

Considerations for Special Education Teachers Certificated at the Secondary Level or Teaching at the Secondary Level to Meet the Highly Qualified Requirement

The purpose of this document is to explain/clarify how the term “highly qualified” (HQ), used in the reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004, impacts special education teachers in Michigan. A number of questions and concerns remain on this issue. However, the one fact about which there is absolute certainty is that:

All public elementary and secondary school teachers, including special education, bilingual education, and alternative education teachers who teach core academic subjects, must have met the “highly qualified” requirement by the end of the 2005-2006 school year.*

New special education teachers who teach multiple subjects and are highly qualified in Mathematics, Language Arts or Science at the time of hire, have two years after the date of employment to demonstrate competence in the other core academic subjects to which they are assigned.

***Note:** An extension through June 30, 2009 has been granted to Michigan Special Education teachers to meet the October 2007 revision in highly qualified requirements.

What are the Core Academic Subjects?

English/Language Arts
Reading
Mathematics
Science: General Science, Biology,
Chemistry, Earth/Space, Physical
Science, Physics
Social Studies: Social Studies, Civics
and Government, History, Geography,
Economics
Foreign Languages
The Arts: Visual Arts, Instrumental Music,
Vocal Music, Dance and Theatre

What does “Highly Qualified” mean for Special Education Teachers?

“Highly Qualified” means the teacher holds a valid Michigan Teaching Certificate and an appropriate required special education endorsement and can demonstrate competence in each of the core academic areas taught or assigned to teach.

Special Education Teachers who are not required to meet the Highly Qualified requirement for core academic subjects:

- Special education resource room program teachers who provide academic support, but **do not** teach the core academic subjects
- Special education teachers who team teach in a general classroom, **regardless** of which teacher (general education or special education) gives the grade or credit
- Special education teacher consultants who do not provide direct instruction
- Early childhood special education teachers (birth to pre-K)

Criteria

Note: Completing any **one** of these options will be demonstration of being highly qualified to teach one or more core academic subject areas in special education.

Hold a major (or equivalent)

Secondary special education teachers who are providing direct instruction in a core academic area, to students with disabilities, may demonstrate competence to teach that subject in the special education setting by completing the equivalent to a major in that subject. A major is defined as thirty (30) semester credit hours or more.

Pass the Elementary Exam of the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC)

This comprehensive examination is designed to cover the spectrum of core subject areas that define the curriculum that a certified elementary or secondary special education teacher can be assigned to teach at the **Elementary level** or to students who are exclusively assessed by alternative achievement standards (such as students taking the MI-Access).

Pass the appropriate subject exam of the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC)

Secondary special education teachers who are providing direct instruction to students with disabilities may take and pass a specific subject area MTTC in order to demonstrate competence to teach that subject in the special education setting. The specific subject area test may be the elementary or secondary version for special education teachers.

National Board Certification in Exceptional Needs

This is authorized by the “advanced certification provision” in ESEA/NCLB and would make a teacher HQ across all core academic areas. Nothing additional is required.

HOUSSE Options

Both the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and IDEA allows the state to set High Objective Uniform State Standards of Evaluation (HOUSSE) as a process for teachers to meet the highly qualified requirement. The following HOUSSE options are available to **elementary and secondary special education teachers** to become HQ.

HOUSSE Option #1

A special education teacher may use this option if, since the issuance of the provisional certificate, he/she has completed 18 semester hours in a planned standards-based approved program or a masters or higher degree. The semester hours taken must be shown to reflect knowledge in the core academic subject area(s) being taught. A Masters Degree in the following areas would qualify a special education teacher to be HQ in all content areas: Masters of Arts in Teaching, Masters of Arts in Elementary or Secondary Education, Masters of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction, and Masters of Arts in Educational Technology.

