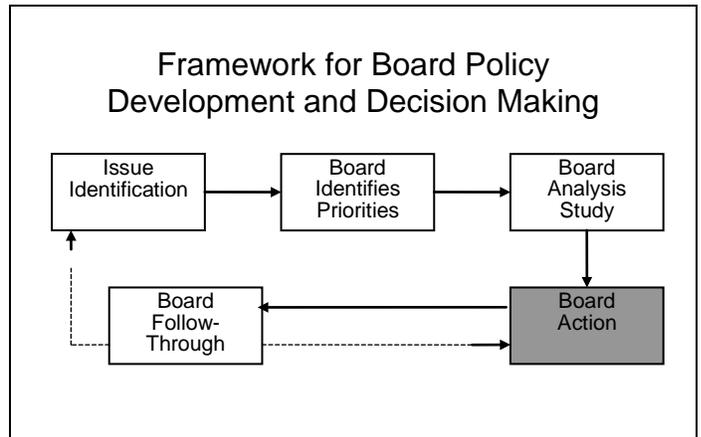


Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

November 14, 2012



Agenda Item: Western Iowa Tech Community College Paraeducator Preparation Program Approval

Iowa Goal: All PK -12 students will achieve at a high level.

State Board Role/Authority: Iowa Code section 256.7(22) directs the State Board to adopt rules and a procedure for the approval of paraeducator preparation programs offered by a public school district, area education agency, community college, Regents institution of higher education, or an accredited private institution. The programs shall train and recommend individuals for paraeducator certification under Iowa Code section 272.12.

Presenter: Marietta Rives, Consultant
Bureau of Educator Quality

Attachments: 1

Recommendation: It is recommended that the State Board approve for five years the paraeducator preparation programs submitted by Western Iowa Tech Community College. The next review will be during the 2017-2018 school year.

Background: Legislation originally passed in 1998 and revised in 2000 created a voluntary paraeducator certification. The legislation was prompted by the need to have well trained paraeducators providing assistance to students and teachers. Licensure rules were established by the Board of Educational Examiners. The State Board of Education approves the voluntary preparation programs according to standards and procedures contained in Chapter 80 of the Iowa Administrative Code.

Programs Recommended for Approval November 14, 2012

Western Iowa Tech Community College Paraeducator Programs to include:
Generalist Level I

Iowa's voluntary paraeducator certification program is one way for paraeducators to meet the requirements set forth in No Child Left Behind. An additional benefit of this program is that certification will establish realistic opportunities for upward mobility through a career ladder pathway for paraeducators.

The institution named above has submitted a request for approval or re-approval of programs to certify paraeducators in each of the listed content areas. Although the paraeducator certification program is voluntary, there are several benefits to having paraeducators certified.

1. All learners will be better served and the quality of education and related services will improve with the availability of a better-prepared paraeducator workforce.
2. Paraeducators have mastered skills that are required to support and supplement teacher/provider programs.

The programs have been reviewed. In reviewing the programs, it was important to look for three major components:

1. Verification that each of the standards included in Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 80 have been met.
2. Verification that all standards and competencies of Chapter 22, Board of Educational Examiners administrative rules were included.
3. Verification that criteria to evaluate performance of the standards were present and appropriate.

Strengths of the programs:

Paraeducator candidates have multiple opportunities to complete practicum experiences in local schools. Data is collected from the candidates and cooperating teachers that can be used to inform program features.

Since all courses are delivered in an online format, they are widely accessible.

Areas for improvement:

It is important to make program improvements based on data and with the input of the larger community. Please make every effort to utilize the Advisory Committee to its fullest potential.

Continue to seek ways to collect data that will inform decisions made for program improvement.

Recommendation:

Based upon the review of programs submitted for consideration, an approval is recommended for the Generalist Level I Western Iowa Tech Community College.