

Anchorage School District
No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT)
Frequently Asked Questions

Who has to be highly qualified under the No Child Left Behind Act?

- As of June 30, 2006, under NCLB, **all** public school teachers who teach a core subject are required to be highly qualified. This includes Special Education teachers providing instruction in core academic areas, even to alternative achievement standards.

What are the core academic subjects?

- The core academic subjects are defined by state and federal authorities as: English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science (biology, chemistry, earth science, general science, physical science, and physics), foreign languages, civics and government, economics, history, geography, social studies, speech communications, music, theatre, and art.
- Under the federal law, certificated education professionals in non-core academic subjects do not need to meet the new requirements. This includes PE teachers, counselors, librarians, and nurses.

When do teachers have to be highly qualified under this federal requirement?

- As of June 30, 2006, under NCLB, **all** public school teachers who teach a core subject are required to be highly qualified.

What does it mean to be highly qualified under NCLB?

- To be highly qualified a teacher must be fully certified (no emergency certifications), have a bachelor's degree, and have demonstrated subject matter competency in each core academic subject taught.

What pathways exist for a teacher to demonstrate subject matter competency?

- **Elementary Teachers (K-6)** can demonstrate that they are highly qualified in any one of the following ways:
 1. Passing score on a state-approved elementary Praxis II exam **or**
 2. Passing score (100 points) on the state's HOUSSSE matrix **or**
 3. National Board Certification (NBC) as an Early Childhood Generalist for grades K-3, Middle Childhood Generalist for grades 3-6, or Early Adolescence Generalist for grade 6 **or**
 4. Pass the State Performance Review **or**
 5. State reciprocity
- Elementary content specialists (e.g. reading, art, or music specialists) can be deemed highly qualified by using one of the following ways:
- **Secondary (Middle & High School) and Content Specialist Teachers** must be highly qualified in each core subject they teach. They can become highly qualified in any one of the following ways:
 1. Degree or advanced degree in the core subject **or**
 2. College major in the core subject **or**
 3. Major equivalent in the core subject (30 semester credits or the equivalent) **or**
 4. Passing score on state-approved Praxis II exam in core content **or**

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5. Passing score (100 points) on the HOUSSE **or**
6. National Board Certification in the content area **or**
7. Pass the State Performance Review **or**
8. State reciprocity

What is the HOUSSE?

- The HOUSSE (High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation) is an alternate method for experienced teachers to obtain a highly qualified designation. HOUSSE criteria can be found at www.eed.state.ak.us/TeacherCertification/hq.html. However, ASD teachers must use the My HQT button at www.MyLearningPlan.com to submit HOUSSE requests. The HOUSSE matrix awards points for such things as years of experience, training and coursework, contributions to the profession, awards, etc. Under federal law, only teachers hired prior to July 1, 2002 are eligible to use HOUSSE as a pathway to highly qualified status.

Do college/university ED-prefix courses count toward core content credit?

- ED 500-level classes **do not** count toward 30 credit major equivalency when education is the option being used for acquiring an HQ designation. However, some ED-prefixed courses can count under the HOUSSE matrix. For elementary teachers, credits in education or in a core subject taught in elementary school earned after the completion of a teacher preparation program may count for 3 points each on the HOUSSE matrix. So for elementary teachers, ED-prefix classes may count. For middle and high school teachers, ED-prefix credits that relate to the core subject HQ designation being sought may count for 3 points per credit on the HOUSSE matrix. Thus, ED-prefix credits that can be tied to teaching the core may content area count for middle and high school teachers on the HOUSSE form.

**If I choose to take the testing route, which tests have been approved by the state?
What are the passing scores for these tests?**

- For a list of Praxis II subject assessments, fees, passing scores, testing dates, registration information, and HQ designation matching, go to: www.asdk12.org/NCLB/teachers/praxis.asp.

How do I know which Praxis II test matches to the HQ designation I am seeking?

- For a list of Praxis II subject tests and matching HQ designations, go to: www.asdk12.org/NCLB/teachers/praxis.asp.

I took a PRAXIS II test in another state. Can I use that score to acquire an HQ designation in the ASD?

- If the test you took is on Alaska's state-approved list and it's a passing score, yes. Go to www.asdk12.org/NCLB/teachers/praxis.asp to see the state-approved Praxis II and passing scores list. ETS (the Praxis II testing company) keeps scores on file for up to 10 years. To acquire a score report, contact ETS (www.ets.org) and request a copy. Using the My HQT button under your

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MyLearningPlan.com account, submit your score using the Praxis II option. Don't forget to deliver the score report to ASD Human Resources. If you took the test more than 10 years ago, you would need to have the score report showing the score.

