

**Chapter 179-15 WAC**  
**SPECIAL EDUCATION SUBJECT MATTER CERTIFICATE**

Last Update: 2/12/19

**WAC**

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**WAC 179-15-010 Purpose.** (1) The purpose of this chapter is to define a paraeducator's minimum requirements and process to attain, and the validity period for, the special education subject matter certificate;

(2) The special education subject matter certificate provides increased training to paraeducators to meet the demands of special education instructional support; and

(3) Provided that the special education subject matter certificate is not a prerequisite for a paraeducator working in any program.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.413 RCW. WSR 18-17-011, § 179-15-010, filed 8/2/18, effective 9/2/18.]

**WAC 179-15-020 Minimum requirements.** Prior to completing the special education subject matter certificate, the paraeducator must have completed the fundamental course of study.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.413 RCW. WSR 18-17-011, § 179-15-020, filed 8/2/18, effective 9/2/18.]

**WAC 179-15-030 Process.** (1) To attain the paraeducator special education subject matter certificate, the paraeducator must complete twenty continuing education credit hours of training that meet the learning objectives of the course outline as described in WAC 179-15-060;

(2) Training for the certificate must include the training competencies that align with WAC 179-15-050;

(3) A professional growth plan may not be completed to attain the special education subject matter certificate; and

(4) The paraeducator shall be responsible for completing filing requirements with the superintendent of public instruction, in accordance with WAC 179-01-020, the completion of the special education subject matter certificate.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.413 RCW. WSR 19-05-024, § 179-15-030, filed 2/12/19, effective 3/15/19; WSR 18-17-011, § 179-15-030, filed 8/2/18, effective 9/2/18.]

**WAC 179-15-040 Validity period.** The special education subject matter certificate expires after five years, and as follows:

(1) A certificate issued prior to June 30th of a calendar year shall have the expiration date of the certificate calculated on the

basis such certificate was completed on June 30th of the same calendar year regardless of the date of issuance; and

(2) A certificate issued July 1st or later in the calendar year shall have the expiration date of the certificate calculated on the basis that such certificate was completed on June 30th of the next calendar year regardless of the date of issuance.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.413 RCW. WSR 18-17-011, § 179-15-040, filed 8/2/18, effective 9/2/18.]

**WAC 179-15-050 Knowledge and skill competencies for the standards of practice.** The knowledge and skill competencies describe the learning objectives paraeducators should exhibit when working with students. Competencies are associated with each of the standards written in WAC 179-07-030 and are in addition to the knowledge and skill competencies written in WAC 179-07-040:

(1) Supporting instructional opportunities:

(a) Knowledge competencies:

(i) Knowledge of fundamental purpose of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free and appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them to further education, employment and independent living;

(ii) Knowledge of common special education terminology and acronyms (e.g., Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), individualized education program, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), functional behavior assessment (FBA), behavior intervention plan (BIP), and least restrictive environment (LRE)) that relate to required assignment;

(iii) Knowledge of basic special education process (e.g., free and appropriate public education, individualized education program, and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973);

(iv) Knowledge of the legal requirements for supporting students eligible for and receiving special education services;

(v) Knowledge of the purpose of individualized education program goals, related supports (e.g., accommodations and modifications) and/or related documents (e.g., health care plan) if applicable or pertinent to assigned duties;

(vi) Knowledge of the importance and role of families in the educational process of students eligible and receiving special education services; and

(vii) Knowledge of the importance of language development in academic and nonacademic learning environments for students eligible and receiving special education services.

(b) Skill competencies:

(i) Ability to implement instructional strategies and techniques that support specially designed instruction and specific learning needs as developed and directed by certificated/licensed staff;

(ii) Ability to assist students with assistive technology as directed by certificated/licensed staff; and

(iii) Ability to assist in recording and maintaining data (e.g., academic, behavior, social/emotional, or health) to support individualized education program goals and behavior plans as directed by certificated/licensed staff.

