

# Paraeducator Certificate Program

May 31, 2019 presentation to WSPA

This presentation can be found at: <http://bit.ly/2JMAAVU>

## Speakers

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## SECTION I

An overview of upcoming paraeducator requirements

# Minimum Employment Requirements

Be at least eighteen years of age and hold a high school diploma or its equivalent (for more detailed information on what is considered equivalent, please read our [additional resource](#); and

In addition, a paraeducator must meet one or more of the following:

1. Have received a qualifying score on the Education Testing Service paraeducator assessment as published by PESB; or
2. Hold an associate degree or higher from an accredited college or university; or
3. Have earned seventy-two quarter credits or forty-eight semester credits at the one hundred level or higher at an accredited college or university; or
4. Have completed an apprenticeship as a paraeducator, in a program registered with the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council.

**This does not apply to substitute paraeducators. Title I requirements supersede.**

# The Structure of the Paraeducator Certificate Program

# Paraeducator Certificate Program



**PARAEDUCATOR CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**  
Standards of practice and professional development for Washington paraeducators

**FUNDAMENTAL COURSE OF STUDY (FCS)**

- **Details:** The FCS covers the new paraeducator standards of practice. School districts must provide this training to all employed paraeducators.
- **Training time:** 28 hours
- **Requirements:** Required for all paraeducators beginning in the 2019-20 school year.

**GENERAL PARAEDUCATOR CERTIFICATE**

- **Details:** The general certificate offers professional development to improve instructional practices. School districts must provide this training to all employed paraeducators.
- **Training time:** 70 hours
- **Expiration:** This certificate does not expire.
- **Requirements:** Required for all paraeducators to complete within three years of the FCS.

**SUBJECT MATTER CERTIFICATES**

**English Language Learner**

- **Details:** The English Language Learner certificate offers coursework in topics such as language acquisition, cultural competence, and instructional strategies. Paraeducators may allocate certificate hours towards the attainment of the general certificate.
- **Training time:** 20 hours
- **Expiration:** Five years. Renewable.
- **Requirements:** This certificate is not a requirement for employment. Paraeducators must first complete the FCS.

**Special Education**

- **Details:** The Special Education certificate offers coursework in topics such as special education processes, culturally responsive strategies, and behavioral support. Paraeducators may allocate certificate hours towards the attainment of the general certificate.
- **Training time:** 20 hours
- **Expiration:** Five years. Renewable.
- **Requirements:** This certificate is not a requirement for employment. Paraeducators must first complete the FCS.

**ADVANCED PARAEDUCATOR CERTIFICATE**

- **Details:** The advanced certificate offers additional professional development on the following duties: assisting high-impact classrooms, supporting specialized instruction, and mentoring other paraeducators.
- **Training time:** 75 hours
- **Expiration:** Five years. Renewable.
- **Requirements:** This certificate is not a requirement for employment. Paraeducators must first complete the FCS and general certificate.

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http://bit.ly/ParaProgram  
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## Intent:

Paraeducators provide the majority of instruction in programs designed by the legislature to reduce the opportunity gap.

By setting common statewide standards, requiring training in the standards, and offering career development for paraeducators... students in these programs have a better chance of succeeding.



# Fundamental Course of Study

- **Four days (28 hours)** of training on the state [standards of practice](#) to all paraeducators.
  - Supporting instructional opportunities;
  - Demonstrating professionalism and ethical practices;
  - Supporting a positive and safe learning environment;
  - Communicating effectively and participating in the team process; and
  - Demonstrating cultural competence

## FUNDAMENTAL COURSE OF STUDY (FCS)



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- **Training time:** 28 hours
- **Requirements:** Required for all paraeducators beginning in the 2019-20 school year.

