



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



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PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Jeremy M. Hughes, Ph.D., Acting Superintendent 

SUBJECT: Report on the Efforts of the Michigan Department of Education to Ensure that Teachers Meet No Child Left Behind Requirements

The State Board of Education has requested a report on the efforts of the Michigan Department of Education to provide support and assistance, as well as professional development and other learning opportunities for teachers who must meet the No Child Left Behind highly qualified requirements. The report presents information related to policy issues, resources, and activities to support the needs of Michigan teachers.

While the Office of professional Preparation Services has primary responsibility for coordinating professional development activities related to highly qualified teachers, other offices, and the various educational organizations have assisted in this effort. The Office of School Improvement administers the Reading First grant program whose goal is to provide literacy training to all early elementary teachers to assist in the use of the Grade Level Content Expectations to improve instruction and learning.

The Department has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Michigan Virtual University to provide online professional development activities supported by Title II state-level activities funds. Teacher participation in these professional development activities may be used under the State Board-approved high objective uniform state standards of evaluation (HOUSSE) as a demonstration of competence as a highly qualified teacher.

This report includes information on the integration of various initiatives organized to meet or support the highly qualified teacher requirements.

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HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS: FITTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

A REPORT TO THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

“Fitting the Pieces Together” is the theme for reviewing the Michigan Department of Education’s (MDE) efforts to date to assure that all Michigan teachers are highly qualified by 2006. NCLB is very comprehensive and assuring that all children are taught by highly qualified teachers is just one piece of the puzzle that connects with all the various initiatives.

Michigan, like many other states, has been working with local districts, teacher unions, educational associations, teachers, colleges and universities to disseminate information about the NCLB highly qualified teacher requirements. As a leader of teacher preparation, Michigan has 32 approved teacher preparation institutions with six pending applications, and produces approximately 8,000 new teachers annually. All new teachers will meet NCLB highly qualified requirements because they must pass the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC) prior to being recommended for certification.

In order to address the needs of K-12 students, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has developed teacher preparation program approval standards that are aligned with the K-12 curriculum benchmarks and frameworks. With the creation and implementation of the new Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCE) the approval standards will eventually be reviewed against those for purposes of alignment and/or revision if necessary.

The State Board of Education (SBE) “Task Force on Ensuring Excellent Educators” was organized in 2001 to discuss the current state of teacher quality in Michigan. The Task Force developed five goals and recommended policy actions to accomplish them. In October 2004, Dr. Flora L. Jenkins, Director of the Office of Professional Preparation Services (OPPS), and Mrs. Sue Carnell, Governor’s Education Advisor, attended the National Governor’s Association’s (NGA) Institute on Teacher Quality. **Exhibit 1** is a report prepared by Dr. Jenkins and Mrs. Carnell on Michigan’s response to framing questions from the conference. At the heart of this report are the Task Force’s five goals and recommended policy actions. These goals and policy actions are what drive the MDE’s initiatives and response to preparing and assuring highly qualified teachers.

One of the NGA framing questions deals with how the state prioritizes the many issues regarding teacher quality. The state team identified the following issues and priorities:

- Hard-to-staff districts/schools.
- Hard-to-staff content areas: math, science, special education.
- Accountability of higher education institutions.
- Inappropriate placement of teachers in classes in which they do not hold endorsements or coursework.
- Teacher recruitment and retention.

The SBE/MDE developed a draft strategic plan (**Exhibit 2**) that addresses these issues in objective 3 which states:

“Demonstrate that Michigan classrooms are staffed with highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals under the direction of administrators who are committed to instructional excellence.”

The performance indicators and strategies will continue to guide the Department’s efforts to address the various issues surrounding teacher quality.

CURRENT UPDATE

The MDE presented its first report on highly qualified teachers to the SBE on September 25, 2003 with periodic updates at subsequent Board meetings on the Limited License to Instruct (LLI) project, the Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant, and the ASSIST online induction, mentoring and professional development modules. Some of the policy issues identified in the first report was the revision of the Administrative Rules Governing the Certification Michigan Teachers and changing the secondary certification level from grades 7-12 to grades 6-12.

