

ORTING SCHOOL DISTRICT PARAEDUCATOR CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

We value our paraeducators as critical to the success of our students. We want to invest in our paraeducators by providing professional development to enhance their practice. Now, through a new state program, we have funding for paraeducator training and certification.

The [Paraeducator Certificate Program](#) is a standards-based training program required by the state for all paraeducators. It creates a career growth ladder for those who wish to advance as a paraeducator or pursue the teaching profession.

TYPES OF CERTIFICATES

All paraeducators must earn the Fundamental Course of Study and General Paraeducator Certificate to continue working for any Washington State School District, including Orting. The program offers two required training components and three optional certificates.

Required

Fundamental Course of Study (FCS)

Paraeducators must complete the FCS within thirty days of hire, if hired prior to September 1, 2021, or within one year if hired after September 1, 2021. This is 28 hours of training that covers the paraeducator standards of practice.

General Paraeducator Certificate

Next, the paraeducator must complete the requirements for the general certificate. The general certificate includes 70 clock hours of training to help improve instructional practices. A paraeducator has three years to complete this certificate after completing the FCS.

Paraeducators will attend most of the professional development already being offered to teachers. This includes the four enrichment days (August 24-26 and January 28 in 2021-22). All courses offered through the district will identify the Paraeducator Standards Area of Focus.

Optional Certificates

Subject Matter Certificates

Each optional subject matter certificate includes 20 hours of training. Subject matter certificates can count towards general certificate hours. Both are online courses which require registration.

- *English Language Learner Certificate*: Language acquisition, cultural competence, and instructional strategies. [Link](#) to online course
- *Special Education Certificate*: Special Education processes, culturally responsive strategies, and behavioral support. [Link](#) to online course.

Advanced Paraeducator Certificate

After completing the general certificate, a paraeducator can earn the advanced certificate. This certificate includes 75 clock hours of training on assisting high-impact classrooms, supporting specialized instruction, and mentoring other paraeducators.

TIMELINES FOR COMPLETING THE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Fundamental Course of Study

For the 2021-22 school year, school districts are required to train all paraeducators by September 1, 2022 that have not yet completed the initial two days of the FCS.

- Newly employed paraeducators hired on or before September 1, 2021:
 - Districts must provide two days of training on the FCS by September 30, 2021.
- Paraeducators hired after September 1, 2021:
 - Two days of training on the FCS must be provided by September 1, 2022.

General Certificate

For the 2021-22 school year, school districts are required to provide two days of training on the general certificate to all paraeducators that have completed the FCS on/before September 1, 2022.

How to register and track progress

- Create a pdEnroller login before the first day of your training.
- It is the paraeducator's responsibility to keep track of their completed courses and to sign up for courses that match the requirements outlined in the FCS.
- Use the [FCS Tracking Form](#) to plan and track your progress. This form is for your own use; you do not have to turn it in.
- Use the [Employee Online Instructions](#) to view your Paraeducator Certificate progress.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Here is a list of frequently asked questions. If you have any other questions about the Paraeducator Certification Program or need support, please email joyc@orting.wednet.edu.

What is the Paraeducator Certificate Program?

The State of Washington requires all paraeducators to meet [minimum requirements for employment](#), the Fundamental Course of Study (FCS), and the General Certificate. Additional, optional certificates will also be available under this program and will be applied towards the General Certificate.

What RCW and WAC is associated with this program?

[Chapter 28A.413 RCW](#) and [WAC 179](#) are the relevant laws and rules associated with this program. The RCW established the paraeducator minimum employment requirements, the standards of practice for paraeducators, the Paraeducator Board, and the Paraeducator Certificate Program. The Paraeducator Board further defines the RCW through rules in WAC 179.

What is the FCS?

The Fundamental Course of Study (FCS) is the initial 28 hours of training required for all instructional paraeducators. These hours are similar to graduation requirements - there is an overall requirement of 28 hours and those hours are aligned to specific standards comprising 12 units.

What happens if I don't attend the training, or I miss an opportunity?

You are responsible to ensure you've completed 14 hours of the 28 required hours, by September 30, 2021 if hired on/before September 1, 2021, or within one year if hired after September 1, 2021. The district is responsible to ensure there are ample opportunities available to you. This includes offerings provided by your site, district, or online via our Canvas portal.

What is a clock hour?

Clock hours are individual hours of professional training. They must be preapproved and are issued by an Approved Clock Hour. Orting School District is an approved clock hour provider.

How do I make sure I get the clock hours when I attend a training?

When preapproved clock hours are offered, you will be asked to sign-in on a clock hours request form at any training offering clock hours. You should also pick up a copy of the provided clock hours form for your own records.

How do I get the FCS Certificate?

When you have completed all 28 hours of the required FCS, you will submit your state approved FCS clock hour form(s) to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) through their Education Data System (EDS) at <https://eds.ospi.k12.wa.us>.