

**Series: 2004-2005**  
**Circular Letter: C-6**

**TO: Superintendents of Schools**  
**Regional Educational Service Center Executive Directors**  
**Charter School Directors, Magnet School Directors**

**FROM: Dr. Betty J. Sternberg, Commissioner of Education**

**DATE: March 11, 2005**

**SUBJECT: Determining “Highly Qualified” Teachers**

As you are aware, beginning in school year 2006-2007, all teachers teaching a core academic subject area must be “highly qualified.” As defined in the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)*, core academic subjects include:

English;	World Languages;
Reading/language arts;	Civics and Government;
Science;	History;
Mathematics;	Geography; and
The arts (music, fine arts, dance and theater);	Economics.

To be considered “highly qualified,” individuals who are currently employed must:

- (1) Hold full state certification; and
- (2) Hold a bachelor’s degree; and
- (3) Demonstrate competency in the core academic subject area(s) they teach using one of the following four methods:
  - Holds a major in the core academic subject area(s) that they teach; or
  - Holds a master’s degree in the core academic subject area(s) that they teach; or
  - Has successfully completed the Praxis II exam in the core academic subject area(s) that they teach; or
  - Has successfully demonstrated competency in the core academic subject area(s) using the district’s High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE).

To assist districts with determining which of their core academic subject area teachers are “highly qualified,” we are providing you (Attachment A) with the list of individuals teaching in your district who are certified in one or more of the core academic subject area(s) and whether they have successfully passed a standardized state assessment (either CONNECT or Praxis II) in those core academic subject area(s) in which they are certified. As many of you are aware, the recently reauthorized IDEA law included special education teachers as teachers of core academic content.

Therefore, they too must demonstrate competency in the core academic subjects that they teach to one or more students. We have not included in this list, the teachers who are currently certified in subjects other than the core academic subject areas listed above. Therefore, if a person is certified in physical education only, they will not be included on this list because physical education is not a core academic subject area and that teacher does not need to be “highly qualified” by the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year.

Teachers who teach one or more core academic subject area(s) who have not successfully passed the CONNECT or Praxis II exam, must demonstrate competency in the core academic subject area(s) that they teach through one of the three remaining options provided under NCLB (e.g. hold a major in the core academic subject area(s), hold a master’s degree in the core academic subject area(s) or demonstrate competency through the district’s HOUSSE process).

Also enclosed with this letter is a master copy of a document (Attachment B) that each teacher who teaches a core academic subject area and who has not passed either the CONNECT or Praxis II exam must complete. **We ask that the district collect each individual’s completed sheet(s) and forward them to the department as a batch by March 30, 2005.** Please retain a copy of each sheet prior to sending the batch to the department. We will enter the information into our system and be able to track each individual’s “highly qualified” status. The address for submitting the batched sheets is:

Connecticut State Department of Education  
Bureau of Educator Preparation, Certification, Support and Assessment  
PO Box 150471  
Hartford, CT 06115-0471  
Attention: Nancy Pugliese

Individuals who complete this form, but do not hold either a major or a master’s degree in the core academic subject area(s) they teach, must demonstrate competency in the core academic subject area(s) they teach through the district’s HOUSSE process.

We hope that this information will assist districts with determining which of their teachers are “highly qualified” by holding a major or master’s degree in the core academic subject area(s) they teach or by having successfully completed a standardized state assessment. Once these individuals are moved into “highly qualified” status, it is only those teachers that remain who must demonstrate competency under the district’s HOUSSE plan.

In March 2005, more information will be forthcoming from the Department concerning the HOUSSE plan that each district should be implementing. Please be assured that it is my intention to make this process as reasonable as possible for you and these remaining teachers.

We hope that this information is helpful to districts in identifying individuals who are currently considered “highly qualified” and those that need to demonstrate competency through the district’s HOUSSE plan.

BJS:np  
Attachments

***Determining Highly Qualified Status***  
***Worksheet for Individuals Not Having***  
***Completed a Standardized State Assessment***

**Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **SSN#:** \_\_\_\_\_

**District Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>Core academic content area(s) you currently teach (see footnote below):</b></p> <p>(1) _____</p> <p>(2) _____</p> <p>(3) _____</p> <p>(4) _____</p>
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Coursework Major(s): \_\_\_\_\_      Awarding Institution \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Master's Degree(s): \_\_\_\_\_      Awarding Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Neither my major or master's degree is within the core academic subject area(s) that I currently teach and I must demonstrate competency under the district's HOUSSE process.

*I attest that the information provided above is true and accurate and that I have been officially awarded the degrees that I have described from the identified institution(s).*

*Signature of Individual Completing this form:* \_\_\_\_\_