

Office of Professional Development  
Ava G. Byrne, Deputy Superintendent

**SUBJECT:           REQUEST THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPT A REVISED PASSING SCORE ON THE EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICE PARAPRO ASSESSMENT FOR PARAPROFESSIONAL I EMPLOYEES TO MEET EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT**

**COMMITTEE:       SCHOOL SUPPORT ACCOUNTABILITY**

In accordance with the requirements set forth in Section 1119 of the "No Child Left Behind Act," paraprofessional personnel hired after January 8, 2002, must have completed at least two years of study at an institution of higher education or possess an Associate's (or higher) degree. Paraprofessional I personnel hired prior to January 8, 2002, must comply with NCLB requirements not later than January 8, 2006, through one of the following mechanisms:

1. Complete at least two years of study at an institution of higher education;
2. Obtain an Associate's (or higher) degree; or
3. Meet a rigorous standard of quality and be able to demonstrate through a formal State or local academic assessment:
  - a. Knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing, reading, writing and mathematics; or
  - b. Knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing, reading readiness, writing readiness and mathematics readiness, as appropriate.

During June 2005, the United States Department of Education extended the deadline to meet education compliance requirements from January 8, 2006, through the end of the 2005-2006 school year. Paraprofessional I employees that fail to meet educational requirements on or before the end of the 2005-2006 school year will not be permitted to remain employed in their current capacity. Affected individuals may be eligible for employment in non-instructional positions for which they are qualified, to the extent such positions are available.

During the School Board Meeting held on November 18, 2003, the Board authorized the use of the Educational Testing Service's ParaPro Assessment to allow paraprofessional I employees to meet educational compliance requirements and it adopted the Florida Consortia passing score of 464 for the ParaPro Assessment. The Florida Consortia Standard Setting Process for the ParaPro Assessment, conducted during February 2003, included as a criterion that at least two-thirds of paraprofessionals taking the test for the first time achieve the passing score or better. Since its implementation in Miami-Dade County Public Schools, 415 paraprofessional I employees (unduplicated count) have completed the assessment (291 paper-and-pencil tests, and 124 computer-based tests). A review of the assessment results indicates that only 41.5% of individuals taking the assessment are achieving the current passing score (464 points or higher). The percentage of individuals receiving passing scores

accordingly fails to meet the criterion set forth in the Florida Consortia Standard Setting Process for the ParaPro Assessment.

In establishing an operational passing score, Educational Testing Service allows districts to adjust their operational passing scores based on a review of candidate performances on the assessment. This process insures that the operational passing score is fair and equitable. In order to meet the criterion threshold, it is recommended that an operational passing score of 456 be adopted for the ParaPro Assessment in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. At this reduced score, 61.7% of paraprofessionals taking the assessment for the first time would achieve a passing score or better.

Board authorization to adopt the revised operational passing score of 456 points or higher on the Educational Testing Service ParaPro Assessment is hereby requested. The new operational passing score will be applied retroactively to Miami-Dade County Public Schools' ParaPro Assessment performances. Approval of this item will not generate additional costs to the district.

**RECOMMENDED:** That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, adopt a revised passing score on the Educational Testing Service ParaPro Assessment for paraprofessional I employees to meet education requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act.

There is no additional cost to the district as a result of this item.

AGB:gpq