



Minnesota State Plan for Federal “Highly Qualified” Teacher Requirements 2012 Revision

Information for Teachers and School Districts Includes Updated “Highly Qualified” Requirements from the United States Department of Education and the Minnesota Department of Education.

(See Page 10, Question 5 for Impact of the Federal Waiver Granted in 2012)

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Executive Summary

This updated *Minnesota State Plan for Federal “Highly Qualified” Teacher Requirements* is the official guidance document for teachers and schools. All Department guidance will be issued solely through this Minnesota plan to assure clear communication. Under the 2001 “No Child Left Behind” Act (NCLB), teachers of **core academic subjects** must meet certain requirements to demonstrate federal “highly qualified” status. This plan summarizes guidance in effect for all Minnesota public school teachers.

Implications of the federal waiver granted to Minnesota in 2012: The basic “highly qualified” teacher requirements of NCLB remain in place and there is a requirement to ensure that poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers. A district must still notify parents when their child is taught for four consecutive weeks by a teacher or paraprofessional who is not “highly qualified.” Additional guidance for districts can be found on page 10, Question 5 in Section 2 of this document.

The core academic subjects defined in NCLB and in Minnesota law are: **English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography** [Section 9101 (11)].

Minnesota teachers who are fully licensed in each core academic subject they teach have met the federal “highly qualified” requirements because they have earned an academic subject major and/or successfully passed the Minnesota teacher licensure content exam in each subject.

Minnesota general education teachers, including Title I teachers and teachers of English Learners (EL) who are not fully licensed for all core academic subjects they teach, even if they are working under special Board of Teaching permissions, are required to demonstrate subject competence in order to attain federal “highly qualified” status.

Special education teachers follow new rules under the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004). Special education teachers who hold state licensure in special education may be required to demonstrate subject competence, if teaching a core academic subject, in each core academic subject they teach in order to attain federal “highly qualified” status. See Section 2, Questions 14-16 for further guidance.

This Minnesota plan specifies a state-approved “high objective and uniform state system of evaluation” (HOUSSE) as a means **only** for Special Education teachers, EL teachers, teachers from another country teaching in the United States on a temporary basis, or teachers under a Board of Teaching waiver not new to the profession to demonstrate subject competence in order to meet federal “highly qualified” requirements. An eligible teacher may choose to complete the application, compile the supporting documents, and meet with the district-designated school administrator who must review and verify whether 100 points have been achieved in two or more categories of the HOUSSE process. See Section 3 for details.

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Information about the Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exams (MTLE):

Specific testing information, including registration, dates, testing sites, costs, etc., can be found on the [Minnesota Teacher Licensure Examinations website](http://www.mtle.nesinc.com/). (<http://www.mtle.nesinc.com/>)

Acronym key:

BOT: Board of Teaching
 ESEA : Elementary and Secondary Education Act, aka as “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB)
 EL: English Learner (aka ESL, English as a Second Language)
 IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
 HOUSSE: “high objective uniform state standard of evaluation” process
 LEA: Location Education Agency (i.e., district, school)
 MDE: Minnesota Department of Education
 MTLE: Minnesota Teacher Licensure Examination
 SEA: State Education Agency

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Section 1: Basic Guidance

“Highly qualified” status is guided by the 2001 federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), the 2004 federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), 2004 Minnesota Omnibus Education Statute (122A.16), and Minnesota Board of Teaching (BOT) requirements.

1. Definition of a “Highly Qualified” Teacher

“Highly qualified” teacher is a federal requirement and designation to ensure that teachers in all states have met certain standards to teach core academic subjects. Minnesota teachers who possess a **current** Minnesota teaching license in a core subject area are automatically considered “highly qualified” because they have met the standards by successfully completing a content exam, or academic major, or the HOUSSE process. Generally, Special Education teachers, English Learner teachers, or teachers in an Alternative Learning Center are not required to be “highly qualified” **unless** they also teach in one or more core academic subjects. Determination of “highly qualified” status is done at the school district level in Minnesota as a part of employment. A licensed teacher who is granted a teaching Variance in a core academic subject is required to demonstrate they are “highly qualified” through one of the methods for which they might be eligible within a year of receiving the first Variance.

2. Definition of “New and Not New to the Profession”

Based on the NCLB Act non-regulatory guidance issued by the United States Department of Education, Minnesota considers a teacher to be “new” to the profession until he/she has taught a minimum of one year; after one year of regular full-time teaching in their subject area they are considered to be “not new.” The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) identifies teachers and whether or not they are new to the profession by using data reported by school districts via the Staff Automated Reporting System (STAR) on either October 1 or March 1.

In addition, the Regulations for the 2004 IDEA identify a fully licensed general education teacher who subsequently becomes fully licensed as a special education teacher as a new special education teacher when first hired as a special education teacher. [34 CFR 300.18 (g) (2)].

3. Definition of a Minnesota Professional Teaching License

A Minnesota professional teaching license is defined as any five-year or continuing teaching license issued by the MDE. This license requires teachers to hold a bachelor’s degree, complete an approved teacher preparation program, and pass required licensing exams.

4. Definition of NCLB “Highly Qualified” Requirements for General Education Teachers

Under the NCLB Act, all teachers of core academic subjects must comply with the federal definition of a “highly qualified” teacher for a state to receive certain federal funds for schools. The core academic subjects defined in NCLB and in Minnesota law are: English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography [Title IX, Section 9101 (11)].

Elementary Teachers

To meet the federal “highly qualified” criteria, elementary teachers who are **new** to the profession must meet the following requirements:

- Hold a bachelor’s degree;
- Be licensed by the state; and
- Demonstrate subject competence through rigorous state exams of subject knowledge and teaching skills in all areas of the basic curriculum.

