Executive Summary
March 30, 2017

Agenda Item: Iowa Central Community College Paraeducator Preparation Program Approval

Iowa Goal(s): 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: 281 Iowa Administrative Code chapter 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(s): Marietta Rives, Consultant Bureau of Educator Quality

Attachment(s): One

Recommendation: It is recommended that the State Board approve the paraeducator preparation program request submitted by Iowa Central Community College. This program approval will extend through November 2020.

Background: In November of 2015, the State Board granted a conditional paraeducator program approval for Iowa Central Community College based on the amount of evidence of meeting the program standards. Since that time, Iowa Central Community College has worked diligently to develop a sophisticated curriculum and practicum experience to develop high-quality paraeducators.

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 approves the voluntary preparation programs according to standards and procedures contained in Chapter 80 of the Iowa Administrative Code.
Iowa Central Community College Paraeducator Program to include:
   Generalist, Level 1

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.
3. Certification will establish realistic opportunities for upward mobility through a career ladder pathway for paraeducators.

The program has been reviewed. In reviewing the program, 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 program:
- All certification competencies are aligned to specific course assessments.
- Iowa Central Community College has developed an extensive practicum experience for paraeducator candidates.

Recommendation:
Based upon the review of Generalist, Level 1 program components submitted for consideration, the Iowa Central Community College paraeducator program is recommended for approval. The approved status of this program will remain in effect through November 2020.