

**NEW MEXICO
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NEW MEXICO'S DEFINITION OF A
HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHER**

*Adopted by the New Mexico State Board of Education
April 11, 2003 and August 28, 2003*

THE FEDERAL REQUIREMENT

- Teachers hired after the first day of school of the 2002-2003 school year who teach the core academic subjects in a program supported with Title I funds must be “highly qualified.”
- Not later than the end of the 2005-2006 school year, all public school teachers who teach the core academic subjects must be “highly qualified.”

THE CORE ACADEMIC SUBJECTS

The core academic subjects are: fine arts (including music and visual arts), modern and classical languages (except Native American languages and cultures of New Mexico tribes or pueblos), language arts (including English), mathematics, reading, science, and social studies (which includes civics, government, economics, history, and geography). (See 6.61.8 NMAC, 6.61.2 NMAC, 6.61.3 NMAC, 6.61.4 NMAC, 6.61.5 NMAC, 6.60.5 NMAC, and 6.60.3 NMAC.)

New hires – Teachers with Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle Level, Secondary, and Specialty Area licensure

When the term “highly qualified teacher” is used with respect to any early childhood (Birth – Grade 3), elementary (K-8), middle level (5-9), secondary (7-12), or specialty area (K-12) teacher teaching the core academic subjects in a public school in New Mexico who was hired after the first day of school of the 2002-2003 school year and assigned to work in a Title I targeted assistance program or a Title I school-wide, it means that the teacher:

- holds at least a bachelor’s degree, and
- has passed all of the required portions of the New Mexico Teacher Assessments or other required State test(s) for licensure or endorsements, or accepted comparable licensure tests from another State, and
- has obtained full State licensure as a teacher, including licensure obtained through alternative routes, and
- holds a license to teach in New Mexico, and

- has no licensure requirements waived on an emergency or temporary basis, or for any other reason, or
- is participating in an alternative route to licensure under which the teacher
 - o receives high-quality professional development that is sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused before and while teaching that includes classroom management and lesson preparation/planning; and
 - o participates in a program of intensive supervision that consists of structured guidance and regular ongoing support for teachers or a teacher mentoring program; and
 - o holds New Mexico Internship Licensure authorizing the candidate to assume the functions of a teacher for a period of time not to exceed three years while completing all requirements for alternative licensure; and
 - o demonstrates satisfactory progress toward full alternative licensure by completing at least nine semester hours per year in his/her alternative licensure program at a New Mexico post-secondary institution or successfully demonstrates competency by way of portfolio assessment.

(See 6.61.8 NMAC, 6.61.2 NMAC, 6.61.3 NMAC, 6.61.4 NMAC, 6.61.5 NMAC, 6.60.5 NMAC, 6.60.9 NMAC, and 6.60.3 NMAC)

New hires - Teachers with Elementary licensure teaching in middle school or junior high school

When the term “highly qualified teacher” is used with respect to any middle school or junior high school teacher, who holds an Elementary K-8 license, who is teaching the core academic subjects in a public middle or junior high school in New Mexico who was hired after the first day of school of the 2002-2003 school year and assigned to work in a Title I targeted assistance program or a Title I school-wide, it means that the teacher:

- holds at least a bachelor’s degree, and
- has passed all of the portions of the New Mexico Teacher Assessments or other required State test(s) for licensure or endorsements, or accepted comparable licensure tests from another State required for the teacher’s K-8 elementary license, and has either
 - o passed the Content Knowledge test(s) of the New Mexico Teacher Assessments or predecessor New Mexico teacher licensure examinations, or accepted comparable licensure tests from another State in each subject area the teacher teaches, or
 - o successfully completed an undergraduate academic major (24-36 semester hours), or coursework equivalent to an undergraduate major, or a graduate degree in each subject area the teacher teaches, and
- holds a license to teach in New Mexico, and
- has no licensure requirements waived on an emergency or temporary basis, or for any other reason, or
- is participating in an alternative route to licensure under which the teacher

- o receives high-quality professional development that is sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused before and while teaching that includes classroom management and lesson preparation/planning; and
- o participates in a program of intensive supervision that consists of structured guidance and regular ongoing support for teachers or a teacher mentoring program; and
- o holds New Mexico Internship Licensure authorizing the candidate to assume the functions of a teacher for a period of time not to exceed three years while completing all requirements for alternative licensure; and
- o demonstrates satisfactory progress toward full alternative licensure by completing at least nine semester hours per year in his/her alternative licensure program at a New Mexico post-secondary institution or successfully demonstrates competency by way of portfolio assessment.

