

Highly Qualified Staff

What does it mean to be highly qualified under the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*?

When the term “highly qualified teacher” is used with respect to any public elementary school or secondary school teacher teaching in a State, it means that:

- a. The teacher has obtained full State certification as a teacher (including certification obtained through alternate routes to certification) or passed the State teacher licensing examination, and holds a license to teach in such State, except that when the term is used with respect to any teacher teaching in a public charter school, the term means that the teacher meets the certification or licensing requirements set forth in the State's public charter school law (*see entry below for the definition of a highly qualified charter school teacher*); and
- b. The teacher has not had certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis.

When the term “highly qualified teacher” is used with respect to:

- a. An elementary school teacher who is new to the profession, it means that the teacher has met the requirements of paragraph (a) above, and:
 - i. Holds at least a bachelor's degree; and
 - ii. Has demonstrated, by passing a rigorous State test, subject knowledge and teaching skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and other areas of the basic elementary school curriculum (which may consist of passing a State-required certification or licensing test or tests in reading, writing, mathematics, and other areas of basic elementary school curriculum); or
- b. A middle school or secondary teacher who is new to the profession, it means that the teacher has met the requirements of paragraph (a) above, holds at least a bachelor's degree, and has demonstrated a high level of competency in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches by:
 - i. Passing a rigorous State academic subject test in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches (which may consist of a passing level of performance on a State-required certification or licensing test or tests in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches); **or**
 - ii. Successful completion, in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches, of an academic major, a graduate degree, coursework equivalent to an undergraduate academic major, or advanced certification or credentialing.

When the term “highly qualified teacher” is used with respect to an elementary, middle, or secondary school teacher who is not new to the profession, it means that the teacher has met the requirements of paragraph (a) above, holds at least a bachelor's degree, and: A-3 Improving Teacher Quality State Grants Non-Regulatory Guidance October 5, 2006 (<http://www.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/guidance.pdf>)

- a. Has met the applicable standard requirements, which includes an option for a test; **or**
- b. Demonstrates competency in all the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches based on a high objective uniform State standard of evaluation that-
 - i. Is set by the State for both grade appropriate academic subject-matter knowledge and teaching skills;
 - ii. Is aligned with challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards and developed in consultation with core content specialists, teachers, principals, and school administrators;
 - iii. Provides objective, coherent information about the teacher's attainment of core content knowledge in the academic subjects in which a teacher teaches;
 - iv. Is applied uniformly to all teachers in the same academic subject and the same grade level throughout the State;
 - v. Takes into consideration, but not be based primarily on, the time the teacher has been teaching in the academic subject;
 - vi. Is made available to the public upon request; and
 - vii. May involve multiple, objective measures of teacher competency [Section 9101(23)].

When the term “highly qualified teacher” is used with respect to any public elementary school or secondary school special education teacher teaching in a State, it means that:

The teacher has obtained full State certification as a special education teacher (including certification obtained through alternate routes to certification) or passed the State special education teacher licensing examination, and holds a license to teach in the State as a special education teacher, except that when the term is used with respect to any teacher teaching in a public charter school, the term means that the teacher meets the certification or licensing requirements set forth in the State's public charter school law (*see entry below for the definition of a highly qualified charter school teacher*); and

- i. The teacher has not had special education certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis; and
- ii. The teacher holds at least a bachelor's degree.

For Certification Information

- MSDE Certification visit
http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/certification/certification_branch/
- MCPS Certification visit
<http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/personnel/certification/>