To meet the federal “highly qualified” criteria, elementary teachers **not new** to the profession must meet the following requirements:

- Hold a bachelor’s degree;
- Be licensed by the state; and
- Demonstrate subject competence either by passing knowledge and teaching skills by passing rigorous state exams of subject.

Middle and Secondary Teachers

To meet the federal “highly qualified” criteria, middle school and secondary teachers of core academic subjects who are **new** to the profession must meet the following requirements:

1. Hold a bachelor’s degree;
2. Be licensed by the state after September 1, 2001; and
 - Demonstrate subject competence through a rigorous state exam of subject knowledge and teaching skills; or,
 - Complete an undergraduate academic major, graduate degree or course work equivalent to an undergraduate academic major in each core academic subject they teach.

To meet the federal “highly qualified” criteria, middle school and secondary teachers of core academic subjects who are **not new** to the profession must meet the following requirements:

1. Hold a bachelor’s degree;
2. Be licensed by the state; and
3. Demonstrate subject competence through:
 - Rigorous state exams of subject knowledge and teaching skills; or
 - Completion of an undergraduate academic major, graduate degree or course work equivalent to an undergraduate academic major in each core academic subject they teach.

5. Definition of IDEA 2004 “Highly Qualified” Requirements for Special Education Teachers

In December 2004, Congress reauthorized the IDEA and clarified that special education teachers must meet the following requirements:

1. Hold a bachelor’s degree;
2. Be licensed by the state in special education; and
3. In certain contexts, also demonstrate subject competence in accordance with 9101(23)(B)(i)(II) of the ESEA. See Section 2, questions 14-16 for a more detailed discussion of federal “highly qualified” requirements for special education teachers.

6. Definition of Minnesota Licensing Requirements

Minnesota law requires that teachers must be fully licensed or have equivalent authorization through the appropriate Board of Teaching (BOT) “permission” to teach. Minnesota licensure standards require that teachers granted a full professional license must have earned a

bachelor’s degree related to the teaching field and have demonstrated competence through completion of an approved preparation program aligned with Minnesota’s licensure standards (see Minnesota Rules, Chapter 8710).

A BOT permission is different than a teaching license. Permissions include personnel variances, experimental program waivers, and non-licensed community experts. When granted to districts or charter schools, these permissions allow individuals to be assigned for a limited amount of time to teach subjects for which they are not licensed. **Meeting federal “highly qualified” requirements does not replace Minnesota licensure or permission requirements.**

Section 2: Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do federal “highly qualified” requirements relate to core academic subjects and Minnesota teacher licensure for “new” and “not new” teachers?

The requirement that teachers be “highly qualified” applies to all public elementary, middle and secondary school teachers (including EL and special education) who teach core academic subjects. The term “core academic subjects” means English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography [Section 9101 (11)].

All Minnesota general education teachers (elementary, middle and secondary) hired prior to the beginning of the 2002-2003 school year must have become “highly qualified” by June 30, 2006.

Elementary

Elementary teachers who are “new” to the profession meet federal “highly qualified” requirements if:

- They were granted a professional license in Elementary Education after September 1, 2001; or
- They hold a professional license, but are teaching out-of-field with a permission granted by the BOT and have passed the appropriate content exam.

Elementary teachers who are “not new” to the profession but taught prior to the 2002-2003 school year, were granted a Minnesota teaching license in Elementary Education prior to September 1, 2001, and were not required to take the Praxis II Elementary Education Content Knowledge test (10014) or the Minnesota Teacher Licensure (MTLE) Elementary Education exam (beginning September 1, 2010) must meet federal “highly qualified” requirements in the same manner as other elementary teachers “not new” to the profession. These Elementary teachers not considered “highly qualified” may meet the requirement by passing the MTLE Elementary Education content exam.

Elementary Subject-Area Specialists

Many elementary schools employ subject-area specialists such as Title I teachers, reading, science, world languages, visual arts or music teachers who only teach those specific subjects. A single-subject teacher in an elementary school is expected to meet “highly qualified” requirements in that core academic subject by passing the required context exam(s) and/or holding licensure.

Middle and Secondary

General education middle and secondary teachers who are “new” to the profession meet federal “highly qualified” requirements by:

- Licensure. Teachers holding a professional license issued after September 1, 2001 in each core academic subject taught; or
- Licensure and Minnesota teacher licensure content exam for teachers holding a professional license, but teaching out-of-field with a permission granted by the Minnesota BOT who have passed the Minnesota teacher licensure content exam in each core academic subject they teach have met the federal “highly qualified” requirements; or

- Licensure and course work. Middle and secondary teachers of core academic subjects may demonstrate “highly qualified” requirements by completing an undergraduate academic major, graduate degree or course work equivalent to an undergraduate academic major in each core academic subject they teach.

2. What is the HOUSSE Process? (See Section 3 for complete information.)

The HOUSSE process is the “high objective uniform state standard of evaluation” authorized by NCLB and Minnesota. This process allows only certain teachers who are “not new” to the profession to demonstrate knowledge in a core academic subject they teach:

- A special education teacher “not new” to the profession who teaches multiple core subjects and has met highly qualified requirements in language arts, mathematics, or science at the time of hire. These special education teachers may use HOUSSE to meet federal “highly qualified” requirements in the other core academic subjects they teach to their special education students within two years of hire date; or,
- A teacher from another country, teaching in the United States on a temporary basis; or,
- A teacher “not new” to the profession teaching multiple core subjects under a BOT waiver and has met highly qualified requirements in at least one core content at time of hire; or,
- An English Learner teacher “not new” to the profession teaching multiple core subjects and has met highly qualified requirements in at least one core content subject at time of hire.
- Once a teacher satisfies the federal “highly qualified” requirement for a core academic subject through HOUSSE, the “highly qualified” status is permanent and has limited portability. See Section 3 for additional frequently asked questions about HOUSSE and Appendix A for the HOUSE application.

