

## **Carbon-Lehigh Intermediate Unit #21 Credential Process**

### ***Credential of Competency for Special Education Paraeducators Documentation of Special Education Paraeducators' Competence in Standards-Based Knowledge and Skills***

As practicing members of the educational team, paraeducators should be able to document their competence and mastery of required skills and knowledge. A *Credential of Competency for Special Education Paraeducators in Pennsylvania* is available from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education. This credential is a **voluntary** program for paraeducators and school districts who wish to participate. The enclosed *Special Education Paraeducator Standards for Practice: Competency Assessment Checklist* can be used by paraeducators and their supervisors to document the achievement of the skills and knowledge necessary to work with students in special education programs.

**Please submit completed checklist to your supervisor for documentation signature and date.**

**Your supervisor will forward the checklist to Terrie Geisel or Karen Newton for processing. You will receive a copy of the checklist with a memo indicating the date it left the IU for submission to the state.**

Upon review and approval of the submitted documents, the paraeducator will be issued a *Credential of Competency for Special Education Paraeducators in Pennsylvania*. Please note that it takes about 6-8 weeks for the approval process to be completed.

## ***Performance-Based Standards for Special Education Paraeducators***

Performance-based standards include statements of the knowledge and skills needed by paraeducators to work successfully in educational environments. Standards for knowledge and skill competencies are the foundation for pre-service preparation, ongoing professional development, and performance assessment of paraeducators. *Knowledge and Skills for Beginning Special Educators* were identified by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) in *What Every Special Educator Must Know*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed, 2000. These knowledge and skill statements correspond with the performance-based standards for special education paraeducators promulgated by the CEC [http://.cec.sped.org/ps/perf\\_based\\_stds/paraeducators\\_03-12-01.html](http://.cec.sped.org/ps/perf_based_stds/paraeducators_03-12-01.html)

The Bureau of Special Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education endorses the use of these ten CEC performance-based standards and their corresponding required knowledge and skills, as they define the basic content for the initial preparation and practice of special education paraeducators.

**Paraeducator Standard # 1: Foundations of Special Education**

**Paraeducator Standard # 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners**

**Paraeducator Standard # 3: Individual Learning Differences**

**Paraeducator Standard # 4: Instructional Strategies**

**Paraeducator Standard # 5: Learning Environments & Social Interactions**

**Paraeducator Standard # 6: Language**

**Paraeducator Standard # 7: Instructional Planning**

**Paraeducator Standard # 8: Assessment**

**Paraeducator Standard # 9: Professional & Ethical Practice**

**Paraeducator Standard # 10: Collaboration**

### **Completing the Competency Assessment Checklist**

Each of the ten Paraeducator Standards has a separate page that includes: the checklist of essential knowledge and skill competencies that apply to that standard; the method used to achieve each competency; the level achieved for each competency; the date completed; and the supervisor/designee signature.

**Directions:**

1. Complete employee information on cover page and identifying information on each page.
2. Indicate method used to achieve each competency in the **C-I-D-P** column. For **Essential Knowledge** mark **C** in this column. For **Essential Skills** mark **C/D** in this column.
3. Indicate the achievement level in the **E-I-A** column. Indicate **E** in this column.
4. Indicate the date each competency was achieved.
5. When all competencies in a standard have been completed, the supervisor or designee signs in space provided at bottom of the page to document that the requirements have been met.

<b>Verification:</b> C=Class I=Interview D=Demonstration P=Portfolio				
<b>Competency Achieved:</b>				
<b>Achievement Level:</b> E=Entry I=Intermediate A=Advanced				
<b>5. Learning Environments &amp; Social Interactions</b>		<b>E-I-A</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>C-I-D-P</b>
<b>Essential knowledge:</b>				
K1	Demands of various learning environments	E	2/23/05	C
K2	Rules and procedural safeguards regarding the management of behaviors of individuals with exceptional learning needs	E	2/23/05	C
<b>Essential skills:</b>				
S1	Establish and maintain rapport with learners	E	2/23/05	C/D
S2	Use universal precautions and assist in maintaining a safe, healthy learning environment	E	2/23/05	C/D
S3	Use strategies for behavior management as directed	E	2/23/05	C/D
S4	Use strategies as directed, in a variety of settings, to assist in the development of social skills	E	2/23/05	C/D

Example

**Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Bureau of Special Education**

***Paraeducator Standards for Practice:  
Competency Assessment Checklist***  
**(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)**

**Paraeducator Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Last six digits of SS #:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Job Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check all that apply to the setting where you work:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early Intervention            | <input type="checkbox"/> Middle School                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary School             | <input type="checkbox"/> High School                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learning Support              | <input type="checkbox"/> Speech and Language Support         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Skills Support           | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Support                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple Disabilities Support | <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf and Hearing Impairment Support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Autistic Support              | <input type="checkbox"/> Blind and Visual Impairment Support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Support              | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                         |

