

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING HIGHLY QUALIFIED**

### **1. What is the definition of highly qualified teacher?**

The requirement that teachers be highly qualified applies to all special education teachers who teach a core academic subject.

- A. Holds a minimum of a bachelor's degree; and
- B. Has obtained full Oklahoma certification or holds an Oklahoma teaching license and does not have certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis;
- C. Has demonstrated subject-matter competency in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher delivers the content knowledge.

### **2. Do special education teachers need to meet the highly qualified requirement if they are not teaching a core academic subject?**

No, only teachers who teach core academic courses are required to meet the definition of a highly qualified teacher. If you are collaborating or co-teaching you do not need to meet the requirements of highly qualified.

### **3. If a special education teacher was highly qualified using the 2005-2006 HOUSSE documentation is the teacher highly qualified for the 2006-2007 school year?**

No. The HOUSSE has been revised and you will need to use the 2006-2007 HOUSSE documentation.

### **4. If a special education teacher teaches core academic subjects exclusively to students who are being assessed against alternate academic achievement standards, at what subject matter level must the special education teacher be highly qualified?**

The 2004 IDEA amendments provide that if a special education teacher teaches core academic subjects exclusively to students who are being assessed against alternate achievement standards, the teacher must meet the highly qualified requirements for elementary school teachers and for instruction above the elementary level have subject-matter knowledge appropriate to the level of instruction being provided.

### **5. Must a special education teacher who teaches core academic subjects exclusively to students with disabilities be highly qualified in all subjects they teach?**

Yes. Special education teachers in this category, whether new to the profession or not, must be highly qualified. Special education teachers who are not new to the profession must demonstrate competence in all core subjects they teach. You will use the revised 2006 single subject special education HOUSSE to demonstrate subject-matter competency in each of the core academic subjects that you teach.

The 2004 IDEA amendments provide that special education teachers new to the profession who teach multiple core academic subjects and are highly qualified in early childhood, elementary, mathematics, language arts, or science at the time they are hired, have two additional years after the date of hire to become highly qualified in all other academic subjects they teach, including through use of a core academic HOUSSE.

**6. What activities may special education teachers carry out if they are not highly qualified in the core academic content area being taught?**

There are many activities that special education teachers may 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.

**7. Do all areas of advanced certification by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards make a teacher automatically highly qualified?**

A teacher is automatically highly qualified at the middle/secondary level if the national board certification is in the specific core academic subject area the teacher teaches.

Example: "English Language Arts/Early Adolescence."

A teacher holding national board certification in a non-core academic subject may become highly qualified by counting the national board certification within their HOUSSE.

Example: Exceptional Needs Specialist/Early Childhood.

**8. Will college course work at the college of education count when building a HOUSSE?**

No. An EDUC, CIED, or any other education prefix is not acceptable except for reading. Examples of acceptable core academic prefixes are: POLSCI, ENG, MATH, etc.

**9. Can psychology or sociology count when building a HOUSSE in social studies?**

No. NCLB specifically identified the social studies core academic areas as civics and government, economics, history, and geography. This is in contrast to the other core academic areas of science, mathematics, language arts, etc. Therefore, when counting coursework for social studies only these specific core academic social studies areas may be counted.

**10. Can college course work in Humanities count for any core academic subjects when building a HOUSSE?**

Yes. When a teacher is teaching a course for art or music credit, they may count Humanities when building a HOUSSE.

**11. Can college course work in speech, drama, journalism, or communication count when building a HOUSSE in language arts?**

No. These courses are not considered core academic subjects.

**12. Can you count out-of-state years of teaching experience when building a HOUSSE?**

No. Each state must develop their HOUSSE based on their state standards.

**13. When building a HOUSSE, can service in the content area (Column 3) count if they are accrued out of state?**

No. Each state must develop their HOUSSE based on their state standards.

**14. What is meant by High Objective Uniforms State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) procedures?**

As of July 1, 2006 you will be required to use the revised HOUSSE for all special education teachers who teach a core academic subject.

**15. May Districts offer HOUSSE procedures as a way for experienced teachers to demonstrate subject-matter competency in the subjects they teach after the 2005-2006 school year?**

Yes. Districts will need to use the revised HOUSSE for special education teachers, as a way of determining that individual teachers have the subject-matter competence they need to be highly qualified in each subject they teach.

**16. Do you build a HOUSSE (High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation) for each academic area you are teaching?**

Yes. Due to requirements by USDE we have revised the HOUSSE document and you will need to use the revised form for the school year 2006-2007.

**17. If you have a master's degree in special education are you automatically highly qualified?**

No, you would still need to build your HOUSSE using the revised document.

**18. If you have elementary certification plus special education certification are you highly qualified?**

For veteran teachers teaching the subject of elementary, only when content competency is demonstrated by also passing the elementary test or by building a HOUSSE in the subject of elementary education. Teacher testing began in 1982.

**19. In column 1 of the HOUSSE do I only count one academic area for credits?**

Yes, you add up all your credit hours of a C or better, for the academic area and then multiply by 4. Remember education courses do not count except for Reading.

**20. I have taken my national board certification in special education; will that automatically make me highly qualified?**

No, you may use National Board certification in special education under column 6 of the HOUSSE document.

**21. What if I cannot reach 100 points to build a HOUSSE will I lose my job?**

You cannot be the teacher of record for any core academic area. You have until June 30, 2007 to use the revised HOUSSE. Your school district may need to look at reconfiguring your teaching assignments where you are in a consultative, collaborative or co-teaching role.