



**District of Columbia
Office of the State Superintendent of Education**

**LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY
HIGHLY QUALIFIED (HQ) RESOURCE GUIDE**

**Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
810 First Street, NE, Eighth Floor
Washington, DC 20002**

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FOREWORD

The purpose of this guide is to provide assistance to local education agencies (LEAs) in meeting the highly qualified requirements for teachers and paraprofessionals outlined in the Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

In addition to providing information on compliance requirements, OSSE has and will continue to provide LEAs and teachers with resources to meet ESEA's requirements. We welcome your feedback and suggestions in these efforts.

FREQUENTLY USED ACRONYMS

ELL	English Language Learner
ESEA	Elementary Secondary Education Act
HQ	Highly Qualified
HQP	Highly Qualified Paraprofessional
HQT	Highly Qualified Teacher
IHE	Institution of Higher Education
LEA	Local Education Agency
OSSE	Office of the State Superintendent of Education
SBOE	State Board of Education
SEA	State Education Agency
SY	School Year

I. HIGHLY QUALIFIED (HQ) TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

During the 2014-2015 academic year, OSSE will provide technical assistance directly to LEAs to ensure that all LEAs are aware of HQ requirements for teachers and paraprofessionals and have the knowledge and skills to successfully meet those requirements. To request OSSE HQT technical assistance, contact Valida Walker, valida.walker@dc.gov (202) 741-6420 or Dorothy Beal, dorothy.beal@dc.gov (202) 741-8569.

HIGHLY QUALIFIED AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WEBINAR TIMELINE SY 2014-2015

Activity	Description	Expected Date
LEA Highly Qualified Webinar	The Webinar will cover the State Definition of Highly Qualified Teacher and review updates to the LEA HQ Resource Guide	October 2, 2014 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM
LEA Highly Qualified Webinar	The Webinar will cover the State Definition of Highly Qualified Teacher and review updates to the LEA HQ Resource Guide	October 7, 2014 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM
LEA Technical Assistance Workshop	This Workshop will provide participants with an opportunity to get real-time answers to HQ questions and to work through real scenarios related to making highly qualified teacher status determinations. The workshop will include a thorough discussion and demonstration of the HOUSSSE rubrics.	October 30, 2014
LEA Technical Assistance Workshop	This Workshop will provide participants with an opportunity to get real-time answers to HQ questions and to work through real scenarios related to making highly qualified teacher status determinations. The workshop will include a thorough discussion and demonstration of the HOUSSSE rubrics.	November 4, 2014

II. STATE HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHER DEFINITION

General Criteria for Highly Qualified Teachers of Record

In March 2008, the D.C. State Board of Education unanimously voted to fully align the state HQT definition with the definition outlined in ESEA § 1119. This decision provides teachers with additional flexibility to demonstrate content knowledge in core subjects being taught (Elementary Education (K-6); Mathematics; English/Reading/Language Arts; Science (including Biology, Chemistry and Physics); Social Studies; Foreign Language; and the Arts (Art, Music, Drama, etc.)). For purposes of compliance with the state HQT definition, a teacher:

- 1) Must have a Bachelor's degree; **and**
- 2) Must have a Regular I, Regular II, Standard, or Professional license that has not been waived on a temporary basis (charter LEAs exempted); **and**
- 3) ***Elementary teachers must:***
 - a) Pass the DC Elementary content exam; **or**
 - b) Pass the DC Early Childhood content exam (K-3 teachers only); **or**
 - c) Veteran teachers may achieve HQ status via the High Objective Uniform State Standard Evaluation (HOUSSE) process.

Secondary teachers (and single subject teachers on the Elementary level, e.g., Art, Music, etc.) must:

- a) Pass the appropriate DC Praxis content knowledge exam; **or**
- b) Have a major or its equivalent (30 semester hours) in the content area; **or**
- c) Have an advanced degree in the content area; **or**
- d) Have National Board Certification in the content area; **or**
- e) Veteran teachers may achieve HQ status via a HOUSSE process.

DC's Regular I license is not considered a waiver or temporary license since it meets ESEA's HQT requirements for those in alternate route or practicing teacher programs. To be deemed highly qualified, these teachers:

- 1) Are enrolled in a state-approved teacher education program; and
- 2) Have passed the Praxis I and II - Content exams; and
- 3) Participate in a program of intensive supervision with structured guidance and regular ongoing support or a teacher mentor program.

Highly Qualified Special Education Teachers

Pursuant to federal (34 CFR § 300.18(b)(1)) and state requirements (5 DCMR §1601.1) for highly qualified Special Education teachers, resource teachers in DC Public Schools (DCPS) that ONLY push-in/pull-out and/or provide collaborative/consultative services must have a valid DC license in Special Education; and charter LEA teachers must have a Bachelor's degree.

Per the requirements of IDEA and ESEA, self-contained special education elementary education teachers (grades K-6) and special education core subject teachers of record must:

- 1) Have a valid DC license in Special Education (DCPS only); charter LEA teachers must have a Bachelor's degree;
AND
- 2) Meet the content knowledge demonstration requirements for the core subject(s) being taught as outlined in the HQT definition. In addition:
 - SPED teachers of students who take the DC-CAS ALT may demonstrate content knowledge as Elementary Education teachers do (Elementary or Early Childhood Praxis or HOUSSE).
 - New, multi-subject SPED teachers who are already HQT in Reading, Math or Science may also use the HOUSSE to meet HQT requirements.