3. How is the HOUSSE process different than Minnesota licensure?

Successfully meeting federal “highly qualified” requirements through the HOUSSE process does not in itself qualify a candidate as licensed to teach in Minnesota.

4. May a teacher who is highly qualified in another state be considered “highly qualified” in Minnesota?

According to ESEA Title II, Part A Non-Regulatory Guidance Revised Edition: August 2005, A-36, “Each State determines whether or not to consider the teacher from another State to be both ‘fully certified’ and having demonstrated adequate subject matter competence in each subject the teacher will teach.” Minnesota school districts may accept “highly qualified” verification from another state.

5. What is the impact of the federal waiver approved for Minnesota in 2012 on the “highly qualified” requirement?

The “highly qualified” requirement has not changed and is still in effect for all teachers. School districts, however, have additional flexibility in meeting the requirement under the conditions described in the following paragraphs. For additional information about the impact on school districts contact the MDE NCLB director.

School district guidance as a result of the waiver: under ESEA section 2141(a), an LEA that has not made progress for two consecutive years toward meeting the SEA's annual objectives for ensuring that all teachers teaching core academic subjects are highly qualified must develop an improvement plan. Section 2141(b) requires an SEA to provide the LEA with technical assistance in developing such a plan. Under section 2141(c), if an SEA determines that an LEA (districts with Focus and/or Priority Schools) has failed to make progress toward meeting those annual objectives and has failed to make AYP for three consecutive years, the SEA must enter into an agreement with the LEA on the use of the LEA's Title II, Part A funds. Under such an agreement, the SEA must develop — in consultation with the LEA, teachers, and principals — professional development strategies and activities that the LEA will use to meet the objective of all of its teachers of core academic subjects being highly qualified. Such an LEA also is prohibited from using Title I, Part A funds to fund any paraprofessional hired after the date of the SEA's determination, except under certain limited circumstances (see ESEA section 2141(c)(2)(B) and (C)).

Under this flexibility, an LEA is not required to develop an improvement plan or restrict the use of federal education funds pursuant to such a plan, and an SEA is not required to provide the LEA the technical assistance that would be required to develop such a plan (districts with Continuous Improvement Schools). Additionally, the SEA would not be required to enter into the agreement required by ESEA section 2141(c) with an LEA. In addition, an LEA is not restricted in its use of Title I, Part A funds for paraprofessionals, but still must comply with the requirements with respect to paraprofessionals in ESEA section 1119(c) through (g).

This flexibility maintains the basic highly qualified teacher requirements included in section 1119 of the ESEA. Additionally, an SEA must still meet the requirement in ESEA section 1111(b)(8)(C) to ensure that poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers. However, once more meaningful evaluation and support systems are in place in accordance with principle 3 (as described in the document titled ESEA Flexibility), an SEA may use the results of such systems to meet that requirement.

6. Are local Education Agencies (LEAs) required to inform parents about the “highly qualified” status of their teachers?

Yes: the State Waiver granted in 2012 did not change this requirement. According to guidance provided by the U.S. Department of Education in the NCLB Non-Regulatory Guidance Question A-37, at the beginning of each school year, an LEA that accepts Title I, Part A funding must notify parents of students in Title I schools that they can request information regarding their child's teacher, including, at a minimum: (1) whether the teacher has met the State requirements for licensure and certification for the grade levels and subject matters in which the teacher provides instruction; (2) whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualifications or licensing criteria have been waived; (3) the college major and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree; and (4) whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

In addition, each Title I school must provide each parent “timely notice that the parent’s child has been assigned, or has been taught for 4 or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified” [Section 1111(h)(6)].

7. What are the current and past federal deadline dates for implementation of “highly qualified” requirements?

- General education teachers of core academic subjects in Title I* funded programs or schools hired after the first day of the 2002-03 school year must have already met the federal criteria for “highly qualified” teachers at the time of hire. This deadline has passed and the requirement is now fully implemented.
- General education teachers of core academic subjects, whether in Title I* funded programs or other programs, hired prior to the beginning of the 2002-03 school year had until the end of the 2005-06 school year to meet the federal “highly qualified” requirement. This deadline has passed and the requirement is now fully implemented.
- Special education teachers of core academic subjects who are “new” to the profession must be licensed in special education and “highly qualified” in mathematics, or language arts, or science upon hire, and then become “highly qualified” in the other core academic subjects they teach within two years after the date of employment. Special education teachers who are teaching core academic subjects at the elementary level may also meet “highly qualified” requirements by passing the Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exam Elementary Education content test.
- Special education teachers of core academic subjects who were “not new” to the profession had until June 30, 2006, to become “highly qualified.” This deadline has passed and the requirement is now fully implemented.

*Title I is a federally funded program under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 reauthorized as the No Child Left Behind Act. The program provides funding to schools for the purpose of improving the academic achievement of those students most at risk of not being academically successful. If a school district hires a teacher who is new to the profession and not “highly qualified,” the school district will be considered out of compliance with federal requirements and penalties are possible.

8. How do federal “highly qualified” requirements impact local school board staffing decisions?

While staffing is a local decision, the MDE advises school districts to take advantage of the federal guidelines that give teachers, including special education teachers, time to demonstrate “highly qualified” status by specified deadlines. See Question 7 for deadline dates pertaining to general education teachers and Questions 14-16 for deadlines pertaining to special education teachers.

