



TEHAMA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1135 LINCOLN STREET/P.O. BOX 689 • RED BLUFF, CA 96080 • 530.527.5811 • FAX 530.529.4120

PARAEDUCATOR PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

Testing for the Tehama County ParaEducator Proficiency Assessment is a service provided by the Tehama County Department of Education (TCDE) for school districts in Tehama County.

If you are seeking employment in a school district as a paraeducator (teacher's aide, instructional assistant, etc.), pursuant to Education Code 45330, you must either possess an A.A. degree or higher, have two years of college (48 units), or pass an assessment of your knowledge and the ability to assist in instructing reading, writing, and mathematics as appropriate to the responsibility of the position. In Tehama County in order to meet this assessment requirement, TCDE administers the ParaEducator Proficiency Assessment.

The test is administered at TCDE, 1135 Lincoln Street, Red Bluff, and is given at 9:00 a.m. and again at 1:00 p.m. on scheduled test days. Each session is limited to 20 participants. The test is approximately 2 hours long. The cost for the test is \$5.00 (cash only), which is payable at the testing session.

The test is comprised of four sections: Math, English Language Arts, Writing, and Ability to Assist in the classroom. This test is multiple choice and will be completed on a computer. All sections of the test must be passed in order to receive verification of achievement.

If a participant does not pass all or part of the test they can retake all or any portion of the test for \$5.00.

TCDE also offers tutoring for all four sections. Tutoring is offered on the day of testing before the test and is optional. Participants can choose to be tutored in all subjects or in an individual subject. The tutoring schedule is linked above.

Individuals taking the test are not allowed to use calculators, dictionaries, cell phones or any other type of aides.

If a "reasonable accommodation" is necessary, the Human Resources Services Department needs to be notified before the day of the test.

For more information or to sign up for the test, call TCDE Human Resources Services at 528-7329. Please specify which session date/time you would like to attend and let us know if you are interested in tutoring.

STUDY GUIDE

What affects test results?

- Knowledge
- Test anxiety
- Test-taking skills

KNOWLEDGE

Review what subject areas will be covered in the examination process and then
STUDY!

TEST ANXIETY

- Test anxiety can cause loss of appetite, disruptions in sleep, stomach problems, fidgeting, and even a sense of panic.
- Relax by breathing deeply.
- Be PREPARED! This will help you think positive thoughts:
- I know I will do well on this test.
- I am well qualified for this job.
- Tests give me a chance to show how well qualified I am.

TEST TAKING SKILLS

If you haven't been to the testing site, visit the location before the day of the test. Be on time. Follow test instructions and know what to do if you don't understand. Eliminate distractions—wear comfortable layered clothing and take practice tests to learn to block out noises and other distractions. Get a good night's sleep.

10 Tips to Improve Test Performance

1. Read the directions carefully, and follow them.

- Read directions carefully, and follow them.
- Don't skip the instructions, assuming you already know how to answer the questions.

2. Budget your time wisely.

- See how long the test is and how much time you have to complete it; then budget your time accordingly.
- Don't spend too much time on any one question; if you can't answer a question; skip it and come back to it later.
- Since every question is worth just one point, whether it is easy or difficult, it doesn't make sense for you to waste time with the difficult questions before you have racked up as many points as possible on the easy and medium questions.

3. Read each question completely.

- Read each question completely and work through any examples.
- Read both the question and all of the choices twice before answering a

question.

- Work at a good pace, but don't rush.
- Avoid making careless mistakes on easy questions because you didn't really read the questions or because you misread an answer choice.

4. Answer the easy questions first.

- On easy questions, go ahead and choose the answer.
- Remember that easy questions have easy answers.
- On easy questions usually the most straightforward answer is correct.
- Go back after answering the easy questions to answer the difficult ones so that your time will be well spent.

5. Eliminate obvious wrong answers.

- This will give you a better chance of choosing the correct response. Using the process of elimination to get rid of incorrect answer choices will raise your score by raising your odds.

6. Look for key words.

- Common key words are ALWAYS, NEVER, BECAUSE, INSTEAD OF, LEAST, MOST, WORST, FIRST, LAST.
- Read and answer negatively stated items CAREFULLY.

