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Policy 2415.03 - Highly Qualified Teachers

Introduction

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 requires all teachers be or become highly qualified in the core academic content area(s) they teach. New, newly hired and veteran teachers in non-Title I schools and veteran teachers in Title I school-wide and targeted assistance programs must satisfy the definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. New and newly hired teachers in Title I schools must satisfy the definition by September 2003.

Definitions

"Equivalent of an undergraduate major" is a 30-credit coherent sequence of courses in a subject field that includes study at the introductory, intermediate and advanced levels.

"New Jersey HOUSE Standard" is New Jersey's High Objective Uniform State Evaluation Standard to provide teachers with an alternative means of demonstrating their content knowledge for the core academic subject(s) they teach. The New Jersey HOUSE Standard is the means by which teachers can document their content expertise in the core academic subject(s) they teach. The New Jersey HOUSE Standard uses a Content Knowledge Matrix to document college coursework, professional activities, teaching activities, and successful teaching performance.

"New to the Profession" are teachers in their first year of teaching and hired after the first day of school in the 2002-2003 school year. In Title I schools, these teachers must be highly qualified at the time of hire. In non-Title I schools, these teachers must be highly qualified as of the end of the 2005-2006 school year.

"Newly hired teachers" are teachers with prior teaching experience who are either returning to teaching after an absence or are changing school districts. Teachers changing building, class or grade-level assignments within their district are not considered newly hired. In Title I schools, these teachers must be highly qualified at the time of hire. In non-Title I schools, these teachers must be highly qualified by the end of the 2005-2006 school year.

"School Organization" is the most typical organizational structures in New Jersey and are as follows:

" Elementary schools (K-5, K-6, K-8) in which classes are self-contained and teachers provide instruction in the full range of content to a single class, all day.

" Middle schools (5-8, 6-8) are those in which classes are departmentalized and teachers provide instruction in one or more content areas to different classes of students throughout the day.

" Secondary schools (9-12) are those in which classes are departmentalized and teachers provide instruction in one or more content areas to different classes of students throughout the day.

"Teacher - Bilingual Education" is a bilingual teacher that provides direct instruction in one or more content areas in students' native language and English as a replacement for content instruction provided in a classroom where only English is spoken. The teacher must satisfy the federal definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher for the content area(s) and level(s) they teach.

"Teacher - ESL" is an ESL teacher that provides daily support to students with limited English proficiency and may co-teach classes with a Language Arts Literacy instructor. ESL teachers may also provide direct instruction in English, reading or language arts. When ESL teachers provide direct instruction, they must satisfy the federal definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher based on the grade level of the content/curriculum they teach rather than the chronological age of their students.

"Teaching Assignment" is an assignment teaching in the grade level and/or core academic subject area. It is not the class schedule. Multiple sections of the same course (i.e., three classes of freshman composition or two periods of world history) count as one teaching assignment. Teaching all subjects to one class of elementary or special education (elementary) students all day (i.e., 5th grade, 2nd grade) is one assignment.

"Testing Option" provides the teacher an opportunity to submit a passing score on a State licensing exam taken in New Jersey or a passing score on a State licensing exam taken in another State as verification they have satisfied the federal definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher. Examples of appropriate tests include: The National Teacher Exam (NTE); the Praxis II Elementary Education: Content Knowledge Test; the Praxis II Content Knowledge Test(s) for the relevant content area teaching assignment(s). The Praxis II series of Content Knowledge Tests for the middle school level will become available in New Jersey during the 2003-2004 school year.

"Undergraduate Major" is defined as thirty credits of content coursework within the subject field listed as the major.

"Veteran Teachers" in Title I schools are teachers who were hired before the first day of school in 2002-2003. These teachers may use the New Jersey HOUSE Standard to satisfy the federal definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher. Experienced teachers who are newly hired may also use the New Jersey HOUSE Standard. "Veteran Teachers" in non-Title I schools are teachers who are hired before the first day of school in 2005-2006. These teachers may use the New Jersey HOUSE Standard to satisfy the federal definition

of a Highly Qualified Teacher. All veteran teachers must be highly qualified by the end of 2005-2006.

NCLB Core Academic Content Areas

All teachers with primary responsibility for direct instruction in one or more of the core academic content areas are required to demonstrate they satisfy the federal definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher. This includes elementary generalists who teach all subjects to a particular grade/class, special education teachers who provide direct instruction in one or more content areas, middle and secondary level content area instructors and basic skills supplemental teachers. This also includes bilingual teachers and English as a second language (ESL) teachers who provide direct instruction in core academic content.

The New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards that align with the list of core academic subjects of §9101 of NCLB are: language arts literacy, science, mathematics, social studies, world languages, and visual and performing arts. Teachers in the areas of health, physical education, technological literacy, career education and consumer, family and life skills and those holding educational services certificates are not required to satisfy the federal definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher.

