

AN EVALUATION OF A CURRICULUM BASED ON PUBLIC SCHOOL
PARAEDUCATOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND
RECOMMENDED STANDARDS

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

AN EVALUATION OF A CURRICULUM BASED ON PUBLIC SCHOOL PARAEDUCATOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDED STANDARDS. (August, 2003)

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Twenty paraeducators from four rural counties in western North Carolina enrolled in an eight-week course taught at a local community college. These paraeducators volunteered to participate in this study that proposed to evaluate a curriculum based on paraeducator needs assessment and recommended standards. Three questions were addressed in the study: (a) What are the educational needs of paraeducators who work in public schools, as identified by the paraeducators and supervising general education teachers? (b) What are the similarities and differences in educational needs as identified by paraeducators and those specified by recommended standards? and (c) What effect does a curriculum based on needs assessment and recommended standards have on self-efficacy for the paraeducators? Data showed several statistically significant differences in identified

needs of the paraeducators and their supervising teachers especially in the organizational skills content of the curriculum. Independent t-tests indicated agreement between paraeducator identified needs and those recommended by professional standards. Both quantitative and qualitative data showed positive effects of the curriculum on paraeducator perceptions of self-efficacy.