

TO: Local Leaders, MEA Board Members and MEA Professional Staff
FROM: Mary Anne Adams, Professional Development/Human Rights Department Consultant
RE: Reminder Regarding Teaching Assignments and the Highly Qualified Requirement
DATE: April 28, 2005

R 390.1105 of the Administrative Rules Governing the Certification of Michigan Teachers states, "A person employed in an elementary or secondary school with instructional responsibilities shall hold a certificate, permit, or vocational authorization valid for the positions to which he is assigned." **In short, teachers must be assigned to instruct within the validity of their Michigan teaching certificate.**

This Administrative Rule has been in effect for many years and is fundamental to the requirements of being highly qualified under ESEA/NCLB. As I talk to our members regarding their highly qualified status, I have learned that many teachers have been inappropriately assigned to teach in subjects for which they are not certified by the State to teach.

For example, a teacher with a CC history endorsement is not authorized to teach a social studies class. Another situation is a teacher with elementary certificate for K-5 all subjects; K-8 self contained classroom and 6-8 social studies who has been assigned to teacher 6th grade language arts. This is inappropriate, as the teacher is not authorized by the State for 6th grade language arts, and therefore is not highly qualified in this subject area.

A third scenario is a secondary certified teacher endorsed in CB geography and CC history for grades 7-12. He is teaching an 8th grade general social studies class. He is not authorized to teach a general social studies class because he doesn't have the CX or RX endorsement. In this case the content of the 8th grade social studies is geography. If the district would change the name of the class to geography to align with the content of the class, the teacher would be highly qualified. If the class remains "social studies", the teacher is not highly qualified.

I urge you to work with districts to make sure our members are appropriately assigned to classes for which they are authorized by the State, as per the validity of their certificate.

In some instances, changing the name of the class to reflect its content would solve the issue.

If you have questions, please contact me.

cc: Lu Battaglieri
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