

**Highly Qualified Teachers Questions & Answers
Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)
No Child Left Behind (NCLB) of 2001
May 6, 2005**

See the Michigan Definition for Identifying Highly Qualified Teachers at www.michigan.gov/documents/definitionofhighlyqualifiedteachers_63281_7.pdf.

Section I: General Questions about the Michigan Definition of Highly Qualified Teachers

1. What is meant by “core academic subjects”?
 - A. *Core academic subjects, as per ESEA/NCLB are English, language arts, reading, science, mathematics, arts, foreign languages, government and civics, history, economics and geography.*

2. What is included in “arts”?
 - A. *In Michigan “arts” refers to instrumental music, vocal music, visual arts, dance, and drama/theatre.*

3. What is included in “science”?
 - A. *Congress has determined that science means physics, chemistry, biology and earth science (and physical science as a combination of chemistry and physics).*

4. If a teacher has a master’s in an area related to his/her teaching (for example, a Master’s in Curriculum and Instruction), can that Master’s be used as a demonstration of being highly qualified in multiple core academic areas?
 - A. *The master’s in curriculum and instruction may be used to demonstrate “highly qualified” for one core academic subject. The teacher must complete one of the options in the Definition for Identifying Highly Qualified Teachers for each core academic subject area he/she teaches. (See question #34 on page 7 for an explanation of when a master’s may be demonstration of highly qualified in multiple subjects.)*

Once a teacher has designated a given master’s as highly qualified demonstration, that master’s degree may not be used in the future as highly qualified demonstration for another subject area.

5. What is the time for compliance with the highly qualified teacher requirement?
 - A. The timeline for meeting this requirement is contingent upon two elements: (1) the date of employment and (2) whether the teacher is working in a program supported by **Title I funds (targeted assistance or school-wide)** and 3) whether teaching in rural area (Eligible rural districts are those that have 600 or less average daily student enrollment or 10 or less persons per square mile **and** have either a U.S. census designation of category 7 or 8).

NEW HIRE: TITLE I PROGRAM

- **If hired after the first day of school in the 2002-03 school year and working in a program supported with Title I funds (school-wide or targeted assistance), the teacher must meet the requirement as a condition of employment.**

NEW HIRE: NON-TITLE I PROGRAM/BUILDING

- If hired **after** the first day of school in the 2002-03 school year and **NOT** working in a program supported with Title I funds (school-wide or targeted assistance), the teacher must meet the requirements by the end of the **2005-06 school year**.

NOTE: New hire really means new to the profession. The intent is not that the teacher is new to a district. Thus, new hire refers to one who is not employed as a teacher prior to the beginning of the 2002-2003 school year.

EXPERIENCED TEACHERS: TITLE I PROGRAMS AND ALL OTHERS

- If hired **before** the first day of school in the 2002-03 school year, the teacher **must meet the requirements by the end of the 2005-06 school year**, regardless of whether working in a program supported by Title I funds or not.

Note:

1. The first day of school is defined as the first day of school that students report per the district school calendar.
 2. New teachers trained at an approved Michigan teacher preparation institution will meet the definition of highly qualified because they are required to take and pass the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC) basic skills test and appropriate subject area examinations.
6. Who gets to determine which option a teacher will pursue to demonstrate he/she is "highly qualified"?
 - A. *It is the teacher's choice. All options are available to teachers.*
 7. What is the school districts' parental notification requirement?
 - A. *Parental notification is required in a building designated as a targeted-assistance program for those teacher who are supported by Title I funding. For buildings designated as school-wide programs all core academic teachers are effected by the requirement. The requirement went into effect at the beginning of the 2002-2003 academic year and impacts new and experienced teachers equally.*
 8. Who is the final authority as to whether a teacher has demonstrated that he/she is highly qualified?
 - A. *The Michigan Department of Education must directly respond to the U.S. Department of Education on the status of Michigan teachers demonstrating that they are highly qualified for their assignment. Therefore, the State Board of Education, acting through the MDE, may be considered the final authority on issues related to a highly qualified teacher.*

