locally?

The tool may show a limited number of instructional paraeducators because most paraeducators are part-time employees and/or late hires that LEAs are not required to report to S-275 or CEDARS. If LEAs would like to reduce the amount of data verification during the Program Review by reporting paraeducator information, please consult your staff responsible for Personnel Reporting or CEDARS.

What is the data source of the paraeducator data in the tool?

The validation tool uses several data sources, and the data source may be different for each element. The sources used are:

- S-275 / SAFS Personnel Report
- Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS)
- eCertification (eCert)

The tool includes instructional paraeducators who appear in either SAFS or CEDARS. They must appear under certain codes to be identified. They are:

- 1) SAFS: Duty root 91 (Aide); and Activity code 22 (Learning Resources) or 27 (Teaching). For more information, see the SAFS Personnel Reporting Handbook.
- 2) CEDARS: Present in Staff file under Staff Type Code 91y (Aide); and present in Staff Schedule file under Teacher Indicator Code G (Paraeducator); and a matching Course Catalog record exists; and a matching Student Schedule record exists. For more information, see the CEDARS reporting guidance section on paraeducators.

What is the data source and meaning of each element in the tool?

School Year

Data sources: SAFS, CEDARS

Meaning: The school year in which the paraeducator was identified as working. The tool identifies the most recently available year of data from SAFS and/or CEDARS. In SAFS, school year reflects personnel present as of October 1st. (IE 2025-26 is October 1st, 2025)

LEA Name

Data Source: Organization's Legal Name

Meaning: The name of the Local Education Agency (LEA)/School District in which the paraeducator worked. LEAs which have no reported paraeducators in SAFS or CEDARS are not listed.

School Name

Data Source: Organization's Legal Name

Meaning: The name of the school in which the paraeducator worked. Schools which have no reported paraeducators in SAFS or CEDARS are not listed.

Certificate Number

Data sources: SAFS, eCertification

Meaning: Unique identifier for a paraeducator. Many paraeducators actually have a temporary certificate number instead since they do not hold any Washington educator certificates. Can be crosswalked to Educator ID and SAFS Personnel ID.

Educator ID

Data sources: eCertification

Meaning: A unique identifier for a paraeducator. Created during EDS/eCert account creation or when a new paraeducator is identified in other data sources. Can be crosswalked to Certificate Number and SAFS Personnel ID.

SAFS Personnel ID

Data sources: SAFS

Meaning: A unique identifier for a paraeducator in SAFS. Can be crosswalked to Certificate Number and Educator ID.

Employment Data Source

Data sources: SAFS, CEDARS

Meaning: Indicates if the paraeducator was identified from their CEDARS and/or SAFS records. Most paraeducators are identified by their SAFS record.

Last Name

Data sources: SAFS, CEDARS

Meaning: The paraeducator's last name reported in SAFS or CEDARS.

First Name

Data sources: SAFS, CEDARS

Meaning: The paraeducator's first name reported in SAFS or CEDARS.

Middle Name

Data sources: SAFS, CEDARS

Meaning: The paraeducator's middle name reporting in SAFS or CEDARS.

School Title I Served

Data sources: OSPI Title I, Part A Program Office

Meaning: If the school was served with Title I, Part A federal funds that school year.

Age

Data sources: SAFS, CEDARS

Meaning: The paraeducator's Date of Birth (DOB) as of October 1st that school year is used to calculate their age. October 1st is used since that aligns with the SAFS collection date. If age as of another date is needed, the DOB can be used instead.

DOB

Data sources: SAFS, CEDARS

Meaning: The paraeducators Date of Birth (DOB) reported in SAFS or CEDARS. This can be used to calculate age as of any given date.

HS Degree Date

Data source: N/A

Meaning: The date the paraeducator graduated from High School. OSPI does not collect this data element. This is one of the optional data elements listed in [RCW 28A.413.040](#) for

demonstrating minimum employment requirements. This data element must be verified at the LEA level if the paraeducator has the document.

AA+ Degree Date

Data sources: SAFS, eCertification

Meaning: The date the paraeducator's first Associate or higher degree was awarded. If the paraeducator has reported an Associate or higher degree in eCertification, the tool can pick it up. Or, if the LEA has reported a Bachelor's or higher degree in SAFS/S-S275, the tool can pick it up. The S-275 does not have a value for reporting Associate degrees.

72 Quarter Credits Date

Data sources: N/A

Meaning: The date the paraeducator attained 72 quarter credits from an accredited college or university. OSPI does not collect this data element. This is one of the optional data elements listed in [RCW 28A.413.040](#) for demonstrating minimum employment requirements. This data element must be verified at the LEA level if the paraeducator has the document.

ETS Para Pro Test Date

Data sources: Praxis, eCertification

Meaning: The date the paraeducator passed the ETS ParaPro test. OSPI receives test data from Praxis and attempts to match it to the paraeducator's eCertification profile.

Pearson Paraprofessional Assessment Date

Data sources: N/A

Meaning: The date the paraeducator passed the Pearson Paraprofessional assessment OSPI does not collect this data element. This is one of the optional data elements listed in [RCW 28A.413.040](#) for demonstrating minimum employment requirements. This data element must be verified at the LEA level if the paraeducator has the document.

Master Teacher Inc Paraeducator Online Training Program Date

Data sources: N/A

Meaning: The date the paraeducator passed The Master Teacher Inc. Paraeducator Online Training Program test. OSPI does not collect this data element. This is one of the optional data elements listed in [RCW 28A.413.040](#) for demonstrating minimum employment requirements. This data element must be verified at the LEA level if the paraeducator has the document.

Paraeducator Apprenticeship Program Date

Data sources: N/A

Meaning: The date the paraeducator completed an apprenticeship as a paraeducator in a program registered with the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council. OSPI does not collect this data element. This is one of the optional data elements listed in [RCW 28A.413.040](#) for demonstrating minimum employment requirements. This data element must be verified at the LEA level if the paraeducator has the document.

FCS Completion Date

Data sources: eCertification

Meaning: The earliest date the paraeducator completed 28 hours of Fundamental Course of Study (FCS). The tool can identify FCS professional development records which the paraeducator has reported in eCertification.

Data As Of

Data sources: N/A

Meaning: The latest date the tool re-queried SAFS, CEDARS, and eCertification for updated information. Updates made in SAFS, CEDARS, or eCertification will not be reflected in the tool until the weekly update around every Sturday.

General Para Cert Issue Date

Data sources: eCertification

Meaning: The latest date the paraeducator had a General Paraeducator Certificate awarded by OSPI. This certificate never expires.

Para SPED Subject Matter Expiration Date

Data sources: eCertification

Meaning: The latest date the paraeducator's Special Education Subject Matter Certificate awarded by OSPI expires.

Para ELL Subject Matter Expiration Date

Data sources: eCertification

Meaning: The latest date the paraeducator's English Language Learners Subject Matter Certificate awarded by OSPI expires.

Adv Para Cert Expiration Date

Data sources: eCertification

Meaning: The latest date the paraeducator's Advanced Paraeducator Certificate awarded by OSPI expires.

Support and Contact

I am new to this role, where can I get support?

Please contact Educator Data, Research and Development, EducatorData@k12.wa.us. The Educator Data, Research and Development team offers bi-weekly **Office Hours** on Monday and Thursdays. Please refer to the [Educator Data Office Hours](#) for specific dates and times.