The draft of the revised Administrative Rules is nearing completion. The rules will reflect the need for strong preparation programs with early and on-going classroom experience, and focus on content majors, professional development that is relevant to the teacher’s assignment, and/or is content-based, and emphasizing the importance of mentoring and induction. In addition, the revised rules will update policy with legislation that has passed since the last revision.

The revised rules also propose changes to the secondary certificate levels from grades 7-12 to grades 6-12, which will increase the number of highly qualified teachers at the middle level. This will have a significant positive impact on districts with middle schools that contain grades 6-8 or 6-9.

Another issue raised was the qualifications of special education teachers and the impact of NCLB and the reauthorization of IDEA. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004, reauthorizes IDEA and requires special education teachers to meet highly qualified requirements as stipulated in NCLB. This means that self-contained classroom special education teachers must demonstrate that they are highly qualified in each subject taught. Michigan special education teachers who hold elementary certification in conjunction with their special education endorsement will be considered highly qualified. Secondary special education teachers can use the high objective uniform state standards of evaluation (HOUSSE) options approved by the SBE on April 24, 2003, which include passage of the MTTC general elementary education examination.

On March 15, 2004, the USDOE issued supplemental guidance and flexibility for rural schools in meeting highly qualified requirements. **Exhibit 3** is a detailed presentation of the additional guidance and provisions related to rural schools. This flexibility deems teachers with group endorsement majors in social studies, science, and language arts as highly qualified. Small and

rural schools with a census designation of category 7 or 8 will have an additional year (2007) to meet the highly qualified teacher requirements.

OPPS staff, along with staff from the Offices of Special Education, School Improvement, and the Superintendent's office continue to work together to meet the various requirements of NCLB including highly qualified teachers. The following paragraphs further elaborate on the activities and initiatives that MDE staff have and are engaged in to assure that Michigan teachers are highly qualified by 2006.

The MDE in collaboration with the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) has proposed and implemented changes in the Registry of Educational Personnel (REP) data collection system, that will track district-level progress in employing highly qualified teachers by the end of June 2006. Beginning June 30, 2004, within the REP submission, districts were required to report the status of core academic teachers in demonstrating competence as highly qualified. Importantly, for this time period, the REP report reflected a 100% submission rate by local districts thus ensuring the completeness of the collection. This initial collection of data found that 91% of Michigan core academic teachers had met the (USDOE) definition highly qualified, and that percentage was reported to the United States Department of Education. The December 2004 REP collection results are currently being analyzed and are not yet available for distribution.

The Office of Professional Preparation Services (OPPS) in collaboration with CEPI and the Department of Information Technology (DIT) have developed and implemented a process to audit teacher assignments reported in the REP against the certification licensing system to identify variances. A test of this process was conducted using the June 2004 REP data and further refinements to the audit were made. The analysis of the December 2004 REP data being conducted is to identify exceptions to the placement of teachers in appropriate assignments. Districts will be notified if they are out of compliance and will be given an opportunity to take corrective action without further MDE involvement. The MDE is also monitoring a sample of Michigan districts to determine the accuracy of reporting information to the REP. The OPPS plans to employ additional temporary summer staff to conduct a more extensive audit of the accuracy of the data being submitted.

The OPPS has, in response to NCLB, reduced the number of emergency teacher permits issued to districts to employ an individual in an instructional capacity when an appropriately certificated teacher is not available. The trend indicates a significant decline in emergency permits issued during the last three academic years. The OPPS proposes to reduce the yearly emergency permits issued to zero, by the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year. The OPPS will continue to issue teacher permits to districts when the identified individual is enrolled and making adequate progress toward certification and is in compliance with all other requirements of NCLB. As indicated in **Exhibit 4** emergency permits have been reduced from 960 in 2002 to 268 in 2005.