9. Can a teacher with a minor in a core academic subject teach that subject, under ESEA/NCLB?
- A. *Teachers with a minor in a core academic subject, may teach that subject, if they have the appropriate endorsement on their Michigan Teacher Certificate and, if they have passed the appropriate Michigan Test for Teacher Certification subject area exam. If they have not passed the appropriate MTTC subject exam, teachers with a minor in a core academic subject, and authorized by the state to teach the core academic area, have to meet one of Michigan's High Objective Uniform State Standards of Evaluation (HOUSSE) requirements which defines a highly qualified teacher.*
10. How does the "highly qualified" requirement for teachers in core academic subjects impact a teacher in a dual enrollment course?
- A. *If the teacher of a dual enrollment course, and that would include an advanced placement course, is employed by an institution of higher education to teach the course, he/she does not need to meet the definition of a highly qualified teacher. If the teacher is employed by the local education agency, then the teacher must be highly qualified, which includes full state certification.*
11. Do adult education teachers need to be highly qualified?
- A. *No. Adult education teachers are not required to meet the definition of a highly qualified teacher as defined by ESEA/NCLB.*
12. When a teacher reports to the district that he/she is highly qualified, how will that data be used?
- A. *The district reports that information via the Register of Education Personnel (REP) to the Center for Education Performance and Information (CEPI). This data is used to audit certification records and for federal reporting.*
13. How can a teacher verify his/her certification records?
- A. *Certification records are public information and are available on the Michigan Department of Education website at www.michigan.gov/mde. Click on educators (on the left menu bar), click on Teacher Verification (on the right menu bar near the bottom).*
14. What is the penalty if a teacher does not demonstrate, by the compliance deadline, that he/she is highly qualified?
- A. *Beginning fall, 2006, a district may not assign a teacher to a core academic subject assignment unless that teacher has been determined to be highly qualified for the assignment. See question #5 in this section for a revised timeline for rural teachers to demonstrate their highly qualified status.*

15. Is there funding available to districts to assist teachers in demonstrating they are highly qualified?
- A. *Yes, districts are permitted to use up to 5% of the Title I award and all of the Title II award to support teachers (and para professionals, if needed) in demonstrating he/she is highly qualified.*
16. HOUSE or HOUSSE is frequently used in writing about highly qualified teachers. What does this mean?
- A. *HOUSE/HOUSSE are used interchangeably and refer to the high objective uniform statewide standards of evaluation, which is referenced in the ESEA/NCLB Act.*
17. Can you tell me how to find the Michigan Content Area Portfolio Guidelines?
- A. *See the Michigan Highly Qualified Teacher Content Area Portfolio Guidelines posted at www.michigan.gov/documents/Portfolio_Assessment_82163_7.doc.*
18. What is a standards-based SBE approved program?
- A: *Programs offered by approved teacher preparation institutions.*
19. What happens if a teacher's course load changes from year to year? Will a teacher have to take the MTTC exam for each subject as their course load changes?
- A: *If their teaching assignment is one in which they do not hold a major or a minor, in which they have already passed the MTTC, then they must meet the highly qualified definition. If the teacher chooses to take the MTTC in areas in which he or she is not highly qualified, then that is an option for them to meet the definition of highly qualified. They must also hold these as subject area endorsements on their teaching certificates.*
20. How does the "highly qualified" requirement impact substitutes?
- A. *Long-term, permanent subs that are the teacher of record in core academic subjects need to meet the highly qualified requirements. Day-to-day subs do not need to meet the requirement.*
21. Do ESL teachers need to be highly qualified?
- A. *ESL teachers are not impacted by the highly qualified requirements unless the student is getting core academic subject credit for the class. If so, the teacher must be highly qualified in the core academic area for which credit is received.*
22. Do alternative education teachers need to be highly qualified?
- A. *Alternative education teachers who instruct secondary students for high school credits must be "highly qualified" in each of the core academic subjects they teach.*
- Alternative education teachers who hold a Michigan elementary certificate are highly qualified for teaching alternative education students who are performing at the elementary level and not receiving graduation credit.*

