

Special Education Teachers Highly Qualified Requirements

Special Education

Special Education is **NOT** a Highly Qualified (HQ) area. Highly Qualified Core Academic Subject areas are:

- Early Childhood
- Elementary Education
- English/Language Art
- Reading
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies: History, Geography, Government and Civics, Economics
- World Languages
- Art: Visual Art or Music

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) recognizes the burden that would be placed on a Special Education teacher, in becoming Highly Qualified (HQ), which would require a ***teacher to add the Core Academic Subject Areas (English/Language Arts; Reading; Science; Mathematics; Social Studies: History, Government and Civics, Economics, Geography; Foreign Language; Arts: Music/Visual Arts) to their license***. This would require a Special Education Teacher to hold too many licenses; therefore, Special Education teachers can prove proficiency in a specific core academic subject area by taking the National Teachers exam(s), ETS's Praxis II exam(s), or Pearson Core Assessment Subject Area Exam(s). For example a Special Education Teacher can take the Elementary Education exam, and once passed, would be Highly Qualified (HQ) in Special Education Elementary Education.

Licensed Special Education teachers who are required to meet the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Highly Qualified Teacher definition include:

- Core Academic Elementary School Teacher: The Special Education teacher is the primary teacher providing instruction to the student in the core academic elementary subjects.
- Core Academic Junior High, Middle or Secondary School Teacher: The Special Education teacher is the primary teacher providing instruction to the student in one or more Core Academic Subject(s).
- Team Teaching (Special Education Teacher and a General Education Teacher): The Special Education teacher works in the general education class alongside a Highly Qualified Teacher of Core Academic Subjects or elementary academic content. The Special Education teacher and the general education teacher share responsibilities for the design and delivery of instruction, as well as the evaluation of student performance.

Teaching Core Academic Subjects Exclusively to Students Assessed Against Alternate Achievement Standards (ISTAR)

Highly Qualified Requirements – Amendment

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004 provides that if a Special Education teacher teaches Core Academic Subjects exclusively to students who are being assessed against alternate achievement standards (ISTAR), the teacher **MUST** meet the Highly Qualified requirements for Elementary School Teachers and, and have subject-matter knowledge appropriate to the level of instruction being provided.

Accordingly, Special Education teachers above the elementary level who teach Core Academic Subjects exclusively to students assessed against alternative achievement standards (ISTAR) have the option of meeting the Highly Qualified requirements for elementary school teachers. Alternatively, these teachers can meet the Highly Qualified Teacher requirements at the secondary level.

Licensed special education teachers who are NOT required to meet the NCLB Highly Qualified Teacher definition include:

- Co-Teacher: The Special Education teacher who works within the general education setting in which a Highly Qualified general education teacher provides instruction to the class on Core Academic Subjects, or the Special Education teacher who provides direct assistance to students with disabilities (e.g., via individualized or small group instruction) as a support to the Highly Qualified Teacher's instruction.
- Consultant Teacher: The Special Education teacher who provides consultation (e.g., adapts curricula, uses behavioral supports and interventions, and selects appropriate accommodations) to Highly Qualified general education teachers of Core Academic subjects.
- Resource Room Teacher: The Special Education teacher who provides direct assistance to students with disabilities (e.g., tutoring, reinforcement of content provided in the general education setting) in segregated settings (e.g., resource class setting, self-contained classroom) after the students receive instruction on Core Academic Subjects from a Highly Qualified general education teacher.
- Non-Core Academic Instruction Teacher: The Special Education teacher who provides direct instruction to students with disabilities on non-Core Academic Subjects (e.g., life skills, study skills, community-based instruction).

Note

Teachers who do not teach Core Academic Subjects (e.g., some life skills classes) do not have to be Highly Qualified, when in doubt whether a highly qualified teacher (HQT) is required consult Indiana's Assignment Codes, which lists the course, the course number, along with the license required, and whether or not the teacher must be highly qualified.

Note: For information in regards to assignment codes please see the document in Helpful Links "Assignment Codes".

Questions

For information about how to become licensed in a Special Education please contact the Office of Educator Effectiveness and Licensing's Help Desk at (317) 232-9010 or email your questions to licensinghelp@doe.in.gov. For Highly Qualified questions please contact Tana Mansfield, Educator Effectiveness Specialist over Testing and Title II/Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) Specialist by email at hqt@doe.in.gov or by phone at (317) 234-0218. Visit our Highly Qualified webpage at: <http://www.doe.in.gov/effectiveness/educator-effectiveness-highly-qualified-teacher-provisions>.