Schools are encouraged to assist the teachers who do not meet federal “highly qualified” requirements by creating professional development plans to help guide the teachers. Local school districts may elect to use Title II Part A funds to assist teachers in meeting the federal “highly qualified” requirements. Local school districts may also use federal special education staff development funds to assist special education teachers in meeting federal “highly qualified” requirements.

9. Are school districts responsible for collecting and reporting “highly qualified” information about teachers?

Yes. School districts are responsible for designating a school or district administrator to serve as the school district’s State Plan administrator. The administrator is responsible for determining the “highly qualified” status of teachers of core academic subjects. The administrator will:

- Meet with eligible teachers in completing the HOUSSE application; and,
- Certify that all teachers successfully meet federal “highly qualified” requirements for each core academic subject they teach; and,
- Collect and maintain appropriate documentation as part of the school or district teacher records; and,
- Accurately report “highly qualified” information as requested by the department.

Each state is required to collect and report information from every school district annually on the “highly qualified” status of their teachers. Under federal guidelines, the State must monitor progress toward annual goals to increase the percentage of “highly qualified” teachers in each school and district in order to continue receiving federal funds.

10. What is the responsibility of the MDE for compiling federal reports on the “highly qualified” status of Minnesota teachers?

The No Child Left Behind Act requires the department to:

- Monitor the annual yearly progress in each Minnesota school/district toward increasing the percentage of core academic subjects taught by “highly qualified” teachers;
- Report data about the percentages of Minnesota teachers who meet the federal “highly qualified” requirement to the U. S. Department of Education beginning with the 2005-06 school year; and
- The MDE may ask selected school districts to provide this evidence of successful HOUSSE completion by individual teachers as part of federally required monitoring.

11. What flexibility exists for local districts to assign academic standards while meeting licensure and federal “highly qualified” requirements?

Minnesota has established rigorous academic standards required for its public school students. Local school districts are responsible for embedding required standards into the curriculum and deciding which courses carry academic credit. M.S. §120B.024 guides this decision process when it states, “a course credit is equivalent to a student successfully completing an academic year of study or a student mastering the applicable subject matter, as determined by the local school district.” School districts have the discretion to assign standards across their curricula, assign course names, and determine how student credits can be earned according to local school board policy.

If the school district grants credit in a core academic subject, regardless of the department in which it is taught, the teacher must be “highly qualified.” School districts may integrate standards from any subject into another subject.

According to Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 120B.024, an agriculture science course may fulfill a science credit requirement in addition to the specified science credits in biology and chemistry or physics under paragraph (a), clause (3). In this situation, an individual licensed in agriculture may teach and grant credit in agriculture. This agriculture credit may then fulfill a science credit requirement.

12. Are Minnesota teachers who teach in a state approved alternative program and/or on a Board of Teaching (BOT) experimental program waivers subject to the federal “highly qualified” requirements?

Yes, if the teacher is providing direct instruction in a core academic subject(s). Teachers in state approved alternative programs and/or on a BOT experimental program waiver who do not meet the “highly qualified” requirement in a specific academic subject may not provide direct instruction in that core academic subject. Instruction must be provided by a teacher who holds a corresponding license or is authorized through the appropriate BOT permission such as a variance or waiver and is “highly qualified” to teach each core academic subject.

A general education teacher in a state approved alternative program and/or on a BOT experimental program waiver who is “new” to the profession may satisfy federal “highly qualified” requirements if the teacher demonstrates subject competence for each of the core academic subjects taught through full licensure in each core academic subject or be authorized through the appropriate BOT permission and by passing the appropriate MTLE content exam for each core academic subject taught.

A general education teacher in a state approved alternative programs and/or on a BOT experimental program waiver who is “not new” to the profession may satisfy federal “highly qualified” requirements if the teacher demonstrates subject competence for each of the core academic subjects taught. This can be accomplished through full licensure in each core academic subject, by passing the appropriate Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exam, or through the HOUSSE process.

13. Do teachers in care and treatment programs need to comply with federal “highly qualified” requirements?

Yes. In Minnesota, the educational programs of all residential care and treatment programs are under the authority of the Minnesota Department of Education and must comply with federal “highly qualified” requirements. In addition, according to Minnesota Statute 125A.515, all onsite educational programs of Minnesota residential care and treatment facilities are the responsibility of the public school district in which they are physically located. As part of the licensing process for Department of Corrections and Department of Human Services programs, the Department of Education must approve each educational program in order for these facilities to attain their licenses. Educational programs operated by the Department of Corrections receive Title I funds (Part D, Neglected or Delinquent, Subpart 1) and thus are under the authority of the Department of Education.

Teachers teaching general education subjects must hold a corresponding license or be teaching under Board of Teaching permission such as an experimental program waiver or a personnel variance for any subject(s) they teach. They must also be “highly qualified” for each core

academic subject they teach: English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography.

Special education teachers teaching in care and treatment facilities must hold a special education license and be “highly qualified” for each core academic subject they teach.

14. What is the updated department guidance about federal “highly qualified” requirements for special education teachers who provide only “consultative” services?

At a minimum, in order to be “highly qualified” if **not** teaching a core academic subject(s) and providing only special education services, special education teachers must:

- Hold a bachelor's degree; and
- Be licensed by the state in special education.

Special education teachers who provide only consultative services to highly qualified teachers are considered “highly qualified” if they are fully licensed in special education and hold a bachelor's degree. The U.S. House of Representatives Conference Report # 108-779, note 21, for IDEA 2004 describes consultative services as “adjustments to the learning environment, modifications of instructional methods, adaptation of curricula, the use of positive behavioral supports and interventions, or the use of appropriate accommodations to meet the needs of individual children.” Similar guidance is provided by the U.S. Department of Education in the NCLB Non-Regulatory Guidance Question A-33 dated August 3, 2005.