23. Do alternative education teachers in a supporting/reinforcing role, when the instruction is via a distance learning arrangement, need to meet the highly qualified definition?
- A. *If a teacher assigned to an alternative education program has a role of supporting or reinforcing instruction of students, and the primary source of instruction is through distance learning, that teacher does not need to meet the definition of highly qualified teacher.*
24. What is the “highly qualified” status of a teacher who is teaching a core academic subject(s) on a full-year permit?
- A. *If a district employs a non-certified teacher under a full-year permit and that teacher is enrolled in a teacher preparation program and demonstrating adequate academic progress toward certification, the teacher must be provided a mentor and be supervised by a university faculty member in order to be considered highly qualified under ESEA/NCLB. Completion of the certification program must not take longer than three years.*
- If a certified teacher is teaching on a full year permit (a full year permit is required to teach outside his/her certificate/endorsement areas), that teacher is considered highly qualified if the teacher is making progress towards the certificate/endorsement appropriate for the assignment. Completion of the program must be within three years.*
25. If a teacher is demonstrating he/she is highly qualified by having three years of teaching experience, plus completing 90 clock hours of professional development or 6 semester hours of credit, what is the timeline for completing the hours?
- A. *Either the 90 clock hours or 6 semester hours must be taken and completed during the 5 years prior to June 30, 2006. A teacher must demonstrate that he/she is highly qualified prior to the beginning of the school year fall 2006. See question #5 in this section for a revised timeline for rural teachers to demonstrate their highly qualified status.*
26. Do the 90 clock hours or 6 semester hours need to be in the content of the core academic subject in which the teacher is demonstrating he/she is highly qualified?
- A. *Yes, content or content-related.*
27. Do the 6 semester hours noted in question #25 have to be graduate credits?
- A. *No. The credits need to be related to the core academic subject and from an accredited post-secondary institution.*
28. Are there limitations in the 3 years of teaching experience that is tied to the option of 90 clock hours of content related professional development or 6 semester hours of content course work?
- A. *Yes, teaching experience must be within the validity of the individual’s teaching certificate.*

29. Can a teacher demonstrate he/she is highly qualified by an individual professional development plan which is a combination of contact hours and semester hours plus the three years of experience?
- A. *No. The individual professional development plan option under HOUSE, includes three years of teaching experience plus 90 clock hours or 6 semester hours in the content area, earned between April 24, 2003 and June 30, 2006.*
- A combination of clock hours and semester hours is not acceptable.*
30. If a teacher wants to demonstrate he/she is highly qualified by obtaining National Board Certification, where can the teacher get information on the National Board Certification process?
- A. *There is a wealth of information on the certification process at the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards website at www.nbpts.org.*
- For financial assistance, contact Dr. Frank Ciloski at the Michigan Department of Education, 517-373-6791 or ciloskif@michigan.gov.*
- MEA members may contact Mary Anne Adams at MEA Headquarters, 800-292-1934 or madams@mea.org for additional information.*
31. Does a teacher's National Board certificate need to be in the core academic subject area in which the teacher is assigned in order for the National Board Certificate to meet the highly qualified requirement?
- A. *Yes, the National Board Certification needs to be in the core academic subject area (or as related as possible, considering the NBC labels) and at an appropriate developmental level for the students to which the teacher is assigned.*
32. Do bilingual teachers need to meet the highly qualified teacher requirements?
- A. *Bilingual teachers only need to be highly qualified if they teach a core academic subject or a subject for which students get core academic credit.*
33. Can dance, which has previously been taught as a physical education class, continue as a non-core subject area?
- A. *Michigan has included dance in the arts and, therefore, the teacher must demonstrate he/she is highly qualified to teach dance.*