# Units of the Fundamental Course of Study

## Training includes:

- Introduction to Cultural Identity and Diversity;
- Equity;
- Positive and Safe Learning Environment;
- Behavior management strategies including de-escalation techniques;
- Child and Adolescent Development;
- Technology Basics;
- Methods of Educational and Instructional Support;
- Using and Collecting Data;
- District Orientation/Roles and Responsibilities of Job Duties including professional conduct and ethical practices;
- Emergency and Health Safety;
- Communication Basics;
- Communication Challenges



# Three certificates then available!

## GENERAL PARAEDUCATOR CERTIFICATE



- **Details:** The general certificate offers professional development to improve instructional practices. School districts must provide this training to all employed paraeducators.
- **Training time:** 70 hours
- **Expiration:** This certificate does not expire.
- **Requirements:** Required for all paraeducators to complete within three years of the FCS.

## SUBJECT MATTER CERTIFICATES

### English Language Learner

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### Special Education

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- **Training time:** 20 hours
- **Expiration:** Five years. Renewable.
- **Requirements:** This certificate is not a requirement for employment. Paraeducators must first complete the FCS.

# General Paraeducator Certificate

- Paraeducators may become eligible for a General Paraeducator Certificate by completing the Fundamental Course of Study and an **additional 70 hours** of general courses.
- If funding is provided, school districts must ensure paraeducators employed by the district meet the general certificate requirements within three employed years of completing the Fundamental Course of Study.
- The General Paraeducator Certificate does not expire.

## GENERAL PARAEDUCATOR CERTIFICATE



- **Details:** The general certificate offers professional development to improve instructional practices. School districts must provide this training to all employed paraeducators.
- **Training time:** 70 hours
- **Expiration:** This certificate does not expire.
- **Requirements:** Required for all paraeducators to complete within three years of the FCS.

# Subject Matter Certificates

- Two Subject Matter Certificates in **Special Education** and in **ELL**.
- **Not a prerequisite for a paraeducator working in any program.**
- Attain by completing **20 hours** of professional development in the subject area of the certificate.
- Certificate expires after five years.
- Attaining the Subject Matter Certificate(s) may be used to deduct hours from the General Paraeducator Certificate

## SUBJECT MATTER CERTIFICATES

### English Language Learner

- **Details:** The English Language Learner certificate offers coursework in topics such as language acquisition, cultural competence, and instructional strategies. Paraeducators may allocate certificate hours towards the attainment of the general certificate.
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- **Details:** The Special Education certificate offers coursework in topics such as special education processes, culturally responsive strategies, and behavioral support. Paraeducators may allocate certificate hours towards the attainment of the general certificate.
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- **Requirements:** This certificate is not a requirement for employment. Paraeducators must first complete the FCS.



# Advanced Paraeducator Certificate

- **An Advanced Paraeducator Certificate is not a prerequisite for a paraeducator working in any program;**
- **Attain by completing 75 hours** of professional development in topics related to the duties of an advanced paraeducator:
  - Assisting in highly impacted classrooms,
  - Assisting in specialized instructional support and instructional technology applications,
  - Mentoring and coaching other paraeducators.
- **Advanced paraeducator certificates expire after five years.**