The OPPS continues to work closely with the districts, teachers, and various education associations, informing all staff of the options approved by the SBE as a demonstration of competence. Particular emphasis has been given to the teacher portfolio option when individual

teachers have a number of years of experience teaching core academic subjects. The portfolio, as a high objective uniform standard of evaluation, has been adopted by many states and has received positive review from the USDOE. Other options receiving emphasis are the use of 90 contact hours of content-related professional development, or earning an additional six semester credits in the content as a demonstration of competence.

During the fall of 2003 and 2004 the OPPS conducted eight regional update meetings each year across Michigan to inform local districts, public school academies, teachers, education associations, and teacher preparation institutions about the highly qualified teacher requirements of NCLB. These meetings were well attended by educators (approximately 600 each year). The meetings provided an opportunity for MDE staff to address one-on-one questions and concerns related to highly qualified teachers. In addition, OPPS staff presented at annual conferences of various educational groups during 2003 and 2004. The OPPS staff has been able to address questions and concerns raised by teachers and administrators. The OPPS staff has also taken the opportunity to clarify issues related to highly qualified teachers during the annual meeting of university/college certification officers sponsored by the MDE. This meeting provided time to exchange ideas and solicit assistance in helping teachers meet the requirement. Finally, the OPPS continues to provide technical assistance directly to districts and staff by meeting with them locally.

OTHER MDE EFFORTS RELATED TO HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS

Use of Title II State-Level Activities Funds

In 2003 the MDE received \$2.7 million in Title II activities funds to meet the various requirements of NCLB. A committee, consisting of MDE personnel, was formed to determine how these funds were to be spent. Committee members included:

Carol Wolenberg	Bonnie Rockafellow
Jeremy Hughes	Cheryl Poole
Rick Floria	Catherine Smith
Mary Ann Chartrand	Nancy Mincemoyer
Linda Brown	Greg Olszta
Yvonne Caamal Canul	Jacqueline Thompson
Flora Jenkins	Mary Alice Galloway
Frank Ciloski	Superintendent (Adjunct)

Title II has 14 allowable activities for which funds can be expended. **Exhibit 5** is the matrix of state-level activities by priority proposed during the 2002-2003 fiscal year. The matrix also shows each initiative's relevance to the Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant or existing SBE components. During 2003 the committee decided that dissemination of NCLB requirements to school administrators and teachers was a priority. The Title II funds supported the principal's academy, NCLB, AYP and Ed Yes! informational workshops for administrators, teacher professional development, development of an assessment for paraprofessionals, and recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers.

In FY 2004, the Legislature appropriated two-thirds of the state-level activities funds to the Michigan Virtual University (MVU). The MDE Title II committee met with MVU representatives to determine which activities should be continued by MVU and to develop an inter-agency memorandum of understanding (**Exhibit 6**). **Exhibit 7** contains the FY 2003 Title II state activities budget and the various activities approved by the committee. **Exhibit 8** is the FY 2004-05 budget with the proposed activities. The committee approved funding new projects for 2005 to work with small and rural schools to determine the feasibility of developing a rural educator generalist endorsement and professional development for public school academies (PSAs).

In order to understand how these initiatives are related, **Exhibit 9** is a timeline depiction of past, current, and ongoing activities initiated by the Department using state-level Title II funds as well as other grant funding.

In addition to the Title II state-level funds, the MDE provides competitive collaborative Title II, subpart A(3) professional development grants to institutions of higher education and high priority schools. A portion of these funds (\$400,000) will be targeted for grants to small and rural schools during the 2005 funding period. **Exhibit 10** depicts the project abstracts for 2004-05.

UPDATE ON ALTERNATIVE ROUTES

To have a significant impact on the teacher shortage in urban schools, Wayne State University's College of Education in collaboration with the Detroit Public Schools and the Detroit Federation of Teachers, is preparing individuals to enter the teaching profession under the State of Michigan's Limited License to Instruct (LLI) program. Since 2001, when WSU implemented its LLI program, over 500 individuals have entered the program. This program is assisting the Detroit Public Schools at a time of significant teacher shortages. It is preparing candidates to work in such areas of teaching as curriculum development, classroom management, assessment and evaluation, and working with parents and community – a significant step away from substitute teachers who may have no teacher preparation at all.