34. Is there ever a situation where a master's degree in an appropriate supporting program (for example, master's in curriculum and instruction, master's in education, master's in the art of teaching, etc.) can be used as the demonstration of being highly qualified in multiple core academic areas?
- A. *Yes. A masters in an appropriate supporting program may be used as a demonstration of highly qualified for all of the subjects (for which the teacher is authorized by the state) in which the teacher was instructing at the time the master's was earned. This is, if the current employing district concurs, as the district must be able to defend that all teachers are highly qualified, upon audit, regardless of which option the teacher completes.*
35. Students may receive English elective credit for taking a yearbook/journalism class. How does the highly qualified requirement impact the journalism teacher?
- A. *If the student(s) does receive English credit for the journalism class, the journalism teacher must demonstrate he/she is highly qualified in English.*
- ESEA does not distinguish between required and elective classes.*
36. Districts are asking teachers to report if they are highly qualified. Since teachers have until June, 2006 to meet the highly qualified requirements why are districts asking for the information now?
- A. *The MDE is asking districts to report if a teacher is highly qualified or not via the REP (Registry of Educational Personnel). There is no jeopardy for answering no, since teachers have until 2006 to become highly qualified. The reason MDE is asking for this information now is that MDE must show to the U.S. DOE that Michigan is making progress toward all teachers being highly qualified by 2006. So, the REP information is how MDE is tracking that progress.*
37. Is there a financial penalty for not meeting the requirements of ESEA?
- A. *To not comply with the ESEA requirement could jeopardize federal funding, not only for a district, but for the entire state.*
38. If a math teacher chooses to demonstrate he/she is highly qualified by taking the math test of the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification, what determines which test (elementary or secondary) is appropriate?
- A. *Generally the teachers with elementary certificates take the elementary test and secondary certificate holders take the secondary exam. However, it is appropriate for a middle school math teacher with a secondary certificate to take the elementary math test.*

39. How does the highly qualified requirement impact distance learning program teachers?
- A. *In distance learning programs, the person providing the instruction, if a public school teacher, needs to be highly qualified. A local site facilitator or monitor does not need to meet the highly qualified requirements.*
- If the distance learning provider is a private company, the teacher providing the instruction does not need to be highly qualified, because he/she is not a public school teacher.*
40. If a teacher demonstrates highly qualified in one Michigan district, is he/she considered highly qualified in all Michigan districts?
- A. *Yes, that is correct.*

Section II: Elementary School Questions

1. Are elementary teachers highly qualified if they have full Michigan elementary certification?
- A. *Yes, if an elementary teacher is fully certified and is teaching in a K-5 elementary assignment or in an elementary K-8 special education class, that teacher is highly qualified. The Michigan Department of Education views the elementary education program as a major.*
- Also, the elementary teacher who holds a secondary certificate with an elementary endorsement is highly qualified for an elementary assignment, as noted in the previous paragraph.*
2. Two elementary certified teachers are “teaming” with two 6th grade classes. How is a “teaming” arrangement impacted by the highly qualified requirement?
- A. *A determination would need to be made as to whether such an arrangement is more of a multiple subjects “self-contained” classroom (the majority of the instruction to the same students provided by 1 teacher) or a subject specific departmentalized format. The teachers in a departmental assignment would then need to demonstrate they are “highly qualified”, for the core academic subjects accordingly.*
- In this instance, teachers in the self contained setting would be highly qualified, if they have full elementary certification with a K-8 self-contained classroom designation.*
3. Can elementary teachers who are in grades 4-6 teach specific subjects?
- A. *An elementary teacher may teach all subjects, grades K-5. For grade 6 the elementary teacher must be endorsed to teach a specific subject. That teacher would also be required to be highly qualified for that specific subject.*

4. When an elementary certified teacher (grades 3,4, or 5) switch their students for one subject area, do the teachers have to be endorsed in that subject area? (For example, one teacher teaches all math; another teaches all science; another teaches all social studies.)
 - A. *No, it is not necessary for an elementary teacher (grades K-5) to be endorsed or demonstrate competence in each subject area taught. NCLB allows for the preparation of an elementary teacher as a generalist capable of providing instruction in all subjects.*

5. In a K-6 elementary building, do 5th and 6th grade teachers in a departmentalized teaching format need to demonstrate they are highly qualified?
 - A. *The 5th grade teachers are highly qualified by virtue of their full elementary certificate, according to the Michigan Department of Education.*

The 6th grade teachers in this setting will need to demonstrate, as per the options in the Michigan definition, that they are highly qualified in the core academic subject they teach.