Highly Qualified English Language Learner Teachers

Similar to the requirements for Special Educators, teachers of English Language Learners (ELL) must demonstrate competence in serving this population of students, as well as demonstrate content knowledge of any core subjects they may teach. Per the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (5DCMR §1601.1), ELL resource teachers in DC Public Schools (DCPS) that ONLY push-in/pull-out and/or provide collaborative/consultative services must have a valid DC license in English as a Second Language (ESL). ELL resource teachers in public charter schools must have a Bachelor's degree and be able to demonstrate they are qualified to teach ELL students. Some examples of how a charter school teacher may demonstrate ELL expertise or qualifications: by passing the English as Second Language Praxis Specialty test; having a state certification in ESL; or completing coursework required for ESL certification.

Self-contained ELL/elementary education teachers (grades K-6) and ELL core subject teachers of record must:

- 1) Have a valid DC license in English as a Second Language (DCPS only);
A Bachelor's degree and be able to demonstrate qualifications to teach ELL students (Charter LEA teachers);
AND
- 2) Meet the content knowledge demonstration requirements for the core subject(s) being taught as outlined in the HQT.

Documentation verifying a teacher's HQ status must be kept on file at the LEA and/or school for monitoring and auditing purposes.

III. HIGHLY QUALIFIED PARAPROFESSIONALS

LEAs may not employ paraprofessionals that have not attained Highly Qualified status in an instructional capacity. Any paraprofessional that is not HQ must be assigned to a non-instructional position. Note that the LEA may, at its discretion, reassign paraprofessionals who do not meet HQ requirements to non-instructional duties. If a paraprofessional who does not meet the qualification requirements is re-assigned, evidence must be provided that the paraprofessional will not perform instructional duties.

In compliance with section 1119 of ESEA, to meet highly qualified requirements, instructional paraprofessionals/educational aides must:

- 1) Have a high school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED), **and**;
- 2) (a) Possess an Associate's degree from an accredited college/university, **or**;
(b) Have completed two years of full-time study (minimum of 48 credit hours) at an accredited college/university, **or**;
(c) Have successfully completed the ETS ParaPro Assessment with a passing score of 461.

For more information on types of paraprofessionals, requirements for those serving in school-wide programs, etc., please see the Frequently Asked Questions in the OSSE website. Per Title I-A requirements, paraprofessionals who only serve as translators or who only conduct parental involvement activities must have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent but do not have to meet the additional educational or testing requirements. In addition, individuals who work in food services, cafeteria or playground supervision, personal care services, non-instructional computer assistance, and similar positions are not considered paraprofessionals.

All instructional paraprofessionals whose salaries are funded by Title I in targeted assistance programs must meet highly qualified requirements. Instructional paraprofessionals serving in Title I schools that elect to operate a school-wide program must also meet the requirements above – **whether their salaries are funded by Title I or not**. Documentation verifying a paraprofessional's HQ status must be kept on file at the LEA and/or school for monitoring and auditing purposes. LEAs must be prepared to demonstrate evidence that all instructional paraprofessionals are supervised by a highly qualified teacher.

IV. STATE HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHER EVALUATIONS AND HIGH OBJECTIVE UNIFORM STATE STANDARD OF EVALUATION (HOUSSE) RUBRICS

OSSE has created standard evaluation forms for LEAs to use to evaluate and keep record of a teacher's HQT status. These forms and supporting evidence must be kept on file at the LEA and/or school for monitoring purposes. It is always a good practice for teachers to also keep a copy of their HQT status documents. Based on the difference in HQT requirements for various teachers, OSSE has created four HQT Evaluation Forms and HOUSSE Rubrics:

- 1) Early Childhood (Kindergarten-3) and Elementary Education (K-6)
- 2) Middle - High School (6 - 12); Art and Music (K-12)
- 3) Special Education (K-12)
- 4) English as a Second Language/Bilingual Education (K-12)

The option for veteran teachers, with at least one-year of full-time teaching experience, to use the HOUSSE process to meet HQT requirements is an additional tool for LEA use. New multi-subject Special Education teachers that are HQ in Math, Reading or Science may also use the HOUSSE process to demonstrate content knowledge in additional subject

areas. Teachers may document their years of teaching experience, college coursework, professional development opportunities, service, and leadership activities that are directly related to the core subject area they are currently teaching to meet HQT requirements via the HOUSSE process.

The State HQ Teacher Evaluations and HOUSSE rubrics are available on the OSSE website.

V. PARENT NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

There are two LEA parent notification requirements regarding teacher and paraprofessional quality outlined in ESEA section 1111(h)(6). These require:

- A timely, annual notification to all parents regarding their right to request information regarding a teacher or paraprofessional's professional qualifications; **and**
- A notification to parents of students being taught by a non-highly qualified teacher for four weeks or more.

The first notification often exists on the LEA's website, or is part of the Parent Handbook, or is included in other parental involvement information provided to parents by the LEA. Please note that the second notification must be sent once a core content class has been taught by a non-HQT teacher for more than four consecutive weeks. The LEA must maintain records copies of letters sent to parents as documented evidence of compliance with parental notification requirements.

Sample parent notifications are available on the OSSE website.

V. POINTS OF CONTACT

If you have questions or comments, please contact:

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