(2) Demonstrating professionalism and ethical practices:

(a) Knowledge competencies:

Knowledge of district expectations and/or policies regarding appropriate communication with families and students eligible for and receiving special services as directed by certificated/licensed staff.

(b) Skill competencies:

(i) Ability to practice ethical and professional standards of conduct, including the requirements of confidentiality;

(ii) Ability to comply with the requirements of confidentiality for educational and medical records;

(iii) Ability to comply with legal requirements regarding abuse and neglect;

(iv) Ability to comply with district policies and procedures regarding students eligible for and receiving special education services;

(v) Ability to support high expectations and quality of life potential for students eligible for and receive special education services;

(vi) Develop and maintain professional relationships with both general and special education colleagues;

(vii) Collaborate with others providing services to students eligible for and receiving special education services;

(viii) Practice within their professional knowledge and skills and seek appropriate support when needed; and

(ix) Pursue and participate in professional staff development and/or learning opportunities.

(3) Supporting a positive and safe learning environment:

(a) Knowledge competencies:

(i) Knowledge of legal, ethical practices, and procedural safeguards regarding positive behavioral supports, restraints, and/or isolation of students eligible for and receiving special education services;

(ii) Knowledge that all student behavior (both desired and undesired) is a form of communication and should be acknowledged with an effective response;

(iii) Knowledge of the importance of consistency, predictability and structures in the learning environment and the impact on student behavior and learning outcomes; and

(iv) Knowledge of the basic behavior change process and intervention strategies (e.g., antecedent, behavior, and consequence).

(b) Skill competencies:

(i) Ability to support the legal, ethical practices, and procedural safeguards regarding positive behavioral support, restraint, and isolation of students eligible for and receiving special education services as directed by certificated/licensed staff;

(ii) Ability to implement strategies to support students to maximize their independence across all learning environments;

(iii) Ability to support students in following prescribed classroom routines and transitions with consistency and predictability as determined by certificated/licensed staff;

(iv) Ability to effectively implement a behavior plan for students eligible for and receiving special education services and determined by certificated/licensed staff; and

(v) Ability to carry out assigned health related care or duties with dignity and respect for students they support as directed by school nurse.

(4) Communicating effectively and participating in the team process:

(a) Knowledge competencies:

(i) Knowledge of how to forward and direct concerns or issues from students and/or families of students eligible for receiving special education services; and

(ii) Knowledge of district expectations and appropriate boundaries of communication in various settings (inside and outside of school day) with students and families to protect student confidentiality and privacy following the established chain of command as determined by certificated/licensed staff and district policy.

(b) Skill competencies:

(i) Ability to support in individualized education program conferences and team meetings as determined by each individualized education program team;

(ii) Ability to communicate and forward family or student concerns/issues to designated certificated/licensed staff or administrator;

(iii) Ability to follow individualized education program goals and communicate within appropriate boundaries to protect student confidentiality and privacy as directed by certificated/licensed staff.

(5) Demonstrating cultural competency aligned with standards developed by the professional educator standards board under RCW 28A.410.270:

(a) Knowledge competencies:

Knowledge of culturally responsive strategies for delivering specially designed instruction, accommodations, adaptations, and modifications as designed and determined by certificated/licensed staff.

(b) Skill competencies:

Ability to assist or implement culturally responsive strategies with students to facilitate effective integration into various settings (e.g., libraries, classrooms, playgrounds, community, and assorted modes of transportation) as directed by certificated/licensed staff.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.413 RCW. WSR 18-17-011, § 179-15-050, filed 8/2/18, effective 9/2/18.]

**WAC 179-15-060 Course outline for the special education subject matter certificate.** Providers and facilitators must follow the current course outline as published by the professional educator standards board when delivering training for the special educator subject matter certificate.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.413 RCW. WSR 18-17-011, § 179-15-060, filed 8/2/18, effective 9/2/18.]