Section III: Middle School/Secondary Level Questions

1. Do middle level/secondary teachers have to hold a master's in the core academic content area in which they are teaching, as per one of the options for demonstrating "highly qualified", or will a master's in related area, such as a master's in the art of teaching or a master's in curriculum and instruction or master's in education technology meet the requirement?
 - A. *Yes, a master's in a related area will meet the requirement, if the master's had a content-focus. The above examples would meet the requirement. A master's in guidance and counseling, educational leadership or educational psychology would not meet the requirement.*

2. A secondary certified teacher has a PE major and a science minor. He has passed the MTTC exam for both PE and science (DX endorsement). Is this teacher "highly qualified" to teach a general/integrated science class at the secondary level? Is he highly qualified to teach a specific science subject (chemistry or biology) at the 7-12 level?
 - A. *This teacher is "highly qualified" to teach a general science and integrated science class because he passed the DX (science) exam. He is also highly qualified for each of the individual subjects covered by the endorsement.*

See question #18 below for important additional information.

3. A high school teacher with 20 plus years of experience is secondary certified with a math major and science minor (DX). He teaches math and physics. He knows he is highly qualified in math, in as much as he has a major in the subject. In determining what he needs to fulfill to demonstrate he is highly qualified in physics since he has a science minor and hasn't taken the MTTC general science test, he asked if college course in engineering could be used to establish a 30 hour equivalent to a major. The engineering classes included thermodynamics, statics, materials science.
 - A. *Yes, these engineering courses may be counted towards the major equivalent. Engineering is applied physics. The content of the engineering classes is related to the content taught in physics.*

4. A secondary MATH teacher asked if computer classes may be counted towards the 30 hours equivalent to a major?
 - A. *Yes, if the teacher can document the computer classes are required for a math major program. Documentation might be information from a college catalogue.*

5. I have a minor in Biology. I will obtain a masters in science education and want to know if that will make me "highly qualified" in Biology?
 - A. *A master's in science education will make the biology teacher highly qualified in biology. According to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), this masters would include an exploration of the biology content, thus, make the teacher highly qualified in biology.*

If the teacher, for some reason, doesn't complete the master's, meeting one of the other options in the definition of highly qualified teacher, would demonstrate his/her highly qualified status, such as 6 semester hours in biology between now and the end of 2005-2006 school year (plus the three years of teaching experience which is part of this option).

6. If I hold a 7-8 (All Subjects) designation on my teaching certificate and I pass the MTTC in a particular subject am I highly qualified for that subject without taking additional coursework?
 - A. *You would be considered highly qualified to teach that subject in grades 7-8.*

7. Are Health and Family and Consumer Science classes included? Are they part of the core curriculum? What about Voc Ed certification? Does that/will that help? Are there tests for my subject areas listed above?
 - A. *These are not core academic subjects. At this point vocational subjects are not included in ESEA/NCLB. There are no tests for voc education.*

8. I have a BS in Biology and a Group Science minor. Is my minor of any use in teaching at this point?

A. *The group science minor would not meet the definition of highly qualified. The teacher would need to demonstrate highly qualified in science.*

See question #19 below for important additional information.

9. I am a middle school teacher (6-8) and I have a Master's degree in Education--emphasis in Reading. In what core areas does this make me "highly qualified?" Does it cover Reading, English and Language Arts?

A. *You may use your master's degree in education – emphasis in reading to demonstrate you are highly qualified in reading or language arts, not both, within the grade validity on your certificate. However, if you were teaching reading and language arts at the time you earned the master's, the degree may be used as a demonstration of highly qualified for both subjects. See question #34 on page 7.*

10. I have a master's degree in Reading and I am a middle school teacher. Does my master's degree in Reading make me "highly qualified" to teach English and/or Language Arts?

A. *You would be qualified for reading or language arts, not both, and elementary grades (K-5), if you are elementary certified.*

11. If the middle school has a course in general science that covers several science subjects, is a teacher highly qualified if certified in one science?