(See 6.61.2 NMAC, 6.60.5 NMAC, 6.60.9 NMAC, and 6.60.3 NMAC)

Hired prior to the first day of school of 2002-2003 – Teachers with Early Childhood and Elementary licensure

When the term “highly qualified teacher” is used with respect to any early childhood (Birth – Grade 3) or elementary (K-8) teacher teaching the core academic subjects in a public school in New Mexico who was hired prior to the first day of school of 2003-2004, it means that by June 30, 2006, the teacher:

- holds at least a bachelor’s degree, and
- has obtained full State licensure as a teacher, including licensure obtained through alternative routes, and
- holds a license to teach in New Mexico, and
- has no licensure requirements waived on an emergency or temporary basis, or for any other reason, and
- has demonstrated competency in the elementary disciplines of language arts, social studies, math, and science by:
 - o passing the Elementary Teacher Competency or the Elementary Content Knowledge Test of the New Mexico Teacher Assessments or comparable predecessor New Mexico teacher licensure examinations, or accepted comparable licensure test(s) from another State, or
 - o holding certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in elementary education, or
 - o completing Subject Area Competency HOUSE (High Objective Uniform Standard of Evaluation) as follows:
 - Have successful annual evaluations for the prior two school years.
 - Have five complete school years of teaching experience.

- Complete at least 12 semester hours in the subject area being evaluated.
- Demonstrate competence in the instructional strand of the state board's teacher competencies and indicators for the level of licensure the candidate holds to a local panel.
 - o The local panel shall consist of two teachers.
 - i. One teacher will be appointed by the principal in the school where the teacher seeking to demonstrate that he/she is highly qualified is teaching. The second teacher will be appointed by the candidate.
 - ii. Panelists must be highly qualified in the content area being evaluated, as defined in State Board of Education rules, and hold a current Level II or III-A license, and, if applicable, hold an endorsement in the subject area to be evaluated.
 - iii. Panelists may be from the candidate's same school, or same district, or from another school or district in New Mexico.
 - o The candidate must gather and submit to the panel evidence demonstrating how he/she meets the competencies in the instructional strand of the state board's teacher competencies and indicators. Evidence must include:
 - i.) Documentation from student data, assessment techniques, instructional plans, information about student work, and implementation of state curriculum standards, as provided in 6.69.4.11. E (1) NMAC, and
 - ii.) Observation summaries, by each panel member, of the candidate teaching in the area for which he or she is applying. Observations by the panel members may be done in person or by video, and
 - iii.) At least two observation summaries, completed by the candidate, of a teacher(s) teaching in the subject area for which the candidate is seeking to be highly qualified.
 - o Both teachers on the panel must agree that the candidate has met, or exceeds, the competencies and indicators for the level of licensure the teacher being evaluated holds.
 - o The panel shall submit their recommendation to the State Department of Education in a form acceptable to the department.
 - o The State Department of Education will verify that the teacher has met the requirements set forth in this rule and if permitted in the state board's rules governing the subject area the candidate may be issued an endorsement in the evaluated subject area. It is possible to add licensure endorsements through this process in all of the *content* areas. Note that the bilingual education endorsement is not included in the Subject Area Competency HOUSE option.

Note: Subject Area Competency HOUSE will be implemented beginning January 1, 2004.

(See 6.69.4.7 and 6.69.4.8 NMAC)

Hired prior to the first day of school of 2002-2003 - Teachers with Elementary licensure teaching in middle school or junior high school, and teachers with Middle Level, Secondary, or K-12 specialty area licensure

- When the term “highly qualified teacher” is used with respect to any middle school or junior high school teacher, who holds an Elementary K-8 license, who is teaching the core academic subjects in a public middle or junior high school in New Mexico who was hired prior to the first day of school of 2002-2003, OR

- When the term “highly qualified teacher” is used with respect to any middle level (5-9), secondary (7-12), or specialty area (K-12) teacher teaching the core academic subjects in a public school in New Mexico who was hired prior to the first day of school of 2002-2003, it means that by June 30, 2006, the teacher:

