

May 1, 2006

To: Title I District Chief School Administrators
Title I District Charter School Lead Persons

From: Barbara Gantwerk, Acting Assistant Commissioner
Division of Student Services

Subject: NCLB Requirements for Title I Paraprofessionals

This letter serves as a reminder that the deadline for Title I paraprofessionals to meet the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements is June 30, 2006. The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is firmly adhering to this deadline as the United States Department of Education has not granted states a waiver to extend the deadline for Title I paraprofessionals beyond the end of the 2005-2006 school year.

As specified in the NCLB legislation, paraprofessionals *hired after* January 8, 2002, who work in a program supported with Title I, Part A funds, with certain exceptions, *must* meet one of the following criteria:

- 1) Completed two years of study at an institution of higher education
- 2) Obtained an associate's (or higher) degree
- 3) Met a rigorous standard of quality and be able to demonstrate, through a formal state or local academic assessment, knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing, reading, writing, and mathematics (or, as appropriate, reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness)

Paraprofessional staff working in a Title I school, and whose salary is paid for in whole or in part with Title I funds, must meet one of the three criteria listed above by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. Data submitted by districts for the 2004-2005 Title I Performance Report and the FY 2007 NCLB Consolidated Application identifies those paraprofessionals funded by Title I. During the 2006-2007 school year, NJDOE will monitor the use of Title I funds for paraprofessionals in selected districts. Part of this process includes reviewing the use of Title I funds to support the salary of paraprofessionals and their highly qualified credentials. Districts that use Title I funds for the salaries of paraprofessionals who have not met the NCLB requirements will be subject to audit implications. Title I funds used to pay any portion of salaries for these paraprofessionals are subject to recovery, retroactive to January 1, 2002.

The New Jersey Department of Education is advising districts to comply with the NCLB Title I requirements by the June 30, 2006 deadline. For paraprofessionals in Title I targeted assistance programs that are in jeopardy of not meeting this deadline, the district may use non-Title I funds to cover the 100% of their salary. In Title I schoolwide programs, the district may assign impacted paraprofessionals to non-instructional roles for 100% of the school day or reassign them to a non-Title I school. Please check the NJDOE web site at <http://www.nj.gov/njded/title1/hqs/> for specific information about Title I paraprofessionals.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Karen L. Campbell, program manager, by phone at (609) 341-3403 or by e-mail at karen.campbell@doe.state.nj.us.

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