**College Credits (if any):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Years of Experience:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Supervisor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Supervisor Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School District:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Employment Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-Mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

# ***Paraeducator Standards for Practice: Competency Assessment Checklist***

## **Standard # 1 – Foundations of Special Education**

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Employment Location: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Verification:</b> C=Class I=Interview D=Demonstration P=Portfolio			
<b>Date Competency Achieved:</b> _____			
<b>Achievement Level:</b> E=Entry I=Intermediate A=Advanced			
<b>1. Foundations of Special Education</b>		<b>E-I-A</b>	<b>Date Achieved</b>
<b>Essential knowledge:</b>		<b>C-I-D-P</b>	
K1	Purposes of programs for individuals with exceptional learning needs		
K2	Basic educational terminology regarding students, programs, roles, and instructional activities		

**Documented by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Type or print supervisor's name, title and school district)

# ***Paraeducator Standards for Practice: Competency Assessment Checklist***

## **Standard # 2 – Development and Characteristics of Learners**

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Employment Location: \_\_\_\_\_

**Verification:**

C=Class I=Interview D=Demonstration P=Portfolio

**Competency Achieved:**

**Achievement Level:**

E=Entry I=Intermediate A=Advanced

**2. Development & Characteristics of Learners**

**E-I-A**

**Date**

**C-I-D-P**

**Essential knowledge:**

*K1*

*Effects an exceptional condition(s) can have on an individual's life*

**Documented by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Type or print supervisor's name, title and school district)

# Paraeducator Standards for Practice: Competency Assessment Checklist

## Standard # 3 – Individual Learning Differences

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Employment Location: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Verification:</b> C=Class I=Interview D=Demonstration P=Portfolio	
<b>Competency Achieved:</b>	
<b>Achievement Level:</b> E=Entry I=Intermediate A=Advanced	

3. Individual Learning Differences		E-I-A	Date	C-I-D-P
<i>Essential knowledge:</i>				
K1	Rights and responsibilities of families and children as they relate to individual learning needs			
K2	Indicators of abuse and neglect			
<i>Essential skills:</i>				
S1	Demonstrate sensitivity to the diversity of individuals and families			

**Documented by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Type or print supervisor's name, title and school district)

# Paraeducator Standards for Practice: Competency Assessment Checklist

## Standard # 4 – Instructional Strategies

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Employment Location: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Verification:</b> C=Class I=Interview D=Demonstration P=Portfolio				
<b>Competency Achieved:</b> _____				
<b>Achievement Level:</b> E=Entry I=Intermediate A=Advanced				
<b>4. Instructional Strategies</b>		<b>E-I-A</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>C-I-D-P</b>
<b>Essential knowledge:</b>				
K1	Basic instructional and remedial strategies and materials			
K2	Basic technologies appropriate to individuals with exceptional learning needs			
K3	How students learn reading			
K4	How students learn mathematics			
<b>Essential skills:</b>				
S1	Use strategies, equipment, materials, and technologies, as directed, to accomplish instructional objectives			
S2	Assist in adapting instructional strategies and materials as directed			
S3	Use strategies as directed to facilitate effective integration into various settings			
S4	Use strategies that promote the learner's independence as directed			
S5	Use strategies as directed to increase the individual's independence and confidence			

**Documented by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Type or print supervisor's name, title and school district)



# ***Paraeducator Standards for Practice: Competency Assessment Checklist***

## **Standard # 5 – Learning Environments & Social Interactions**

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Employment Location: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Verification:</b> C=Class I=Interview D=Demonstration P=Portfolio				
<b>Competency Achieved:</b>				
<b>Achievement Level:</b> E=Entry I=Intermediate A=Advanced				
<b>5. Learning Environments &amp; Social Interactions</b>		<b>E-I-A</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>C-I-D-P</b>
<b>Essential knowledge:</b>				
K1	<i>Demands of various learning environments</i>			
K2	<i>Rules and procedural safeguards regarding the management of behaviors of individuals with exceptional learning needs</i>			
<b>Essential skills:</b>				
S1	<i>Establish and maintain rapport with learners</i>			
S2	<i>Use universal precautions and assist in maintaining a safe, healthy learning environment</i>			
S3	<i>Use strategies for behavior management as directed</i>			
S4	<i>Use strategies as directed, in a variety of settings, to assist in the development of social skills</i>			

**Documented by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Type or print supervisor's name, title and school district)