If special education teachers are also providing direct instruction in core academic subjects to children with disabilities, they must **also** meet federal “highly qualified” requirements for each core academic subject they teach (see question 12 for guidance).

Deadlines for special education teachers to meet the new requirements

- Teachers hired before December 3, 2004: Under both IDEA 2004 and NCLB, these special education teachers had until June 30, 2006, to become “highly qualified.” This deadline has passed and the requirement is now fully implemented.
- Teachers hired on or after December 3, 2004: Because the IDEA 2004 “highly qualified” special education teacher requirements went into effect on December 3, 2004, teachers hired from that day on who were providing direct special education instruction in a core academic subject(s) were required to be licensed in special education and “highly qualified” in either mathematics, or language arts, or science upon hire. They must become “highly qualified” in the other core academic subjects they teach within two years of hire date.

15. How do “highly qualified” requirements impact Minnesota special education teachers teaching multiple subjects according to IDEA 2004?

For special education teachers required to demonstrate subject competence in order to meet the federal “highly qualified” requirements, IDEA 2004 provides additional guidance for those teaching multiple core academic subjects. To be deemed “highly qualified” under IDEA 2004, Minnesota special education teachers teaching multiple subjects must hold a professional special education license and meet the following requirements:

Special Education Teachers “New” to the Profession:

The MDE identifies teachers new to the profession by using data reported by school districts via the Staff Automated Reporting System (STAR) on October 1 and March 1. A teacher would be considered new to the profession the first time he/she is reported on STAR as new to the profession. Based on the NCLB non-regulatory guidance issued by the United States Department of Education, Minnesota considers teachers to be new to the profession until they have taught a minimum of one year.

In addition, the Regulations for the 2004 IDEA identify a fully licensed general education teacher who subsequently becomes fully licensed as a special education teacher as a “new” special education teacher when first hired as a special education teacher. [34 CFR 300.18 (g) (2)]

- Special education teachers who are “new” to the profession may meet “highly qualified” requirements in one of the following ways:
 - o Elementary
 - Professional license in Elementary Education granted after September 1, 2001; or
 - Successful completion of the MTLE Elementary Education content exam; or
 - Successful completion of the MTLE content exam in mathematics, or language arts, or science
 - o Middle School and Secondary
 - Professional license in each core academic subject they teach; or
 - Successful completion of the MTLE content exam in mathematics, or language arts, or science upon hire; or
 - Completion of an academic major, graduate degree or course work equivalent to an undergraduate academic major in mathematics, language arts, or science upon hire.

New special education teachers who teach multiple subjects and are “highly qualified” in mathematics, language arts, or science upon hire must meet federal “highly qualified” requirements in the other core academic subjects they teach in the same manner as is required for elementary, middle, or secondary school teachers within two years of hire date.

Special Education Teachers “Not New” to the Profession:

Special education teachers “not new” to the profession who teach two or more core academic subjects exclusively to children with disabilities must meet federal “highly qualified” requirements in all the core academic subjects they teach in one of the following ways:

- o Elementary
 - Professional license in Elementary Education granted after September 1, 2001; or
 - Verify 100 points using the HOUSSE process for Elementary Education or for each core academic subject they teach; or
 - Successful completion of the MTLE Elementary Education content exam.
- o Middle School and Secondary
 - Professional license in each core academic subject they teach; or
 - Verify 100 points using the HOUSSE process for each core academic subject they teach; or
 - Successful completion of the MTLE content exam for each core academic subject they teach; or

- Completion of an academic major, graduate degree or course work equivalent to an undergraduate academic major in each core academic subject they teach.

Elementary and Secondary Assignments

Special education teachers who are “highly qualified” in a core academic subject at the secondary level must also be deemed “highly qualified” to teach that core academic subject to children with disabilities at the elementary level.

Special education teachers who meet federal “highly qualified” requirements for the elementary level only are not considered “highly qualified” for the secondary level. According to IDEA 2004 and NCLB, these teachers may not teach at the secondary level after 2005-2006.

16. At what level do special education teachers of students with moderate to severe-profound cognitive disabilities in a secondary setting need to demonstrate academic competence in core academic subjects to meet federal “highly qualified” requirements?

For the purpose of implementing the Minnesota State Plan, the Commissioner of the MDE has determined that individuals with a special education license who are teaching only students with moderate to severe-profound cognitive disabilities in a secondary setting and who are “new” to the profession may demonstrate “highly qualified” requirements at the elementary level by:

- Professional license in Elementary Education granted after September 1, 2001; or
- Successful completion of the MTLE Elementary Education content exam. Individuals with a special education license who are teaching only students with moderate to severe-profound cognitive disabilities in a secondary setting and who are “not new” to the profession may demonstrate “highly qualified” requirements at the elementary level by:
- Professional license in Elementary Education granted after September 1, 2001; or
- Successful completion of the MTLE Elementary Education content exam; or
- Verify 100 points using the HOUSSE process for Elementary Education or for each core academic subject they teach.

17. Which teachers of English Learners (EL) must meet the federal “highly qualified” requirements?

EL teachers who provide direct instruction in a core academic subject or reinforce instruction in core academic areas that are not already taught by “highly qualified” teachers must meet the federal “highly qualified” requirements.