A. *No, only the science in which he/she is endorsed, or, if endorsed in general science, then they would be considered highly qualified for middle school general science as long as the endorsement is based on having completed a major in science.*

See Reminder at the end of Section III.

12. If a teacher has a major in biology and a minor in chemistry, is the teacher highly qualified in chemistry?

A. *No. Only biology unless he/she has passed the chemistry subject area MTTC exam or demonstrate highly qualified in chemistry via one of the other options within Michigan's Definition for Identifying Highly Qualified Teachers.*

13. In relation to secondary science and math teachers in order to be considered highly qualified do they need to meet the requirements for every area of math or science they are teachers. For example, if a secondary science teacher is teaching biology, chemistry, and earth science must they meet state highly qualified requirements in each of these separate areas? For math ...algebra, geometry, etc.

A. *Teachers must be highly qualified in each subject they teach. Teachers with the DX or DI science endorsement, based on a major, are highly qualified in each of the individual subjects within that endorsement that they are assigned to teach, i.e., biology, chemistry, physics, earth science. Holders of DX or DI, based on a minor, and who have passed the general science MTTC exam are also highly qualified for each of the individual science subjects.*

See Reminder at the end of Section III.

The math endorsement is valid for teaching all of the mathematics curriculum and teachers are highly qualified if they have a math major, or if they have only completed a minor, without having taken the MTTC subject area exam, then they will have to demonstrate that they are highly qualified to teach math.

14. For ESEA purposes, the congressional definition of science (biology, chemistry, physics and earth science) does not include physical science. Do physical science teachers need to demonstrate they are highly qualified?

A. *Yes, because physical science is a combination of chemistry and physics.*

15. I am a social studies teacher assigned to teach 10th grade history. I have an RX (Social Studies) endorsement on my teaching certificate. Am I highly qualified?

A. *You would be considered highly qualified to teach history inasmuch as you have taken and passed the RX test in the MTTC.*

16. I am a social studies teacher assigned to teach 7th grade social studies. I have an RX (or CX) on my teaching certificate. Am I highly qualified?

A. *Yes, you may be considered to be highly qualified to teach a course titled social studies. Note that Michigan School Code requires a teacher of a course titled "social studies" to have either an RX or CX endorsement.*

See Reminder at the end of Section III.

17. I am a teacher of high school chemistry (or biology, physics, and earth science). I have a DX endorsement on my certificate. Am I highly qualified?

A. *You may be considered to be a highly qualified chemistry teacher if your DX endorsement is based on a major, or a minor and you have taken the DX test, or you demonstrated competence by meeting one of the State Board of Education approved options in the Michigan Definition for Identifying Highly Qualified Teachers.*

See Reminder at the end of Section III.

18. I am a teacher of 8th grade science. I have a DX endorsement on my teaching certificate. Am I highly qualified?

A. Yes, you may be considered to be highly qualified to teach a subject titled science.

See Reminder at the end of Section III.

19. What can teachers teach (and be considered “highly qualified”) if they have a DX, BX, CX, etc.?

A. A teacher with a group endorsement may teach a general or survey course in the subject area. (DX-science, general science, etc.; RX or CX – social studies; BX – Language Arts.)

*Further, the MDE has determined that middle school and high school experienced/veteran and new teachers who hold the Science (DX) or the new Integrated Science (DI) endorsement based on having completed a major meet the NCLB highly qualified designation for each of the individual subject covered by the endorsement. Those teachers who hold either endorsement based on having completed a minor and have passed the MTTC general science subject area examination are also considered highly qualified under NCLB. Those teachers who hold the science endorsement based on having completed a minor, **but were not required to pass the MTTC general science test**, must use one of the NCLB or HOUSE options for demonstrating that they are highly qualified to teach the science classed to which they are assigned.*

*REMINDER: It is **inappropriate** to assign a teacher with an individual science subject endorsement such as chemistry, or biology to teach a general science class. Only a teacher with the general science (DX or DI) endorsement can be assigned to teach a general science class or course.*

Social studies teachers in Michigan either have the newer Social Studies (RX) or Social Science (CX) endorsement. The Social Studies endorsement program replaced the Social Science endorsement program in 1995 with revised standards and is limited to four core academic subjects (history, geography, economics, and political science/government/civics).

