

Appropriate Placement of Teachers & Paraprofessionals

When the Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was reauthorized as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the requirements surrounding Highly Qualified (HQ) teachers was removed providing states the autonomy to determine the requirements for teacher and paraprofessional placement.

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has determined that the reporting and verification of a teacher's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Highly Qualified status is no longer required. In support of Goal #3 in MDE's strategic plan, Top 10 in 10, which states, "Develop, support, and sustain a high-quality, prepared, and collaborative education workforce," MDE will outline requirements for certification, as well as provide best practice guidance to support Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) with appropriate staff placement.

When determining placement of educators, LEAs must consider these factors

1. Requirements for Certification
2. Best Practice Guidance

Requirements for Certification

Michigan Compiled Laws (MCL) [380.1531](#) and the Administrative Rules Governing the Certification of Michigan Teachers ([Michigan Administrative Code](#)) **require** teachers hold the endorsement for the subject(s) in which they are assigned to teach.

Teachers who hold the appropriate grade-level and content area endorsements on a valid Michigan educator certificate may be placed in an assignment to provide instruction in corresponding courses. For additional information on placement of teachers, reference the [Quick Reference: Courses That Can be Taught](#) document or the [Appropriate Instructional Assignments for Elementary Endorsed Teachers](#) document.

If a certified teacher does not hold the appropriate endorsement or is not available for the position, additional options for placement exist. Michigan has developed a [system of permits](#) that is structured to support the appropriate placement beliefs outlined in this document.

Special Education

Federal Requirements, in conjunction with Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE), specify requirements for the placement of special education teachers. Special education programs may be provided additional placement flexibilities. Specific information and guidance can be found in the [Special Education Placement](#) document.

“All Subject” Endorsements

Some Michigan certificates hold an “All Subjects” endorsement at specific grade-levels. Teachers with these valid certificates may be placed in any subject area for that grade-level. Additional information for an “All Subjects” placement can be found in the [Appropriate Instructional Assignments for Elementary Certified Teachers](#) document.

Career and Technical Education

Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses are assigned to teachers holding a Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code on a valid CTE Michigan teaching certificate. For questions about CIP code placement, CTE programs or Perkins funding, contact the appropriate [CTE program consultant](#). Holders of these CIP codes may also be placed in corresponding non-Perkins funded 6-12 classes.

Virtual and Online Instruction

Online instructional programs have taken on many forms in the past few years. It is vital to determine how, and by whom, instruction is occurring. For assistance with staffing an online program, LEAs can find information in the [Online or Computer-Based Instruction](#) document.

Paraprofessionals and Instructional Aides

The MDE does not issue a certificate or license for paraprofessionals. The MDE maintains a document for the appropriate [Utilization of Noncertified Personnel](#).

For the purposes of Title I, Part A, a paraprofessional is defined as an employee who provides instructional support in a program supported with Title I, Part A funds, either in a school-wide program or directly under a target-assisted program. As partners in the instructional process, paraprofessionals who work in programs supported with Title I funds must meet the requirements of:

- Earned 60 semester credit hours from an institution of higher education, or
- Earned an associate’s degree or higher, or
- Successfully complete an approved formal assessment

Additional information is provided in the [Paraprofessional Requirements](#) document.

Best Practice Guidance

Ensuring that an appropriately prepared and endorsed teacher is assigned to teach in Michigan’s classrooms is critical to student achievement. To be prepared to instruct Michigan students effectively, the MDE believes teachers should exhibit competency in three areas of their profession:

- Content Knowledge
- Pedagogical Practices
- Professional Behaviors

The MDE recommends local districts consider these competencies when placing staff to best serve the needs of all students in their district. Additional information and clarity on best-practices for educator assignment be found in the [Proper Placement Considerations](#) document.

