

HIGHLY QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

The Board of Education recognizes that every student with a disability is entitled to be educated by highly qualified personnel. In accordance with federal and State Law, the Board will take measurable steps to ensure that it will recruit, hire and train highly qualified personnel to provide special education programs and services.

Such steps shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Active recruitment of personnel who possess prior experience working with students who have disabilities;
2. Solicitation of resumes from schools and programs that specialize in the special education field;
3. Seeking dually certified personnel to the extent possible;
4. Ensuring that every professional is “highly qualified” pursuant to the No Child Left Behind Act (“NCLB”) and New York State Law; and
5. Ensuring that every professional participates in Annual Professional Performance Reviews under 8 N.Y.C.R.R. §100.2(o), and Professional Development Plans under 8 N.Y.C.R.R. §100.2(dd).

The Board will ensure that all new and returning teachers in Title I programs who teach core academic subjects are “highly qualified” as required by NCLB and New York State Law. “Core Academic Subjects” are English, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, history, geography, economics, civics and government, foreign languages and the arts, including the visual arts, dance, music, theater, public speaking and drama.

Whether a teacher is “highly qualified” shall be determined before hiring by the Board of Education in accordance with the mandates of NCLB and New York State Law. The specific definition of “highly qualified” that employers must use depends on a teacher’s teaching assignments and his/her “newness” to the profession of teaching. It is the responsibility of the District, not the teacher, to ensure that the “highly qualified” standard is met.

The Board shall hire, recruit and train teachers in accordance with the following:

1. Teachers who are not teachers of record for core academic subjects in grades K-12, such as teachers of Pre-K classes or physical education classes, must meet New York State certification requirements;
2. Special education teachers of any grade who are not teachers of record for core academic subjects because they serve as resource room or consultant teachers must be certified in special education;

3. To the extent applicable, the High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation, HOUSSE evaluation conducted by a school district as part of a pre-employment review or an Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR), which enables teachers beyond the first year of their first certification to demonstrate that they have subject matter competency in each core academic subject they teach based on “objective, coherent information” acceptable to the Commissioner, as listed in the New York State HOUSSE rubrics. Teachers need only use the HOUSSE once for each subject to demonstrate their competency in that subject indefinitely. The school district shall maintain records on each teacher’s local evaluation for the HOUSSE for at least six years from the end of the last school year in which a teacher is employed;
4. Teaching assignments include “special classes” for students with disabilities in grades K-6 or the age equivalent; and “special classes” for students with disabilities of any grade or age who qualify for the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA);
5. “Newness” to the teaching profession is either:
 - New to the Profession - defined as the first year following the effective date of a teacher’s first teaching certificate or during the first year of full-time equivalent employment in a public school, whichever is later; or
 - Not new to the Profession - defined as after the first year following the effective date of a teacher’s first teaching certificate;
6. Teachers with elementary assignments who are new to the profession are “highly qualified” if they:
 - have a bachelor’s or higher degree; and
 - meet State certification standards for their teaching assignments; and
 - demonstrate subject knowledge and teaching skills by passing two New York State Teacher Certification Examinations: the Liberal Arts and Sciences Test and the Assessment of Teaching Skills–Written.

Legal References: No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
20 U.S.C. §7801
34 C.F.R. §§200.55 and 200.56
Educ. Law §§3001, 3001-a, 3004, 3006 and 3008
8 N.Y.C.R.R. §§120.6 and 200.2(b)(12)

1st Reading June 19, 2007
2nd Reading & Adoption July 9, 2007