- ★ *The MDE has determined that middle and high school experienced/veteran and new teachers who hold the Social Studies (RX) endorsement based on having completed a major or minor meet the NCLB highly qualified designation for each of the individual subjects covered by that endorsement (these teachers are required to pass the MTTC social studies examination prior to certification/endorsement). Those teachers who hold the Social Science (CX) endorsement based on having completed a major, which included content coursework in history and geography and political science and economics are also highly qualified to teach in each of the subjects covered by that endorsement.*

- ★ *Teachers who hold the social science (CX) endorsement based on having completed a minor must use one of the NCLB or HOUSE options for demonstrating that they are highly qualified to teach the social science/social studies classes to which they are assigned.*

*REMINDER: it is **inappropriate** to assign a teacher with an individual social studies or social science subject endorsement such as history, or geography to teach a general social studies class. Only a teacher with the social studies (RX) or social science (CX) endorsement can be assigned to teach a general social studies class or course.*

20. If a middle school teacher wants to demonstrate competency in math by taking the MTTC, is the elementary or secondary math test the appropriate exam?
- A. *Either test may be appropriate. The test selected should correspond to the grade in which the teacher is instructing. For example, if the teacher is teaching 6th grade math, the elementary test would be appropriate. If the teacher is in 9th grade math, the secondary test should be taken.*

Section IV: Special Education Questions

1. Do special education teachers need to meet the highly qualified requirement?
- A. *Yes, all teachers of core academic subjects must meet both Michigan Certification standards and federal highly qualified requirements.*
2. What does a special education teacher need to do to meet the highly qualified requirement (in addition to a Michigan certificate with all required endorsements appropriate for their assignment)?
- A. *Special education teachers with an elementary certificate who teach at the elementary level are highly qualified.*

Special education teachers with an elementary certificate who teach at the secondary level must do one of the following:

- ★ *a HOUSSE option, **OR***
- ★ *MTTC elementary education test, **OR***
- ★ *MTTC subject area exam for each core academic subject taught.*

Special education teachers with a secondary certificate who teach at the elementary level must do one of the following:

- ★ *One of the HOUSSE options, **OR***
- ★ *MTTC elementary education test*

Special education teachers with a secondary certificate who teach at the secondary level must do one of the following:

- ★ *One of the HOUSSE options, **OR***
- ★ *MTTC elementary education test, **OR***
- ★ *MTTC subject area exam for each core academic subject taught.*

3. Will a master's in special education make a teacher highly qualified to teach core academic subjects to special education students?
 - A. *No, a master's degree in and of itself does not document highly qualified. However, courses taken toward a master's degree may be used to meet a HOUSSE option, if those courses can be shown to reflect knowledge in the core academic subjects being taught or support the teaching of content to the students (a minimum of 18 semester credits are required).*
4. Will a master's in special education meet the definition of "highly qualified" if I am teaching regular education in other core academic areas?
 - A. *No, only if you completed coursework that would give you the equivalent of a major in the subject(s) that you are teaching.*
5. Are there special education teachers who already meet the highly qualified requirement?
 - A. *Yes, the following already meet the highly qualified requirement:*
 - ★ *Special education teachers who hold an elementary certificate and teach at the elementary level are highly qualified.*
6. Are there special education teachers who are not required to meet the highly qualified requirement?
 - A. *Yes, special education teachers in the following situations are not required to meet the highly qualified requirement:*
 - ★ *Teacher consultants and resource room teachers who do not provide direct instruction in core academic subjects for a grade or credit do not need to meet HQ requirements.*
 - ★ *Special education teachers who are team teaching in a general education classroom do not need to meet HQ requirements. This holds true whether the special education teacher gives the grade or not for that team taught class.*
 - ★ *Special education teachers teaching to alternate achievement standards need only to meet the HQ elementary requirements.*