## ADVANCED PARAEDUCATOR CERTIFICATE



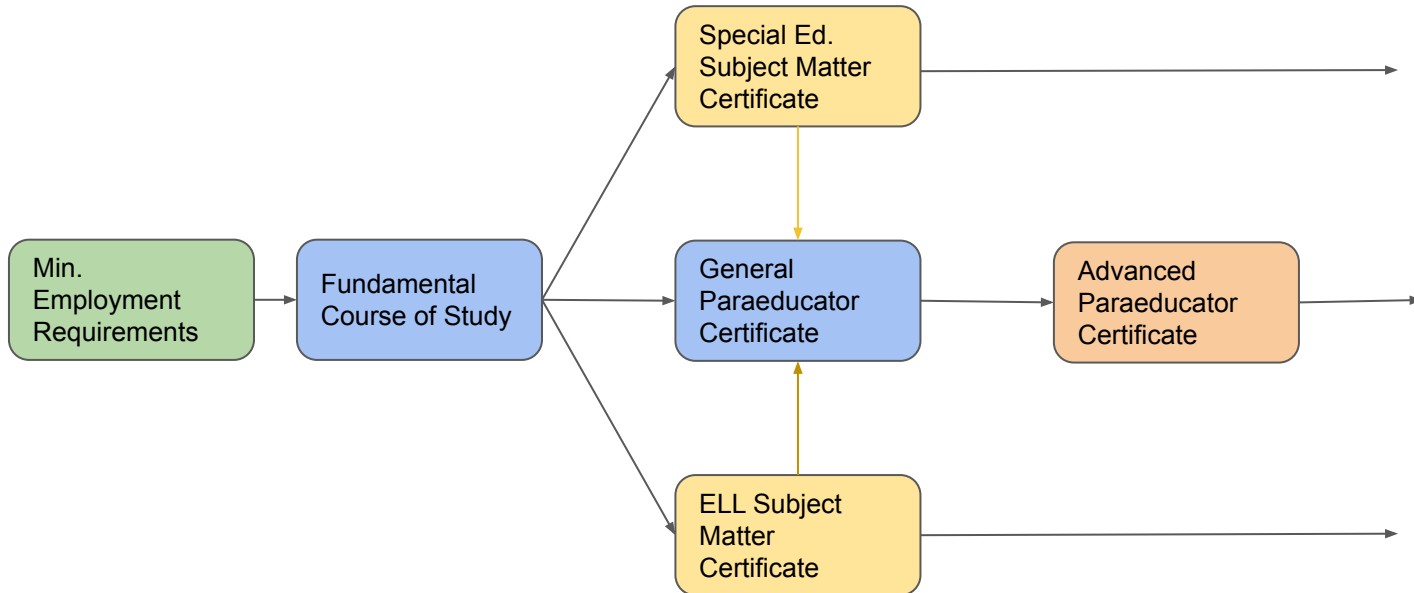
- **Details:** The advanced certificate offers additional professional development on the following duties: assisting high-impact classrooms, supporting specialized instruction, and mentoring other paraeducators.
- **Training time:** 75 hours
- **Expiration:** Five years. Renewable.
- **Requirements:** This certificate is not a requirement for employment. Paraeducators must first complete the FCS and general certificate.

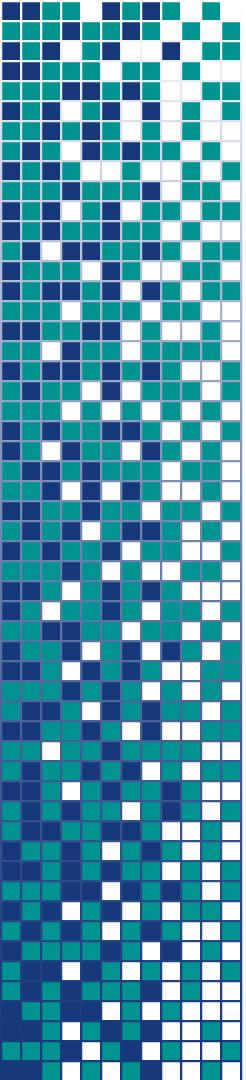


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## Another look





## School Year 2019-20



## School Year 2019-20 Requirements

- **School districts are required** to provide 2 days of professional development training on the FCS (SD decision);
- The FCS is still 4 days of training;
- School districts and paraeducators are not required to complete the 4 days of training during school year 2019-20;

## School Year 2019-20 Requirements

- There is no requirement to provide training on the General Paraeducator Certificate.
- School districts may provide training to complete requirements on the FCS and the General Paraeducator Certificate, but reimbursement from the state will not be provided.

## Additional notes

- Must complete the FCS first (all four days), before beginning the General Paraeducator Certificate\*;
- Hours is equivalent to clock hours;
- E-cert has been adapted for paraeducators;
- When the FCS is done, it is the responsibility of the paraeducator (with the assistance from the school district) to note completion on e-cert;
- It is the responsibility of both the paraeducator and school district to maintain records.

