

# WorkINdiana

## Teacher Assistant

Teacher Assistants, paraprofessional educators, or instructional assistants, work in a variety of settings, such as preschools, child care centers, and religious and community centers. The most common environment for teacher assistants are in classroom settings in elementary, middle, and secondary schools. Additionally, they also may work outdoors, supervising recess when weather allows, and they may spend time standing, walking, or kneeling. However, many spend much of the day sitting while working with students.

A teacher assistant's day consists of performing duties that are instructional in nature and/or deliver direct services to students or parents. Often teacher assistants serve in a position for which a teacher has ultimate responsibility for the design and implementation of educational programs and services.

Approximately 40 percent of teacher assistants work part time. Most assistants who provide educational instruction work the traditional 9-month to 10-month school year.

Seeing students develop and learn can be very rewarding. However, working closely with students can be both physically and emotionally tiring. Teacher assistants who work with special education students often perform more strenuous tasks, including lifting, as they assist students with additional daily needs.

### Hourly Wage

Entry  Median  
\$8.02 \$10.88

### Projected Employment

7.73% increase  
(2014-2024)



### INDemand Statewide Ranking



Teacher  
Assistants

## Job Duties

- Supervise students in classrooms, halls, cafeterias, and schoolyards.
- Help children with their assignments.
- Get instructions for assigned duties from the teacher.
- Type, file, and duplicate materials for the teacher.
- Hand out teaching materials such as textbooks, workbooks, and papers.
- Observe and record student progress.
- Prepare lesson materials, bulletin displays, and exhibits.
- Present material to students under the direction of the teacher.
- Assist students with special needs.

Skills and Knowledge	
-Oral Communication	-Problem-solving
-Critical Thinking	-Resource Allocation
-Professionalism	-Written Communication
-Conflict Management	-Technology and Tool Usage
-Attention to Detail	-Teamwork
-Leadership	-Customer Service
-Organization	-Information Gathering
-Integrity	-Multi-tasking
-Decision-making	-Maintaining confidentiality
-Work Ethic	

## Certification and Advancement

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**Certification.** Many teacher assistants need only a high school diploma and on-the-job training. However, a college degree or related coursework in child development improves job opportunities. In fact, teacher assistants who work in Title 1 schools must have college training or proven academic skills. They face Federal mandates that require assistants to hold a 2-year or higher degree, have a minimum of 2 years of college, or pass a rigorous State or local assessment. WorkINdiana recognizes two credentials for teacher assistants.

**Paraprofessional Educator:** For instructional paraprofessionals in Indiana districts and schools receiving Title I funds, Indiana adopted the ParaPro Assessment developed by the *Educational Testing Service (ETS)*. Instructional Assistants with less than two years of college are required to successfully complete this assessment. The ParaPro Assessment measures the skills and knowledge in reading, writing, and math possessed by prospective and practicing paraprofessionals. It also measures their ability to apply those skills and knowledge when assisting in classroom instruction. The assessment was designed to satisfy the requirements of the federally legislated No Child Left Behind Act. In addition, school districts may have separate requirements for paraprofessionals. Individuals will need to contact the district they will be working in for more information.

**Child Development Associate:** For early childhood education professional assistants, the *Council for Professional Recognition* offers the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. This credential ensures candidates meet current state and national professional requirements. CDA recipients are competent practitioners who value vital knowledge, skills, and formal education and will learn the best teaching practices. These candidates must complete their HSD or HSE, 120 clock hours of professional education, and have 480 hours of work experience.

**Advancement.** Advancement for teacher assistants—usually in the form of higher earnings or increased responsibility—comes primarily with experience or additional education. Some school districts provide time away from the job or tuition reimbursement so that teacher assistants can earn their bachelor's degrees and pursue licensed teaching positions.