7. Check other questions for clues.

- Sometimes test writers inadvertently leave questions that give clues to other questions; how many times have you thought, while taking a test, "Didn't I just answer that?"

8. Don't read too much into a question.

- Chances are the test writer is not thinking as deeply as you think and is not out to trick you.
- Tests are supposed to be related to the job in question; if you are qualified to compete for the position, you probably understand the question.

9. Be prepared.

- Use online resources to prepare for topics you are unsure about. You can find a list of resources linked on the website or at the end of this document.

10. When in doubt, guess.

- Never leave a question blank, always guess on a problem, especially if you can eliminate at least 2 answer choices.
- Don't make random guesses.
- Don't guess a letter (a, b, c, d, e) because it hasn't occurred in a while.
- Don't be afraid to guess a letter because it seems to appear often.
- Focus on the content of the test, not the frequency of the answer letters.

Multiple Choice Tests

A multiple choice test item always has a "stem". This is either an incomplete statement or a question followed by a correct, or best answer with three or more incorrect answers.

- This could be the answer.
- This could be an incorrect answer.
- This could be an incorrect answer.
- This could be an incorrect answer, too.

For this question knowing the meaning of prefixes will help eliminate all wrong choices.

1. FOREMOST most nearly means

- a. many
- b. last
- c. middle
- d. first

Think of other words that have the prefix fore, such as: forehead, foresee, forefront, foresight, foremost, etc. The prefix fore means before in time or situated in front so you would be able to eliminate all but "d" which is correct.

2. If you accidentally splash a harmful chemical onto your skin, which one of the following should you do first?

- a. Apply soothing lotion.
- b. Contact a nurse or doctor.
- c. Report it to your supervisor.
- d. Wash the area with water.

The key word in this question is "*first*". Although you may apply a soothing lotion, contact a nurse or doctor, and report it to your supervisor, you should wash the area with water *first*. The correct answer is "d".

If you are having a difficult time with a word problem, look for a simpler approach-the problem may be difficult but the math is usually easy. Use scratch paper to figure your work. On many difficult questions, the obvious answer is wrong-do not guess unless you have worked the problem out on scratch paper. If there is time, do the problem twice.

Reading Comprehension Tests

- These tests are like open book tests, all of the correct answers can be found directly in the passage. You need to know where and how to look for them.
- Requires focus and concentration.
- Careful searching is important.
- You need to quickly read the main ideas of each paragraph, and the main idea and tone of the entire passage.
- The correct answer will be the only choice that repeats information from the passage or is directly supported by information in the passage - simply look it up in the passage.
- Incorrect answers may sound good, but they will never be supported in the text.
- Most reading comprehension questions will require you to go back to the passage and reread something, so don't worry about memorizing details the first time through.
- Make sure to read through all of the answers even if you find one that seems correct.
- Avoid not mentioned, but sounds good answers. Sometimes an incorrect answer is one that is logical or true, but is actually never mentioned or supported in the passage.
- Answers are always either paraphrases of information found directly in the passage or logical conclusions drawn from pieces of information found in the passage.
- It can't be correct unless it is mentioned in, or supported by, the passage.
- *Be aware of answers that seem correct, but are not!*
- Sometimes an answer choice uses a word or phrase taken directly from the passage but distorts the author's intended meaning, making the answer incorrect.
- Many of the answers use words from the text, but will still be wrong.
- Don't pick an answer just because it sounds familiar.
- Every incorrect answer choice is incorrect for a reason.
- There is always a word or phrase in a wrong answer that makes it wrong.
- Use process of elimination to get rid of bad answer choices that can't be correct.
- No matter how difficult the reading passage, you should be able to eliminate some of the wrong answers.

Ability to Assist

- If you have relevant training in classroom management, rely upon that training to help you answer the questions.
- Try to think of how you would want your student to be treated in the situations described in the questions.
- Try to remember what it was like to be a student in a classroom. If you found yourself as the student in those described situations, how would you want to be treated by a supervising adult?
- Sometimes, you must rely on common sense in more difficult classroom situations. In most situations, your classroom teacher will be available to answer questions. Relying on the leadership of the classroom teacher is always a wise way to manage difficult situations.