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STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

MEMORANDUM

TO: All K-12 Michigan School Districts

FROM: Flora L. Jenkins, Director
Office of Professional Preparation Services

DATE: October 25, 2005

SUBJECT: Clarification on Staffing Alternative Education Programs

The “No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2002 requires all middle and high school teachers of core academic content subjects to be highly qualified. Core academic subjects are defined as: English/language arts, reading, mathematics, foreign languages, the arts, science, civics/government, history, geography, and economics. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has received numerous questions regarding the staffing of alternative education classrooms.

Prior to the passage of NCLB the MDE had established the following procedures for staffing alternative education:

“The term “alternative education” is used widely throughout the state to offer different types of programs usually to secondary students. In some instances, the programs are designed to assist students with behavior problems. In other instances, the programs are designed to help low-achieving students. Many times the low-achieving students would be learning at the elementary school level.

Only the employing school district can determine the nature of the program which it is offering. The Michigan General School Laws requires that the school districts employ certificated and qualified personnel. Therefore, the local school district is required to determine who is qualified to teach in the Alternative Education Program and to make a determination as to whether or not an elementary or secondary certified person is used. This interpretation is supported by Rule 5 of the Administrative Rules which specify that a person shall hold a certificate valid to the position to which they are assigned.”

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In light of the NCLB highly qualified teacher requirements the above procedures are **no longer valid** for assignment of alternative education teachers as federal law supersedes state law. Attached is a copy of the "Revised Procedures for Staffing of Alternative Education Programs". This document is also available on the MDE website at:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Revised_Prodecures_for_Alternative_Ed_140182_7.doc

Please share this information with your human resources director, alternative education director, building principals and teaching staff. Questions regarding alternative education staffing may be directed to Dr. Frank Ciloski at 517/373-6791 or ciloskif@mi.gov.

cc: Jeremy M. Hughes, Ph.D.
Chief Academic Officer

Frank Ciloski, Ph.D.
Supervisor, Client Services

Mary Alice Galloway
Special Assistant to Jeremy Hughes

Enclosure

FLJ:dsr

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION SERVICES

REVISED PROCEDURES FOR STAFFING OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

October 25, 2005

The "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) Act of 2002 requires all middle and high school teachers of core academic content subjects to be highly qualified. Core academic subjects are defined as: English/language arts, reading, mathematics, foreign languages, the arts, science, civics/government, history, geography, and economics. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has received numerous questions regarding the staffing of alternative education classrooms.

Alternative education teachers who hold a Michigan elementary certificate are highly qualified for teaching alternative education students in a self-contained middle school or secondary class in which students are performing at the elementary level and not receiving credit towards high school graduation.

Secondary certified teachers with an endorsement in at least one of the core academic subjects can use the HOUSSE options, including the multidisciplinary portfolio, to demonstrate that they are highly qualified to teach each subject taught in the self-contained alternative classroom.

Middle school departmentalized alternative education classrooms must be staffed with appropriately certificated, endorsed, and highly qualified teachers.

Alternative education students who perform at the secondary level in **departmentalized** alternative education classrooms, for which graduation credit is earned, must be taught by highly qualified secondary teachers who are appropriately certificated and endorsed.

Alternative education teachers who instruct secondary students for high school graduation credit in a self-contained classroom must demonstrate that they are highly qualified in each of the core academic areas in which they are assigned to teach.

Additional information regarding the multidisciplinary portfolio guidelines is available on the MDE website at:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Alternative_Ed_NCLB_Clarifications_140240_7.doc

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