## Deadlines

Paraeducators hired for the 2018-19 school year must complete the training by September 1, 2020

Paraeducators not employed for the 2018-19 school year, but employed for the 2019-20 school year must complete the training by September 1, 2021

## Odds and ends

- Paraeducators who were former teachers or hold a valid WAC 181 certificate
- PGPs
- What about local, state, federal, temporary, etc... paraeducators?
- Tracking completion of training

# Funding

- This is a reimbursement model
  - SDs required to provide training SY 2019-20
  - Funds provided to the SD, at the earliest, July 1, 2020
- Following the expenditure report for this program, which states:
  - ~ \$218, per paraeducator, per day
  - This is funding for paraeducator release time (salary and benefits)
- Reimbursement request
  - To be done via iGrants
  - Request to be made during the open window near the end of the 2019-20 school year
    - Window TBD



## SECTION II

# What to consider when implementing the Fundamental Course of Study



## Understanding paraeducator standards

- Paraeducator standards with knowledge and skill components:
  - Are the basis for all training; and
  - Can be incorporated into district job descriptions

# Understanding paraeducator standards

PARAEDUCATOR BOARD

## General Paraeducator Standards of Practice

STANDARD 1	STANDARD 2	STANDARD 3	STANDARD 4	STANDARD 5
Support educational outcomes	Demonstrate professionalism and ethical practices	Support a positive and safe learning environment	Communicate effectively and participate in the team process	Demonstrate cultural competency
<b>1.1 Knowledge Competencies:</b> <b>A.</b> Proficiency in basic reading, writing, and math skills  <b>B.</b> Knowledge of basic computer applications (Word, PPT, Excel), data collection, assessments and software applications to support K-12 education  <b>C.</b> Knowledge of one's own cultural identity and how it influences perceptions, values, and practices	<b>2.1 Knowledge Competencies:</b> <b>A.</b> Knowledge of the Code of Professional Conduct for education (WAC 181.87) and applicable district policies and procedures  <b>B.</b> Knowledge of the distinctions in the roles and responsibilities of teachers, paraeducators, administrators, families, and other team members  <b>C.</b> Knowledge of the need to protect civil and human rights pertaining to all students, families, and staff  <b>D.</b> Knowledge of the importance and purpose of confidentiality of student information	<b>3.1 Knowledge Competencies:</b> <b>A.</b> Knowledge of child and adolescent developmental milestones/stages and potential early warning indicators (e.g. attendance, behavior, and academic progress)  <b>B.</b> Knowledge of strategies to create an equitable learning environment which fosters the unique strengths and abilities of students being served  <b>C.</b> Knowledge of behavioral support systems/strategies that create inclusive and safe learning environments	<b>4.1 Knowledge Competencies:</b> <b>A.</b> Knowledge of how multiple communication methods contribute to collaborative teamwork  <b>B.</b> Knowledge of collaborative team strategies and decision making  <b>C.</b> Knowledge of the need to respect individual differences among all students, families, and staff  <b>D.</b> Knowledge of the importance of giving and receiving feedback regarding student learning and/or personal performance	<b>5.1 Knowledge Competencies:</b> <b>A.</b> Knowledge of and respect for different ethnic, cultural, abilities, and linguistic backgrounds of students, families, staff, and community being served  <b>B.</b> Knowledge of strategies to support and maintain a culturally inclusive learning environment  <b>C.</b> Knowledge of student cultural histories and contexts, as well as family norms and values in different cultures
<b>1.2 Skill Competencies:</b> <b>A.</b> Demonstrate ability to assist in reviewing, preparing, delivering, and reinforcing district/school/classroom instructional outcomes (e.g. tutoring, individual and small group instruction) as directed by certificated/licensed staff	<b>2.2 Skill Competencies:</b> <b>A.</b> Adhere to code of professional conduct and applicable district policies, and procedures	<b>3.2 Skill Competencies:</b> <b>A.</b> Demonstrate ability to assist students at appropriate developmental stages and report student concerns or risk factors to certificated staff or supervisor	<b>4.2 Skill Competencies:</b> <b>A.</b> Demonstrate the ability to utilize various communication methods, problem-solving skills, and collaboration strategies with staff, students, families, and community	<b>5.2 Skill Competencies:</b> <b>A.</b> Demonstrate the ability to assist in implementing educational material which represents and supports various cultures and abilities of students being served as directed by certificated/licensed staff

