

This legislation is the result of the efforts by Katherine Terras and a diverse advisory committee to address the critical shortage of trained paraprofessionals in special education. This bill as an avenue for individuals to attain a certificate as a technician in special education. This certificate may serve as a stepping-stone for those who wish to pursue a degree in special education.

The special education technician training programs will follow the national preparations standards of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)

According to data from January of 2020, of the approximately 1115 special education teaching positions, between 80 and 90 were unfilled – meaning students may not be receiving the services they deserve to be successful. With the passage of the bill, certified technicians can provide supervised services to students which will assist the special education teachers.

Reviewing the bill:

Section 1 is an Amendment to add “certificate of completion of special education technicians” (page 2, line 6) to the list of those requiring credentials or certificates. The Superintendent of public instruction may adopt the rules governing the issuance of this certificate.

The prior version of the bill contained an explanation of services that a special education technician could and could not provide. After a review by interested parties it was determined that the services should align with the training program. Thus, the best avenue was for the Superintendent of Public instruction to define and adopt the rules governing special education technicians.

There was concern expressed regarding the original language in the bill from Designer Gene of North Dakota. The following concerns should also be a consideration when adopting the rules governing the special education technicians.

- Supervising Special Education Teacher – over 2 years of experience
- Caseload Maximums for Special Education Teachers with service being provided by a technician
- Documenting of student progress by technicians

This legislation along with all efforts to address the identified needs of students as early as possible will provide for improved student success.

I would sincerely appreciate your support of this legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.