Can a Master's degree in Education be used to acquire a content HQ designation?

- No. The federal law states that the degrees or credits earned must be in the core content area being taught. (Examples of core content include English, math, science, social studies, etc.) However, points are awarded under the HOUSSE matrix for such a Master's degree.

Is a high school teacher with a degree in a specific scientific field or who has otherwise demonstrated subject-area competency in a specific scientific field (e.g. biology or chemistry) considered to be highly qualified (HQ) to teach any science course?

- No. Being content knowledge HQ in one scientific discipline does not necessarily mean that a high school teacher will be deemed HQ to teach in another scientific discipline. High school science teachers must demonstrate subject-matter competency appropriate to the specific courses they are teaching. For example, a teacher who majored in biology is not, on that basis alone, considered highly qualified to teach physics.

In what ways does the ASD support teachers seeking highly qualified designations?

- The ASD is committed to supporting its teachers in obtaining HQ designations. For consultation regarding HQ planning, support, and fiscal resources – contact Clendaniel_Zareena@asdk12.org at 742-7819. For more information, go online to www.asdk12.org/NCLB/teachers/. Specific examples of HQ support include: Praxis II prep classes for credit, Praxis II study groups for credit, Praxis II study guide checkout, addenda for eligible Praxis II scores, foreign language testing (LTI), HQT application assistance, and HQT consultation.

Must special education (SPED) teachers who teach core academic subjects be highly qualified?

- Yes. Under NCLB special education teachers who provide instruction in core academic subjects must meet the highly qualified teacher requirements for those subjects. These requirements apply whether a special education teacher provides core academic instruction in a regular classroom, a resource room, or another setting. This includes Special Education teachers providing instruction in core academic areas, even to alternative achievement standards.
- SPED teachers have a few more options in terms of how to meet HQ requirements. Rather than attaining separate HQ designations in each of the content areas being taught, the MS or HS SPED teacher of multiple subjects may be eligible to use the SPED Multiple Subjects HOUSSE. Also, secondary SPED teachers whose students are assessed against alternate learning standards (i.e. those students on the alternate assessment) can take one of the approved

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elementary level Praxis II exams to be designated HQ.

What activities may special education teachers carry out if they are not highly qualified by June 30, 2006 in the core academic content area being taught?

- Special educators who do not directly instruct students in any core academic subjects or who provide only consultation to highly qualified teachers in adapting curricula, using behavioral supports and interventions, or selecting appropriate accommodations do not need to demonstrate subject-matter competency in those subjects. These special educators could also assist students with study skills or organizational skills and reinforce instruction that the child has already received from a teacher who meets the federal requirements in that core area.

Must ESL teachers be highly qualified?

- Yes. If teachers of English language learners provide instruction in core academic subjects, they must meet the requirements of the law for highly qualified teachers, in addition to the ESEA Title III requirements for teachers of English language learners.

Must the teachers of courses that offer a content credit option (e.g. KCC, JROTC, Voc. Ed., CTE, and Family Consumer Science) be highly qualified?

- Yes. If the class offers core academic credit, the instructor must be highly qualified under the federal definition.

Are charter schools' teachers required to be highly qualified under the No Child Left Behind Act?

- Yes. Charter schools' teachers are required to attain a highly qualified designation in the core academic areas in which they teach.

How do the highly qualified requirements apply to individuals working in extended learning time programs?

- If services offered outside of regular school hours in a Title I extended learning time program provide instruction in core academic subjects designed to help students meet state or local academic standards, the persons providing such core academic instruction must meet the highly qualified teacher requirements. However, if the instructor is not an employee of the school district, the teacher quality requirements do not apply.

What required notifications must be sent to parents about teacher qualifications?

- Notification must be sent to parents if a Title I school or program teacher has taught for four consecutive weeks and has not met the highly qualified requirements. Additionally, parents of Title I students must be notified of their right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's teachers and paraprofessionals. These requirements only apply to Title I schools.

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Where can I get more NCLB highly qualified teacher information?

- ASD highly qualified teacher support information is available through Zareena Clendaniel at 742-7819 or Clendaniel.Zareena@asdk12.org. There is No Child Left Behind (and HQT) information on the district's website at www.asdk12.org/nclb. The Alaska State Department of Education and Early Development has a site at www.eed.state.ak.us/nclb. The federal Department of Education website is www.ed.gov/nclb.