[Link to standards document](#)

# Implementing Fundamental Course of Study

## Steps to Consider:

- Understand and unpack FCS course outline with Learning Objectives with Standards - 12 units
- Work smart and **crosswalk** the FCS Learning Objectives to what your **district has already been offering** and perhaps can modify to meet the FCS Learning Objectives
- Consider what trainers would be a good match to deliver the FCS

[Link to the FCS outline](#)

# Implementing Fundamental Course of Study

- Consider working with your union leaders to determine what courses will work best.
- Understand and review Collective Bargaining Agreement
- Involve paraeducators, union, and district leadership to increase credibility and paraeducator buy-in.
- Consider what method of training your district will utilize - face to face training or perhaps a blended learning approach with online access to What We Do Matters Modules

# Implementing Fundamental Course of Study

## Supporting Educational Outcomes (11 hours)

### Units:

### Minimum Suggested Length

1. Technology Basics

2 Clock hours

2. Introduction to Cultural Identity and Diversity

4 Clock hours

3. Methods of Educational and Instructional Support

4 Clock hours

4. Using and Collecting Data

1 Clock hour



# Implementing Fundamental Course of Study

## Demonstrate Professionalism and Ethical Practices (6 hours)

### Units

### Minimum Suggested Length

5.District Orientation/Responsibilities/Prof. Conduct and Ethical conduct

3 Clock hours

6.Equity

3 Clock hours

# Implementing Fundamental Course of Study

## Supporting a Positive and Safe Learning Environment (8 hours)

Unit:	Minimum Suggested Length
7.Positive and Safe Learning Environment	3 Clock hours
8.Behavior Management Strategies including de-escalation strategies	2 Clock hours
9.Child and Adolescent Development	2 Clock hours
10.Emergency and Health Safety	1 Clock hour

# Implementing Fundamental Course of Study

## Communicating Effectively and Participate in Teaming Process (3 hour)

Unit:	Minimum Suggested Length
11.Communication Basics	2 Clock hours
12.Communication Challenges	1 Clock hour



## Implementing Fundamental Course of Study

- Select what units you will offer during 2019-2020 school year
- Select a total of 14 clock hours to offer during 2019-2020 school year
- Consider your resources and partnering with other districts; ESD's, unions, or Community Colleges to deliver FCS
- Create District Training Plan and Calendar for Implementation



## Implementing Fundamental Course of Study

- Consider how to communicate the FCS offerings to all Paraeducators and Principals
- Consider how you will record and track enrollment and completion of classes offered
- Submission for cost reimbursement in grants will require specific data be collected

## PESB Resources

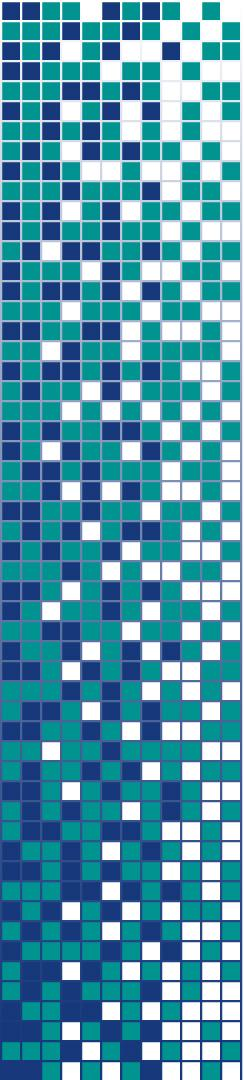
- **Webinar**
  - June 5, 12:00-1:30
  
- **Train the Trainer Workshops**
  - June 21; Everett Public Schools, 9:00-4:00
  - June 24; ESD 101, Spokane, 9:00-4:00
  - June 26; ESD 121, Renton, 9:00-4:00
  - June 27; ESD 112, Vancouver, 9:00-4:00
  