When fully implemented, this plan should result in the placement of 625 licensed instructors in Detroit Public Schools and ultimately 625 fully qualified and certified DPS teachers. The MDE remains a consistent partner with WSU and DPS in assuring the success of the LLI program. **Exhibits 11 and 12** present updated reports on the LLI program.

Michigan also participates in the Troops to Teachers (TTT) program. **Exhibit 13** is a list of the local districts/schools that employ those trained through the TTT program. Currently, there are 56 former military personnel serving as teachers in Michigan as a result of the state's participation in the TTT program.

In addition to these programs, several Michigan teacher preparation institutions are offering experimental programs to accommodate individuals who are seeking to make a transition to teaching from other careers. These institutions include Grand Valley State University, Wayne State University, Saginaw Valley State University, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, University of Michigan-Dearborn, Oakland University, and Central Michigan University.

ENHANCING NEW TEACHER INDUCTION AND MENTORING

The Michigan Department of Education's investment in the "Advocating Strong Standards-based Induction Support for Teachers" (ASSIST) web site instructional modules provides a consistent 24/7 availability of resources to educators across Michigan.

These resources provide an innovative means of transforming teacher induction and mentoring program standards into realistic materials on an on-demand delivery approach. Beginning teachers, mentors, and school building administrators have access to research based frameworks for thinking, learning, and teaching for success. Within the ASSIST resources are professional tools for peer assisted learning, observation tools, and documentation systems that promote performance-based learning. The ASSIST materials also provide tools that strengthen high quality instructional leaders to better motivate and work with high quality teachers. One training session on use of the ASSIST resources was held in January and others are being scheduled. Training sessions targeted particularly to high priority urban districts such as Detroit, Benton Harbor, Saginaw, and Flint are also being scheduled. Additional information on ASSIST is available via the website at <http://assist.edu.msu.edu/ASSIST/>. **Exhibit 14** is the synthesis of the standards for ensuring excellent educators that is the basis for the development of the ASSIST modules.

SBE/MDE AND ISD/RESA PARTNERSHIP

On January 11, 2005, a report on the ISD/RESA Partnership was presented to the SBE. Staff from the OPSS along with SBE members, other MDE staff, and ISD/RESA representatives have worked together on this collaborative effort since June, 2004. The SBE/MDE and ISD/RESA matrix, **Exhibit 15**, shows the roles and interrelations that each partner has in accomplishing the State Board's strategic goal: "To attain substantial and meaningful improvement in academic achievement for all students/children with primary emphasis on high priority schools and students." Certainly an integral part of achieving that goal is, "Ensuring Excellent Educators."

SUMMARY

In spite of the stringency of the various requirements and sanctions of NCLB, it has brought the education community together around a central theme: "quality education for

all children.” The current report shows that Michigan’s initiatives and efforts were already addressing this issue, but it has now come together in a more planned and purposeful manner. We are confident that we will reach the goal of having all teachers highly qualified by the 2006 school year. This means that school administrators will have to pay closer attention to how they are assigning their teachers based on their level of certification and endorsements. Veteran teachers must work to provide evidence that they are highly qualified either through testing, coursework, professional development, submission of a portfolio, or one of the other approved HOUSSE options. Teacher preparation institutions must be poised to meet the demands of veteran teachers for coursework in their content through a variety of instructional modules, particularly via online course offerings. ISDs/RESAs must continue to be collaborative partners with MDE to facilitate the implementation of new state and federal laws, grants, programs and continue to offer opportunities for professional development.

The MDE will continue to be proactive in providing support and assistance to teachers and administrators. Together we will “fit the pieces together” and assure quality education to all Michigan children.

NOTE: The backup material is available for review in the State Board of Education Office.