



## FAQ – Endorsements / Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

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### **Q1: How does Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) affect me?**

**A1:** For the purpose of teacher certification, ESSA legislation empowers states to individually determine what makes a teacher qualified to teach a particular subject. In short, the focus has shifted from being **highly qualified** to being **endorsed**.

### **Q2: I'm not sure which endorsements I hold. How do I find out more?**

**A2:** Please visit <https://education.alaska.gov/teachercertification/endorsements> for information on endorsements. Being highly qualified in a subject area does NOT necessarily mean you are endorsed in that area. There are two ways to determine your endorsements:

- Review your hard copy teaching certificate; individual endorsements are clearly listed.
- Contact the Department of Education (DEED) or visit their teacher certificate website at <https://www.eed.state.ak.us/TeacherCertification/TeacherSearch/ApplicantLogin.cfm>

### **Q3: How do I add an endorsement to my certificate?**

**A3:** Endorsements may be added to certificates two years or greater in length. Submit the Additional Endorsement application for the certificate type. The cost is \$100 to add, remove, or modify each endorsement (not limited on the number). More information can be found on the DEED website from the following link.

<https://education.alaska.gov/teachercertification/endorsements>

*NOTE: Many teachers hold passing scores from Praxis II exam(s) as such were deemed highly qualified under No Child Left Behind (NCLB). An endorsement in that content area can be added to a teaching certificate as long as the teacher has completed two years of experience teaching the subject.*

### **Q4: What's an example of how this change from highly qualified to an endorsement based focus might impact a teacher?**

**A4:** Let's say you have been considered qualified to teach English because in the past you passed a Praxis II exam. Those passing scores deemed you "highly qualified" under NCLB, however, your teaching certificate does not list English as one of your endorsements.

In order to teach English under ESSA, you must carry an English endorsement. The Praxis II exam by itself doesn't qualify you for an endorsement, however, a **Praxis II exam along with two years of teaching experience in that subject area** does qualify for an endorsement.

*This method of adding an endorsement is not available for elementary, reading or special education endorsements.*

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**Q5: *Can I continue to teach an assignment if I don't carry an endorsement in that area?***

**A5:** For now, yes. If you were deemed highly qualified in a content area, you have until July 31, 2019 to add an endorsement to your teaching certificate.

**Q6: *I'm qualified through a HOUSSE. Can I add an endorsement based on a HOUSSE?***

**A6:** Unfortunately, no. If you have previously been deemed highly qualified through a HOUSSE, you are not eligible to add an endorsement in that subject, per the state's guidelines. However, you may continue to teach the assignment; the district will report you as "out-of-field".

**Q7: *What are the implications of being labeled "out-of-field"?***

**A7:** The district is required to report out-of-field teachers to the state during its annual staff accounting report. The goal is to make sure that no particular school has a higher percentage of out-of-field teachers than another. The state is particularly interested in ensuring that low income and Title I schools do not have a disproportionately high percentage of out-of-field teachers.

**Q8: *Will first year teachers who have passed a Praxis II exam in a content area be able to add an endorsement to their certificate?***

**A8:** No, not until they've completed two years of teaching in that subject area. The district recognizes that there will be inevitable and unavoidable out-of-field reports every year. Again, the goal is to have an equitable distribution of out-of-field teachers among schools. Teachers will be expected to add an endorsement as soon as they are eligible to do so.

**Q9: *What does this mean for upcoming internal transfer opportunities?***

**A9:** For the upcoming 2019 internal transfer period, teachers must hold the appropriate endorsement at the time of application or commit to having the endorsement added by July 31, 2019. For subsequent internal transfer periods, endorsements will be required. Exceptions will be evaluated on a case by case basis, to include teachers qualified via the HOUSSE method who are unable to add an endorsement, per Q6 above.

**Q10: *What's the timeline for all of this, and am I required to add an endorsement even though I renewed my certificate six (6) months ago?***

**A10:** By July 31, 2019, teachers must be endorsed in the subject area in which they are teaching, if they are eligible to do so. As an example, if a teacher is currently teaching math as a result of passing the math Praxis II exam and is not endorsed in math, an endorsement must be added prior to the 2019-2020 school year. If that teacher doesn't have two years of experience teaching math, he/she will have to wait until the two year mark in order to qualify to add the endorsement and will be reported as out-of-field until that time.