Requirements - Title I Schools and Programs

New to the profession and newly hired elementary teachers must, as of September 2003, do as follows:

1. Hold at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education;
2. Hold a valid New Jersey teaching certificate for which no requirements have been waived (i.e., no emergency certification); and
3. Pass a rigorous State test of content knowledge and teaching skills in the basic elementary school curriculum (may have been a State certification test such as the National Teacher Examination (NTE) or Praxis II Elementary Education: Content Knowledge Test).

Newly hired elementary teachers may use the New Jersey HOUSE Standard, if needed. However, these teachers must meet the requirement at the time of hire. New to the profession elementary teachers may not use the New Jersey HOUSE Standard.

Veteran elementary teachers who have been working in schools supported with Title I funds prior to the 2002-2003 school year and veteran elementary teachers who are transferring to Title I schools within the district have until the end of the 2005-2006 school year to satisfy the definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher using the criteria listed above or by fulfilling the New Jersey HOUSE Standard in lieu of passing a rigorous State

test of content knowledge and teaching skills for an elementary curriculum.

New to the profession and newly hired middle and secondary teachers must, as of September 2003, do as follows:

1. Hold at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education;
2. Hold a valid New Jersey teaching certificate for which no requirements have been waived (i.e., no emergency certification);
3. Pass a rigorous State test in each core academic subject in which the teacher teaches (may have been a State certification test such as the NTE or Praxis II Content Knowledge Test for the appropriate subject and level); or
4. Successfully complete either an undergraduate major, a graduate degree, coursework equivalent to an undergraduate major, or advanced certification or credentialing (i.e., National Board Certification) for each core academic subject teaching assignment.

Newly hired middle and secondary teachers may use the New Jersey HOUSE Standard, if needed. However, these teachers must meet the requirement at the time of hire. New to the profession middle and secondary teachers may not use the New Jersey HOUSE Standard.

Veteran middle and secondary teachers who have been working in schools supported with Title I funds prior to the 2002-2003 school year and middle and secondary teachers who are transferring to Title I schools within the district have until the end of the 2005-2006 school year to satisfy the definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher using the criteria listed above or by fulfilling the New Jersey HOUSE Standard in each content area teaching assignment in lieu of passing a State test or having a major, advanced degree, coursework equivalent to a major, or an advanced credential (i.e., National Board certification) for each content area teaching assignment.

Requirements - Non-Title I Schools

New to the profession, newly hired and veteran elementary teachers must, by the end of the 2005-2006 school year, do as follows:

1. Hold at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education;
2. Hold a valid New Jersey teaching certificate for which no requirements have been waived (i.e., no emergency certification); and either:

- a. Pass a rigorous State test of content knowledge and teaching skills in the basic elementary curriculum (may have been a State certification test such as the NTE Praxis II Elementary Education: Content Knowledge Test); or
- b. Document ten points on the New Jersey HOUSE Standard as an Elementary Generalist.

New to the profession, newly hired and veteran middle and secondary teachers must, by the end of the 2005-2006 school year do as follows:

1. Hold at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education;
2. Hold a valid New Jersey teaching certificate for which no requirements have been waived (i.e., no emergency certification); and one of the following:
 - a. Pass a rigorous State test in each core academic subject in which the teacher teaches (may have been a State certification test such as the NTE or Praxis II Content Knowledge Test for the appropriate subject and level); or
 - b. Hold an undergraduate major, a graduate degree or thirty credits of coursework equivalent to an undergraduate major for each core academic subject teaching assignment; or
 - c. Hold National Board Certification in the content area(s) of the teaching assignment; or
 - d. Document ten points on the New Jersey HOUSE Standard for each core academic subject teaching assignment.

Districts may hire middle and special education teachers for the 2003-2004 school year who satisfy the requirements for a standard instructional license under the current State licensing regulations. Middle and special education teachers must pass the relevant Praxis II Content Knowledge Test(s) in the 2003-2004 school year. The Praxis II Content Knowledge Test(s) for middle grades will be available early in 2004.

Special Education Teachers who provide direct content instruction must pass the relevant Praxis II Test(s) at the appropriate grade level(s) for the subject(s) they teach based on the grade level of the content/curriculum they teach. Requirements for special education teachers who provide consultative/support (in-class and pull-out) services and/or who co-teach with a content area instructor in general education settings will be as required based on the final version of the reauthorized IDEA legislation.

Parent Notification

In September of each school year, schools receiving Title I funds (including funds used for before/after school programs) must notify all parents/legal guardians of their right to inquire about the qualifications of their child's teacher(s). In November each year, schools receiving Title I funds must notify parents if any of their child's teachers have not yet satisfied the federal definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher or if their child has been instructed for four or more weeks by a teacher who has not yet satisfied the definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher. Parent notification requirements apply to the entire school whether or not the teacher is paid in whole or in part by Title I funds or teaches within a target assistance program.

The New Jersey Model for Identifying Highly Qualified Teachers - September 2003 provides the guidance to school districts for teachers to meet the highly qualified teacher requirements of NCLB. The Superintendent will ensure the school district completes its responsibilities in the implementation of the Highly Qualified Teacher requirement of No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, §1119

The New Jersey Model for Identifying Highly Qualified Teachers, Department of Education, August 2003

Adopted: 09 Aug 2006