7. What are the requirements of a team teaching format, as noted in the previous question?

- A. *The term “team teaching” refers to an approach to program delivery in which two or more teachers simultaneously share teaching responsibilities for a group of students by interacting with all of the students in the classroom. In a team teaching situation the following criteria must be satisfied:*
- i. Both the special education teacher and general education teacher must be present at the same time.*
 - ii. The general education teacher will assume the responsibilities of grading and assigning credit for students who are receiving general education during the instructional period.*
 - iii. The special education teacher will assume the responsibilities of grading and assigning credit for students who are receiving special education during the instructional period. The special education teacher must be responsible for the instruction of at least one student who is receiving special education in the team-taught class.*
 - iv. Qualified substitute teachers are utilized in the absence of either the special education teacher or the general education teacher.*

8. I am a resource room teacher. Do I need to meet the highly qualified requirements?

- A. *Resource room teachers who do not provide direct instruction in a core academic subjects for a grade or credit do NOT need to meet the highly qualified requirements.*

9. Is an elementary certified teacher who is endorsed in special education highly qualified for special education instruction in the high school setting, if the content is best delivered at an elementary level, due to the needs of the students?

- A. *Yes, if the teacher has passed the elementary exam of the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification.*

10. Are special education teachers in center-based programs exempt from NCLB/IDEA requirements?

- A. *Yes. IDEA '04 (also known as IDEIA) states that students who exclusively take the MI-Access Assessments are taught to alternate achievement standards. Special education teachers teaching to alternate achievement standards need only to meet the HQ elementary requirements. Most students in center-based programs take Mi-Access:*

Mi-Access is designed for students for whom the IEP team has determined that the MEAP assessments, even with assessment accommodations, are not appropriate for the student. Mi-Access comprises 3 levels of assessment:

Phase 1: Participation - designed for students who have, or function as if they have, severe cognitive impairment.

Phase 1: Supported Independence - designed for students who have, or function as if they have, moderate cognitive impairment.

Phase 2: These assessments are designed for students with mild cognitive impairments.

11. Special Education teachers teaching to alternate achievement standards need only to meet the HQ elementary requirements. Does this mean that they only need an elementary certificate if they are teaching at the secondary level and that they do not need to take the MTTC Elementary Education test?
- A. *The teacher needs to have an elementary certificate OR, if they have a secondary certificate, they can either take the MTTC elementary test or satisfy one of the HOUSSE options.*
12. Middle school teachers have been told that the District is allowed to decide how to designate the building as elementary or secondary. Would those middle school special education teachers have to meet HQ at the grade level or at the level the school has been designated?
- A. *The District may choose how they want to designate the school (elementary, middle, junior high, etc). However, for HQ, the teacher's certificate must match the grades. For example, if a teacher has a K-5 teaching certificate and teaches K-6 elementary school, the teacher is still only qualified for grades K-5.*
13. I have a temporary approval to teach special education. Do I need to be highly qualified?
- A. *Yes. You may function under a temporary or continuing temporary approval for a maximum of three years, effective on the date of hire for that position within the school district, to be highly qualified.*
- If hired prior to the first day of school in the 2003-2004 school year and working under temporary or continuing temporary approval, the teacher must meet the requirements by the end of the 2005-2006 school year.*
- All other candidates may only function under a temporary or continuing temporary approval for three years effective on the date of hire for that position with the school district to be considered highly qualified.*

Additional ESEA Questions and Answers from NEA, including information on the instructional parapro requirements are located at www.nea.org/esea/images/ESEAQA.doc.

Contacts:

Dr. Frank Ciloski, Michigan Department of Education, Supervisor – Office of Professional Preparation Services, 1-517-373-6791, ciloskif@michigan.gov

Mary Anne Adams, Michigan Education Association, Professional Development/Human Rights Department Consultant, 1-800-292-1934, madams@mea.org

Questions specific to Special Education Teachers can be directed to Linda Keway, Michigan Education Association, Professional Development/Human Rights Department Consultant, 1-800-292-1934, lkeway@mea.org