EL Teachers “New” to the Profession:

The Minnesota Department of Education identifies teachers who are new to the profession by using data reported by school districts via the Staff Automated Reporting System (STAR) each October 1 and March 1. A teacher would be considered new to the profession the first time he/she is reported on STAR as new to the profession. Based on the non-regulatory guidance issued by the United States Department of Education, Minnesota considers teachers to be new to the profession until they have taught a minimum of one year. EL teachers who are “new” to

the profession and who are providing direct instruction to students in a core academic subject may meet “highly qualified” requirements in one of the following ways:

- Elementary
 - o Professional license in Elementary Education granted after September 1, 2001; or
 - o Successful completion of the MTLE Elementary Education content exam.
- Middle School and Secondary
 - o Professional license in each core academic subject taught; or
 - o Successful completion of the MTLE content exams for each core academic subject taught; or
 - o Completion of an academic major, graduate degree or course work equivalent to an undergraduate academic major in each core academic subject they teach.

EL Teachers “Not New” to the Profession:

EL teachers who are “not new” to the profession must demonstrate competence in each core academic subject taught in one of the following ways:

- Elementary
 - o Professional license in Elementary Education granted after September 1, 2001; or
 - o Verify 100 points using the HOUSSE process for Elementary Education or for each core academic subject they teach if eligible; or
 - o Successful completion of the MTLE Elementary Education content exam.
- Middle School and Secondary
 - o Professional license in each core academic subject they teach; or
 - o Verify 100 points using the HOUSSE process for each core academic subject they teach if eligible; or
 - o Successful completion of the MTLE content exams for each core academic subject taught; or
 - o Completion of an academic major, graduate degree or course work equivalent to an undergraduate academic major in each core academic subject they teach.

Note that: If a school district grants credit in a core academic subject taught by an EL teacher to EL students, the teacher must be “highly qualified” for that core academic subject.

18. Which teachers of the visual arts and music must meet federal “highly qualified” requirements?

Teachers of visual arts and music (instrumental and vocal) must meet the federal “highly qualified” requirements. The 2003 Minnesota statute on academic standards defines the arts as including five areas: visual arts, music (vocal and instrumental), theatre arts, dance, and media arts (for secondary only). However, for the purposes of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), the 2004 Omnibus Education bill did not define which art areas are considered core academic subjects.

To provide staffing flexibility for local school districts and teachers to meet the federal “highly qualified” requirements, the Minnesota Commissioner of Education is implementing the definition of the arts as including only visual arts and music, for the purposes of the No Child Left Behind Act. This definition is intended to provide guidance for all public schools in determining “highly qualified” status for teachers in the arts for NCLB.

Minnesota licensure rules will still require that all arts teachers be appropriately licensed. School districts will continue to have the option to request Board of Teaching permission (community expert, waiver, variances for non-licensed teachers to teach theatre arts and/or dance. However, teachers will not be required to demonstrate federal "highly qualified" status in theatre arts or dance because these subjects are not defined as core academic subjects in the NCLB.

Many elementary schools employ subject-area specialists-such as reading, science, world languages, visual arts or music teachers-who only teach those specific subjects. A single-subject teacher in an elementary school is expected to meet "highly qualified requirements in that subject.

19. What are the required licensure areas for core academic subjects?

General Education: Core Academic Areas and Required Minnesota Licensure

Defined Core Academic Subject	Required Minnesota Licensure (Professional or Continuing License)
Elementary Core subjects in grades K-6, (except World Languages)	Elementary License for grades K-6 or 1-6 or K-3
Civics, Government, History, Geography, Economics	Social Studies for grades 5-8, 5-12, 7-12 or 9-12
Economics	Business Education 7-12 or 5-12
Mathematics	Mathematics for grades 5-8, 5-12, 7-12, or 9-12
Language Arts, English	Communication Arts and Literature for grades 5-12, 5-8, or English 7-12 or English Language Arts 7-12
Reading	Reading K-12 Remedial Reading - elementary Remedial Reading - secondary grades 7-12 Developmental Reading - secondary grades 7-12
World Languages	A license for the specific language for the corresponding grade level of learner
General Science	General Science for grades 5-8 or 5-9
Biology or Life Science	Life Science grades 7-12 or 9-12; General Science 5-9
Chemistry	Chemistry or Physical Science grades 7-12 or 9-12 General Science 5-9
Earth and Space Science	Earth and Space Science grades 7-12 or 9-12 General Science 5-9
Physics	Physics or Physical Science grades 7-12 or 9-12 General Science 5-9
Arts: The 2004 MN Omnibus Education bill did not define which arts areas are to be included for the purposes of the <i>No Child Left Behind Act</i> . To provide staffing flexibility for local school districts, the MDE is implementing the definition of the arts to include only visual arts and music for the purposes of the <i>No Child Left Behind Act</i> .	Music (vocal, general and/or instrumental) grades K-12 Visual Arts grades K-12; Pre K-6 or 7-12 or Pre K-12

Section 3: HOUSSE Procedures and Issues for General and Special Education Teachers

1. The following teachers may use HOUSSE to meet federal “highly qualified” requirements:

- A Minnesota special education teacher who taught in Minnesota with a professional teaching license prior to June 30, 2006, and is considered “not new” to the profession; or
- A special education teacher “not new” to the profession who teaches multiple core subjects and has met federal “highly qualified” requirements in language arts, or mathematics, or science at the time of hire. These special education teachers may use HOUSSE to meet federal “highly qualified” requirements in the other core academic subjects they teach to their special education students in the same manner as is required for elementary, middle, or secondary teachers within two years of hire date; or
- A teacher from another country, teaching in the United States on a temporary basis; or
- A teacher “not new” to the profession teaching multiple core subjects under a BOT waiver and has met “highly qualified” requirements in at least one core subject at time of hire; or
- An EL teacher teaching multiple core subjects and has met highly qualified requirements in at least one core content at time of hire.

2. School district responsibility for managing the HOUSSE application process and to report the status of “highly qualified” teachers on staff.