- holds at least a bachelor’s degree, and
- has obtained full State licensure as a teacher, including licensure obtained through alternative routes, and
- holds a license to teach in New Mexico, and
- has no licensure requirements waived on an emergency or temporary basis, or for any other reason, and
- has demonstrated competency in the elementary disciplines of language arts, or social studies, or math, or science by:
 - o passing the Content Knowledge test(s) of the New Mexico Teacher Assessments or predecessor New Mexico teacher licensure examinations, or accepted comparable licensure tests from another State in each subject area the teacher teaches, or
 - o successfully completing an undergraduate academic major (24-36 semester hours), or coursework equivalent to an undergraduate major, or a graduate degree in each subject area the teacher teaches, or
 - o holding certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in each content area the teacher teaches, or
 - o completing Subject Area Competency HOUSE (High Objective Uniform Standard of Evaluation) as follows:
 - Have successful annual evaluations for the prior two school years.
 - Have five complete school years of teaching experience.
 - Complete at least 12 upper division semester hours in the subject area being evaluated.
 - Demonstrate competence in the instructional strand of the state board’s teacher competencies and indicators for the level of licensure the candidate holds to a local panel.
 - o The local panel shall consist of two teachers.
 - i. One teacher will be appointed by the principal in the school where the teacher seeking to be highly

- qualified is teaching. The second teacher will be appointed by the candidate.
- ii.) Panelists must be highly qualified, as defined in State Board of Education rules, hold a current Level II or III-A license, and have an endorsement in the subject area to be evaluated.
- iii.) Panelists may be from the candidate's same school, or same district, or from another school or district in New Mexico.
- o The candidate must gather and submit to the panel evidence demonstrating how he/she meets the competencies in the instructional strand of the state board's teacher competencies and indicators. Evidence must include:
 - i.) Documentation from student data, assessment techniques, instructional plans, information about student work, and implementation of state curriculum standards, as provided in 6.69.4.11. E (1) NMAC, and
 - ii.) Observation summaries, by each panel member, of the candidate teaching in the area for which he or she is applying. Observations by the panel members may be done in person or by video, and
 - iii.) At least two observation summaries, completed by the candidate, of a teacher(s) teaching in the subject area for which the candidate is seeking to be highly qualified.
- o Both teachers on the panel must agree that the candidate has met, or exceeds, the competencies and indicators for the level of licensure the teacher being evaluated holds.
- o The panel shall submit their recommendation to the State Department of Education in a form acceptable to the department.
- o The State Department of Education will verify that the teacher has met the requirements set forth in this rule and if permitted in the state board's rules governing the subject area the candidate may be issued an endorsement in the evaluated subject area. It is possible to add licensure endorsements through this process in all of the *content* areas.

Note: The bilingual education endorsement is not included in the Subject Area Competency HOUSE option.

Note: Subject Area Competency HOUSE will be implemented beginning January 1, 2004.

(See 6.69.4.7 and 6.69.4.8 NMAC)

Clarifications from US Department of Education Non-Regulatory Guidance regarding bilingual education, TESOL, special education, and middle/secondary science:

- 1) **Bilingual and TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) teachers teach in the core academic subjects and are required to meet the standards of a highly qualified teacher for the grade level they teach. In addition, teachers of English language learners who teach in instructional programs funded under Title III ESEA must be fluent in English and any other language in which they provide instruction, including having written and oral communication skills.**
- 2) **Special education teachers who are providing instruction in the core academic subjects are required to meet the standards of a “highly qualified” teacher for the grade level they teach. These requirements apply whether a special education teacher provides core academic instruction in a regular classroom, a resource room, or another setting.**

There are many activities that special education teachers carry out that would not, by themselves, require those teachers to be “highly qualified” in a particular subject matter. Special educators who do not directly instruct students in any core academic subjects or who provide only consultation to “highly qualified” teachers of core academic subjects in adapting curricula, using behavioral supports and interventions, or selecting appropriate accommodations do not need to demonstrate subject-matter competency in those subjects. These special educators could also assist students with study skills or organizational skills and reinforce instruction that the child has already received from a “highly qualified” teacher in that core academic subject.

- 3) **Teachers of secondary science with content knowledge in one scientific discipline might not necessarily have sufficient subject-matter competency in another discipline. Middle and secondary science teachers must demonstrate subject-matter competency appropriate to the specific courses they are teaching. For example, a teacher who majored in biology is not, on that basis alone, considered “highly qualified” to teach physics.**

A State may offer a single secondary science content area test that covers more than one science discipline. New Mexico’s secondary science content area test, in fact, does this. The new middle level science content area test that begins in September, 2004, also meets this standard.

Teachers not teaching in the core academic areas

Although teachers who are teaching in content areas outside of the core academic subjects are not required to meet the standards of a highly qualified teacher, they are strongly encouraged to do so. Content areas outside of the core academic subjects include, technology education, health, physical education, library/media, psychology, business education, family and consumer sciences, vocational/technical, and agriculture.

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