- **Implementation Toolkit**
  - July 1, available online



## SECTION III

Thoughts from the Pilot and looking to 2019-20

# **ISD Para Pilot & 2019-2020 Plans**



**CALM DOWN!**



**WE GOT THIS**

# PARA PILOT DETAILS

## Participants

Elementary special education paras

60+ invited, 32 total began, 29 participants completed the entire pilot

## Content

Fundamental Course of Study and Special Education Certificate

48 total hours of professional development

## Format

Mixed modality of PD delivery

10 hours of online modules for FCS (WWDM)

In person trainings for the 18 FCS hours balance, all 20 sped hours in person

# WHERE TO BEGIN...

## Collaboration is Key

- Created a Paraprofessional Learning Coach position to mentor new paras and support the pilot, para bargaining group
- Used FCS Learning Targets to develop PD content
- Tapped into our Director of Educational Technology to deliver pieces of the Tech Basics and PBIS Coordinator to deliver Positive/Safe Learning Environment, Behavior Management and De-escalation
- Met with Executive Director of Special Education in September, Sped Leadership Team reviewed learning targets to determine facilitators for specific content

# WHAT WE LEARNED...

## Reactions

- Strong and pertinent overall content (in person and online modules)
- Long overdue attention to professional support and ongoing growth of paras
- Overall positive and grateful for the PD (ex. Sped Laws and Regulations)
- Paras enjoy being able to collaborate/discuss learning with other paras
- Tapping into District resources (facilitators) to deliver PD
- Learning targets allow some customization for district initiatives/programs
- Full time position dedicated to the paraprofessionals and the pilot has been critical (work load, perspective, facilitation, etc.)



# WHAT WE LEARNED...

## Challenges

- Scope of implementation – big lift
- Offering in person training during para non-working hours (personal commitments)
- Makeups for those that miss in person training
- Staying mindful when developing training the role of the para vs role of a teacher (ex. Instructional Practices)
- WWDM modules good content but no built in accountability

# 2019 - 2020 REQUIREMENTS

## What ISD is thinking:

- Broken into 5 Parts – Part A, B, C, D, E
- A – D = 6 hours each
- E = District Orientation/Roles and Responsibilities/Safety & Health (4 hours)
- Parts A, B and E delivered 2019-2020
- Parts C, D and E delivered 2020 – 2021
- Two year cycle to get through entire FCS with all required paras
- Currently only funding for 2019-2020 SY so will have to see what the state leg does moving forward, this could affect plans

# 2019 - 2020 REQUIREMENTS

**ALL subject to bargaining and agreement with SEIU, meeting next week to discuss**

- **Proposing August 6 hour training for ALL paras**  
Cover Part A Topics (probably PBSES related)  
BASC only paras will be included  
Bus Aides included  
HRS group will have own training with Health Services Supervisor
- **Proposing October NS Day 6 hour training for ALL paras**  
Cover Part B Topics (TBD, possibly Instructional Practices)  
BASC only paras will attend training developed by BASC Admin Team  
Bus Aides TBD  
HRS group will have own training with Health Services Supervisor

# 2019 - 20 POTENTIAL PLANS

## District Orientation/Roles and Responsibilities

- Either through In Person Compliance Trainings, Safe Schools and/or New Hire Orientations
- May be an added accountability piece for buildings to provide up to an hour of Roles and Responsibilities content (learning targets provided)