The Commissioner of Education has authorized this HOUSSE application format as an optional means for certain teachers who are “not new” to the profession to demonstrate subject competence for each core academic subject taught, as part of federal “highly qualified” requirements. School districts are responsible to:

- Assign a school or district administrator to meet with teachers, review their HOUSSE application and supporting documents, assign points according to the criteria, and when approved, to certify in writing the teacher’s “highly qualified” status. The department recommends that the school or district administrator designated as the State Plan administrator be a licensed administrator.
- Maintain, and make available upon request, the school records containing the HOUSSE documentation for all teachers who successfully used the process to demonstrate federal “highly qualified” requirements.
- Report to the MDE on the “highly qualified” status of all teachers assigned to teach a core academic subject through an annual reporting process beginning with data for the 2005-06 school year.
- Assist teachers who have not met the federal “highly qualified” requirements for a core academic subject(s) by recommending that teachers create a professional development plan for meeting federal “highly qualified” requirement.

3. Is a school district-approved HOUSSE process portable for the teacher?

Yes, the HOUSSE process is portable for all teachers in Minnesota, including special education teachers, but only at the discretion of the new school district employer. If a teacher changes employment to a different Minnesota school district, the approved HOUSSE application can remain in effect and be portable only if the new school district accepts the verification and agrees to record and maintain the HOUSSE documentation for reporting to the MDE. The new school district may accept the teacher's already completed HOUSSE application or may require that the teacher complete another HOUSSE application.

4. How can a Minnesota teacher demonstrate at least one year of student academic growth for purposes of the Student Achievement section of the HOUSSE application?

If a classroom teacher implements a norm-referenced or user-normed test which is objective, valid, and reliable, class results may be used as appropriate evidence for purposes of the HOUSSE. Some Minnesota school districts test all students annually using the same test, thus allowing student growth to be measured. In addition, some school districts test students numerous times throughout the year to evidence academic growth.

If a classroom teacher uses student achievement data for purposes of the HOUSSE, the MDE recommends that individual testing results be analyzed to determine a class average. Results from this average may then be used to determine the amount of points obtained on the HOUSSE application.

Due to complexities involved with academic assessment for children with disabilities, the department encourages special education teachers to utilize categories related to teaching experience, course work, and professional activities to demonstrate “highly qualified” requirements.

5. What professional activities may Minnesota teachers provide as evidence for purposes of the Professional Activities Section of the HOUSSE application?

If teachers choose to use the HOUSSE application in this plan, Category G Professional Activities may be used to identify professional activities related to the core academic subject for which the HOUSSE application is made. Minnesota teachers may provide evidence of high quality professional development activities in accordance with Appendix D. The U.S. Department of Education definition in Appendix D states that high quality activities do not include 1-day or short-term workshops or conferences. Some of the professional development activities listed that are related to subject matter and are of high quality include those that:

- Improve and increase teachers' knowledge of the academic subjects they teach, and enable teachers to become “highly qualified;”
- Are an integral part of broad school-wide and district-wide improvement plans;
- Give teachers, principals, and administrators the knowledge and skills to provide students with the opportunity to meet challenging state academic content standards and student academic achievement standards;

- Are high quality, sustained, intensive, and classroom focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction and the teacher's performance in the classroom;
- Support the recruiting, hiring, and training of "highly qualified" teachers, including teachers who became "highly qualified" through state and local alternative routes to certification;
- Advance teacher understanding of effective instructional strategies that use scientifically based research and strategies for improving student academic achievement or substantially increasing the knowledge and teaching skills of teachers, and are aligned with and directly related to state academic content standards, student academic achievement standards, and assessments; and,
- Provide training for teachers in the use of technology so that technology is effectively used in the classroom in the core academic subjects taught.

APPENDIX A: Minnesota HOUSSE Application (Page One of Two Pages)

A teacher using HOUSSE must demonstrate a minimum of 100 points to be deemed “highly qualified.” Teacher: Complete a separate Minnesota HOUSSE Application for each core academic subject for which approval is being sought. See Question 6 in Section 2 for federal deadline dates; check also for local deadline dates. Complete and sign Section 1 below. Attach all supporting documents to this HOUSSE application and submit to your school’s State Plan administrator. Meet with your State Plan school or district administrator to review this application. You are responsible to keep your original HOUSSE application and all supporting documents as signed and approved by the district-designated administrator. Note: if you ever change employment, this information may be requested of you by the new school district.

Designated State Plan Administrator: Please review and complete the HOUSSE application with the teacher. Complete Section 2 ONLY if the points meet or exceed 100 total points. After you certify in writing that the teacher has demonstrated federal “highly qualified” requirements in the core academic subject through the HOUSSE, retain a copy of this application and all supporting documents. Do not send this application or documentation to the Department of Education. Your district will be required to provide “highly qualified” teacher status information to the department through the STARS reporting system, published electronically. Note: Minnesota licensure rules may require that a Board of Teaching variance or waiver application is still needed from your school district for any non-licensed teacher in a subject assignment.

