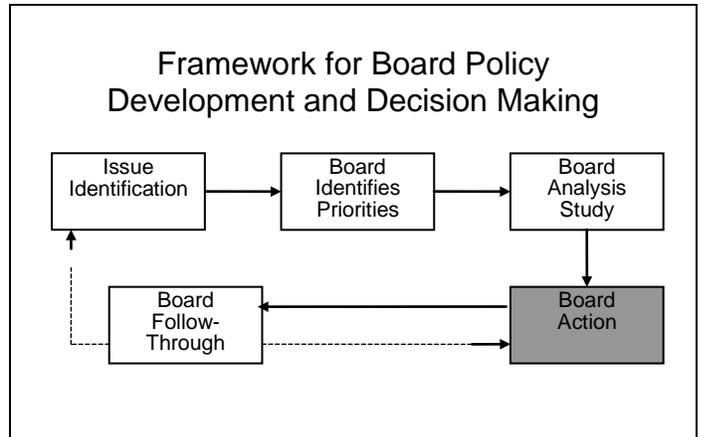


# Iowa State Board of Education

## Executive Summary

August 1, 2013



- Agenda Item:** Heartland Area Education Agency 11 Paraeducator Preparation Program Approval
- Iowa Goal:** Goal 1: All children will enter school ready to learn.  
Goal 2: All PK-12 students will achieve at a high level.
- State Board Role/Authority:** Iowa Administrative Code section 281—80 grants authority to the State Board of Education to set standards and procedures for the approval of programs for individuals who seek a paraeducator certification issued by the Board of Educational Examiners.
- Presenter:** Marietta Rives, Consultant  
Bureau of Educator Quality
- Attachments:** 1
- Recommendation:** It is recommended that the State Board approve the paraeducator preparation programs submitted by Heartland Area Education Agency which include: Generalist Level 1; Early Childhood; Special Needs; English as a Second Language; and Media, Technology, Library programs. The next review will be during the 2017-18 school year.
- Background:** Legislation originally passed in 1998 and revised in 2000 created a voluntary paraeducator certification. The legislation was prompted by the need to have well-trained paraeducators providing assistance to students and teachers. Licensure rules were established by the Board of Educational Examiners. The State Board of Education approves the voluntary preparation programs according to standards and procedures contained in Chapter 80 of the Iowa Administrative Code.

## **Programs Recommended for Approval August 1, 2013**

Heartland AEA 11 Paraeducator Programs to include:

- Generalist Level 1
- Early Childhood
- Special Needs
- English as a Second Language
- Media, Technology, Library

Iowa's voluntary paraeducator certification program is one way for paraeducators to meet the requirements set forth in No Child Left Behind. An additional benefit of this program is that certification will establish realistic opportunities for upward mobility through a career ladder pathway for paraeducators.

The institution named above has submitted a request for approval or re-approval of programs to certify paraeducators in each of the listed content areas. Although the paraeducator certification program is voluntary, there are benefits to having paraeducators certified.

1. All learners will be better served and the quality of education and related services will improve with the availability of a better-prepared paraeducator workforce.
2. Paraeducators have mastered skills that are required to support and supplement teacher/provider programs.

The programs have been reviewed. In reviewing the programs, it was important to look for three major components:

1. Verification that each of the standards included in Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 80 have been met.
2. Verification that all standards and competencies of Chapter 22, Board of Educational Examiners administrative rules were included.
3. Verification that criteria to evaluate performance of the standards were present and appropriate.

### **Strengths of the programs:**

- Face-to-face courses are taught by experts in the field and meet rigorous competencies for performance.
- Heartland has a representative advisory committee that has included paraeducator members for many years.

### **Recommendation:**

Based upon the review of programs submitted for consideration, approval for the Generalist Level 1; Early Childhood; Special Needs; English as Second Language; and Media, Technology, Library Paraeducator programs through Heartland Area Education Agency 11 is recommended.