## Safety and Health (1 hour)

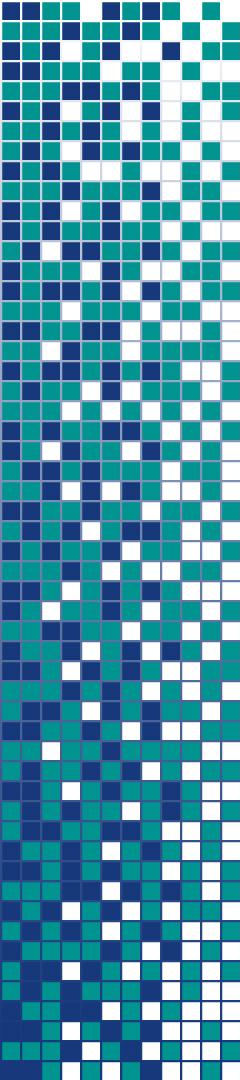
- Delivered by Building Administrator and/or Dean of Students and Nurse
- Will provide checklist of required topics but will include mandatory health trainings (epi, seizures, etc.) and overview of building specific emergency preparedness plans and drill procedures



# 2019 - 20 POTENTIAL PLANS

## Makeups

- January Non-Student Day will be Part A Makeups for any paras who missed August for authorized reasons and any new hires after September 1.
- Part B Makeups will be delivered in August 2020, preferably adjoining the Part C Training Day for the 2020 – 2021 school year.
- Makeups might not be provided for exempt paras



# TBD...

- Internal tracking system of FCS components
- Support for e-cert system for paras
- Content revisions
- Training location/s
- Facilitators





# MENTORING

- **2 Paraprofessional Learning Coaches**
- **Continue providing content at new hire orientation**
- **Goal: Coaching cycle for all new para hires within first 45 days**
  - Preliminary meeting (typically 20 - 30 minutes)
  - Observation/shadow (1 to 2 hours)
  - Post observation meeting (30 minutes)
  - Additional cycle if needed
- **Support vs evaluation**
- **Communication to cert/classified staff**
- **Overwhelmingly positive feedback from new paras**

## Lessons learned from the Pilots

### **Leverage locally bargained resources to ensure training meets district and paraeducator needs**

Consider how the training will affect paraeducator bargaining and what changes must take place for the successful implementation of the program (e.g., adding paid paraeducator training days in the school year). School districts will want to review full day, early release, and late start time to provide the training.

# Lessons learned from the Pilots

## **Leverage current training**

Districts should review already established training against the requirements of the Fundamental Course of Study. By leveraging teacher training programs that can easily be restructured for paraeducators, it will guarantee that paraeducators and teachers have a unified background of training content.

## Lessons Learned from Pilots

**Delivery of training: Best practice is face-to-face training with options for blended learning**

Pilot districts recommended face-to-face training in small groups to ensure optimum results. Using a blended learning approach ( some face to face with online modules as pre-work ) can also support discussion and learning from each other with shared experiences and examples from classroom application

# Lessons Learned from Pilots

## **Communication is critical**

District leaders need to communicate information about the new requirements for the Paraeducator Certificate Program. Districts should also inform and include all levels of the education team (e.g., paraeducators, teachers, principals, administrators)

## Partnering with others

The responsibility is on the school district to provide and ensure your paraeducators receive training on the FCS and general certificate.

School districts can do this by providing training in-house, partnering with another school district, and/or working with other providers, such as:

- Community colleges
- ESDs
- Unions
- And more

**IMPORTANT NOTE: these providers must follow the FCS**



## Community & Technical Colleges

- Educ 101 – embeds all the modules of the required 4-day paraeducator training into one course.
  - Can be completed within 3 months or less.
- Many colleges, across the state, have adopted this common course to assist school districts
- Tuition is roughly \$350\*
- Courses may be offered in 2 formats:
  - Face-to-face instruction for all 30 hrs.
  - Hybrid – part online and at least 7 hours of face-to-face instruction.
- In many cases, training can be provided at a school district location and at a time convenient for paraeducators.
- Students may choose to take the course for credit (or not).
  - Course taken for credit counts toward education credentials.

**Contact:** Kathy Goebel, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges  
[kgoebel@sbctc.edu](mailto:kgoebel@sbctc.edu), 360-704-4359

## Questions?

### **Contact information:**

[paraboard@k12.wa.us](mailto:paraboard@k12.wa.us)

### **This presentation can be found at:**

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