# ***Paraeducator Standards for Practice: Competency Assessment Checklist***

## **Standard # 6 – Language**

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Employment Location: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Verification:</b> C=Class I=Interview D=Demonstration P=Portfolio			
<b>Competency Achieved:</b> _____			
<b>Achievement Level:</b> E=Entry I=Intermediate A=Advanced			
<b>6. Language</b>	<b>E-I-A</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>C-I-D-P</b>
<i><b>Essential knowledge:</b></i>			
<i><b>K1</b></i>	<i>Characteristics of appropriate communication with stakeholders</i>		

**Documented by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Type or print supervisor's name, title and school district)

# ***Paraeducator Standards for Practice: Competency Assessment Checklist***

## **Standard # 7 – Instructional Planning**

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Employment Location: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Verification:</b> C=Class I=Interview D=Demonstration P=Portfolio				
<b>Competency Achieved:</b>				
<b>Achievement Level:</b> E=Entry I=Intermediate A=Advanced				
<b>7. Instructional Planning</b>		<b>E-I-A</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>C-I-D-P</b>
<b>Essential skills:</b>				
S1	Follow written plans, seeking clarification as needed			
S2	Prepare and organize materials to support teaching and learning as directed			

**Documented by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Type or print supervisor's name, title and school district)

# ***Paraeducator Standards for Practice: Competency Assessment Checklist***

## **Standard # 8 – Assessment**

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Employment Location: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Verification:</b> C=Class I=Interview D=Demonstration P=Portfolio			
<b>Competency Achieved:</b> _____			
<b>Achievement Level:</b> E=Entry I=Intermediate A=Advanced			
<b>8. Assessment</b>	<b>E-I-A</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>C-I-D-P</b>
<i><b>Essential knowledge:</b></i>			
K1	<i>Rationale for assessment</i>		
K2	<i>Assessments in reading</i>		
K3	<i>Assessments in mathematics</i>		
<i><b>Essential skills:</b></i>			
S1	<i>Demonstrate basic collection techniques as directed</i>		
S2	<i>Make and document objective observations as directed</i>		

**Documented by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Type or print supervisor's name, title and school district)

# Paraeducator Standards for Practice: Competency Assessment Checklist

## Standard # 9 – Professional and Ethical Practice

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Employment Location: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Verification:</b> C=Class I=Interview D=Demonstration P=Portfolio			
<b>Competency Achieved:</b> _____			
<b>Achievement Level:</b> E=Entry I=Intermediate A=Advanced			
<b>9. Professional and Ethical Practice</b>		<b>E-I-A</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Essential knowledge:</b>			
K1	<i>Ethical practices for confidential communication about individuals with exceptional learning needs</i>		
K2	<i>Personal, cultural biases and differences that affect one's ability to work with others</i>		
<b>Essential skills:</b>			
S1	<i>Perform responsibilities as directed in a manner consistent with laws and policies</i>		
S2	<i>Follow instructions of the professional</i>		
S3	<i>Demonstrate problem-solving, flexible thinking, conflict management techniques, and analysis of personal strengths and preferences</i>		
S4	<i>Act as a role model for individuals with exceptional learning needs</i>		
S5	<i>Demonstrate commitment to assisting learners in achieving their highest potential</i>		
S6	<i>Demonstrate the ability to separate personal issues from one's responsibilities as a paraeducator</i>		
S7	<i>Maintain a high level of competence and integrity</i>		
S8	<i>Exercise objective and prudent judgment</i>		
S9	<i>Demonstrate proficiency in academic skills, including oral and written communication</i>		
S10	<i>Engage in activities to increase one's own knowledge and skills</i>		
S11	<i>Engage in self-assessment</i>		
S12	<i>Accept and use constructive feedback</i>		
S13	<i>Demonstrate ethical practices as guided by the CEC Code of Ethics and other standards and policies</i>		

**Documented by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Type or print supervisor's name, title and school district)

# Paraeducator Standards for Practice: Competency Assessment Checklist

## Standard # 10 – Collaboration

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Employment Location: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Verification:</b> C=Class I=Interview D=Demonstration P=Portfolio				
<b>Competency Achieved:</b> _____				
<b>Achievement Level:</b> E=Entry I=Intermediate A=Advanced				
<b>10. Collaboration</b>		<b>E-I-A</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>C-I-D-P</b>
<b>Essential knowledge:</b>				
K1	Common concerns of families of individuals with exceptional learning needs			
K2	Roles of stakeholders in planning an individualized program			
<b>Essential skills:</b>				
S1	Assist in collecting and providing objective, accurate information to professionals			
S2	Collaborate with stakeholders as directed			
S3	Foster respectful and beneficial relationships			
S4	Participate as directed in conferences as members of the educational team			
S5	Function in a manner that demonstrates a positive regard for the distinctions between roles and responsibilities of paraeducators and those of professionals			

**Documented by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Type or print supervisor's name, title and school district)