Section 1 (To be completed by teacher.)	
Name of Teacher:	Date:
Name of School District:	School of Assignment:
Teacher's Work Phone Number:	Teacher's Work Email Address:
Core Academic Subject Being Assessed via This HOUSSE Process	
Core Academic Subject:	Grade Level:
COPY THE BELOW REQUESTED INFORMATION FROM YOUR MINNESOTA TEACHING LICENSE	
File folder number:	Expiration date of license(s):
Current MN licensure field:	Grade level:
I verify that all of the information hereby submitted is accurate	
Teacher's Signature:	Date:

Section 2 (To be completed by HOUSSE Administrator.)		
I certify that the teacher named above has earned a minimum of 100 points in the HOUSSE process and has thereby met the federal "highly qualified" requirement.		
Name of Administrator:	Signature:	Date:
Minnesota HOUSSE Application		
Indicator: A. Student Achievement Evidence: Documentation is required demonstrating at least one year of academic growth in the subject. Evidence must be objective, valid and reliable; i.e. norm-referenced or user-normed test results given annually in the district. Examples include Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), Stanford Achievement Test (SAT 10), MN Comprehensive Assessment, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), etc. Documentation: Attach documentation	Point Guidelines: Up to 50 points possible 1 year growth = 20 points 1.5 years growth = 35 points 2 years growth = 50 points	Points
Indicator: B. Awards and Recognition Evidence: Provide evidence of local, state, or national activities/awards indicating professional contribution to achievement in the subject. These must have been earned while teaching in the subject content and within the last 10 years. Documentation: Include awards and point total for each.	Point Guidelines: Up to 50 points possible: Local awards = 5 points State awards = 10 points National awards = 15 points	Points
Indicator: C. Teaching Experience Evidence: Describe teaching experience in the subject for which approval is being requested. Teaching experience may have occurred while under a special education or ESL/EL license, or any variance, waiver, limited license, related exception; or in a private or post-secondary setting. Documentation: List dates and locations and type of licensure held.	Point Guidelines: Up to 50 points possible: 1 year = 10 points 2 years = 20 points 3 years = 30 points 4 years = 40 points 5 years plus = 50 points	Points
Indicator: D. Advanced Certification Evidence: Advanced certifications from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS): National Board Certification. Documentation: Indicate the type of advanced credential and the date of completion. Attach a copy.	Point Guidelines: Up to 50 points possible: 50 points	Points
Indicator: E. Course Work Evidence: Include course work or pedagogy courses in the subject for which approval is being requested. Include copies of transcripts showing courses with file. Documentation: Indicate course title, number, date of completion, grade, and institution. Attach transcripts.	Point Guidelines: Up to 50 points possible: 5 points per semester credit 3 points per quarter credit	Points
Indicator: F. Professional Activities Evidence: Include professional development activities related to the subject and in accordance with "high quality" activities as defined in Appendix C. Documentation: Indicate the title of the activity, number of hours* and date of completion. Attach documentation of completion. *Per federal guidelines, "high quality" professional development is not a 1-day or short-term workshop or conference.	Point Guidelines: Up to 50 points possible: <i>Coursework:</i> 5 points per semester credit (15 hours per semester credit) 3 points per quarter credit (9 hours per quarter credit) <i>Professional development activity:</i> *1 point for every 3 hours of "high quality" professional development in accordance with Appendix B	Points
A teacher using HOUSSE must demonstrate a minimum of 100 points to be deemed HQ.		
Point Total		

Appendix B: Definition of High Quality Professional Development

Section 9101, Part 34 of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provides the following definition and guidelines for high quality professional development activities for teachers.

(34) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT- The term professional development

(A) includes activities that:

- (i) improve and increase teachers' knowledge of the academic subjects the teachers teach, and enable teachers to become highly qualified;
- (ii) are an integral part of broad school-wide and district-wide educational improvement plans;
- (iii) give teachers, principals, and administrators the knowledge and skills to provide students with the opportunity to meet challenging State academic content standards and student academic achievement standards;
- (iv) improve classroom management skills;
- (v)(I) are high quality, sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction and the teacher's performance in the classroom; and
- (II) are not 1-day or short-term workshops or conferences;
- (vi) support the recruiting, hiring, and training of highly qualified teachers, including teachers who became highly qualified through State and local alternative routes to certification;
- (vii) advance teacher understanding of effective instructional strategies that are —
 - (I) based on scientifically based research (except that this sub clause shall not apply to activities carried out under part D of title II); and
 - (II) strategies for improving student academic achievement or substantially increasing the knowledge and teaching skills of teachers; and
- (viii) are aligned with and directly related to —
 - (I) State academic content standards, student academic achievement standards, and assessments; and
 - (II) the curricula and programs tied to the standards described in sub clause (I) except that this sub clause shall not apply to activities described in clauses (ii) and (iii) of section 2123(3)(B);
- (ix) are developed with extensive participation of teachers, principals, parents, and administrators of schools to be served under this Act;

- (x) are designed to give teachers of limited English proficient children, and other teachers and instructional staff, the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and appropriate language and academic support services to those children, including the appropriate use of curricula and assessments;
- (xi) to the extent appropriate, provide training for teachers and principals in the use of technology so that technology and technology applications are effectively used in the classroom to improve teaching and learning in the curricula and core academic subjects in which the teachers teach;
- (xii) as a whole, are regularly evaluated for their impact on increased teacher effectiveness and improved student academic achievement, with the findings of the evaluations used to improve the quality of professional development;
- (xiii) provide instruction in methods of teaching children with special needs;
- (xiv) include instruction in the use of data and assessments to inform and instruct classroom practice; and
- (xv) include instruction in ways that teachers, principals, pupil services personnel, and school administrators may work more effectively with parents; and
- (B) may include activities that:
 - (i) involve the forming of partnerships with institutions of higher education to establish school-based teacher training programs that provide prospective teachers and beginning teachers with an opportunity to work under the guidance of experienced teachers and college faculty;
 - (ii) create programs to enable paraprofessionals (assisting teachers employed by a local educational agency receiving assistance under part A of title I) to obtain the education necessary for those paraprofessionals to become certified and licensed teachers; and
 - (iii) provide follow-up training to teachers who have participated in activities described in subparagraph (A) or another clause of this subparagraph that are designed to ensure that the knowledge and skills learned by the teachers are implemented in the classroom.

Revised/updated 11/21/2012