A Masters Degree in Special Education **alone** will not meet the highly qualified requirement. However, courses taken **toward** a Master's Degree in Special Education may be used to meet the HOUSSE standards, if those courses can be shown to reflect knowledge in the core academic subject(s) being taught. Courses within the master's program may be used towards one's demonstration of being highly qualified. For example, courses supporting the teaching of math, reading, science, social studies, the arts, and so on would be applicable toward meeting HQ requirements. Thus, teachers are urged to review transcripts for all classes which include or support core academic area(s). A special education teacher who meets the requirements of HOUSSE Option 1 becomes HQ in all core academic areas.

HOUSSE Option #2

A special education teacher may use this option if he/she has completed six semester hours in a **specific** core academic area **within the last five years**. Teachers are urged to look at all courses completed during this time period that specify a core subject area in the title/course description and others that reflect knowledge in the core academic subject(s) being taught.

or

A special education teacher may use this option if he/she has completed 90 clock hours of professional development activities in core academic area(s) within the last five years including, for example, special seminars and training in MLPP, Reading First, Project Read, social studies content standards, mathematic instruction and assessment, and so on.

Semester hours can be converted into clock hours (1 semester hour = 15 clock hours) to meet an option objective. Other professional development experiences in the core subject area may be converted as applicable. **See Attachment A.**

HOUSSE Option #3

HOUSSE Option #3 allows for the development and submission of a content area portfolio as a means of demonstrating competence. To structure this process, "Michigan Content Area Portfolio Guidelines" were developed by the Michigan Department of Education and approved by the State Board of Education.

In summary, a portfolio developed to comply with the following guidelines is the purposeful collection/documentation of experiences, activities, events and opportunities that support professional learning and demonstrate competence in one or more of the core academic areas specified in ESEA/NCLB.

The secondary special education teacher must demonstrate competence in **each** core academic area assigned to teach. Competence in each of the areas may be demonstrated in different ways (within these guidelines). Each experience, activity or event included in the portfolio must be documented and the required report form must be used where applicable.

Following are the components that must be used by special education teachers to develop a portfolio to demonstrate competence in one or more core academic areas. The teacher must provide documentation of each component used.

Teaching Experience – See Attachment B

The teacher must have up to five years of successful teaching experience in at least one of the four appropriate core academic areas of English/language arts, math, science, and social studies. Teaching experience must be documented by a valid Michigan teaching certificate **and** an experience report.

College Level Course Work – See Attachment C

The teacher must have successfully completed a minimum of 30 semester hours with at least 6 semester hours in **each** of the core academic areas of English/language arts, math, science, and social studies. These 30 semester hours must include at least 3 semester hours in the core academic area of reading, which is required for a Michigan secondary level teaching certificate. All course work may have been completed anytime during the teacher's collegiate preparation program. Successful completion of course work must be submitted on required report form and documented by official transcript.

Content Specific Professional Development Activities – See Attachment D, D-1

As defined by ESEA/NCLB, the term professional development includes activities that:

- Improve and increase teachers' knowledge of the core academic subjects they teach and enable them to become highly qualified;
- Are an integral part of broad school-wide and district-wide educational improvement plans;
- Give teachers and other members of the educational team knowledge and skills to enable students to meet and achieve state academic standards; and
- Involve many other experiences, activities and opportunities that are "not one-day or short-term workshops or conferences."

The teacher must list at least **five** professional development experiences in which he/she has participated within the last five years that support teaching and learning in the core academic areas.

This might include participation:

- To develop, select or evaluate content standards;
 - To align local content standards with state standards;
 - To develop, validate or evaluate content assessments;
 - At local, regional or state professional development seminars/workshops;
 - In action research study groups;
- or**
- In the completion of the portfolio assessment for National Board Certification.

In keeping with the State Board approved guidelines for a content area portfolio, this content specific professional development activities section of the multidisciplinary portfolio must also include a reflection statement on how the combination of professional activities has improved/impacted your teaching practice/classroom instructional strategies. See Attachment D-1.

Some activities classified as "professional development" may also be classified as "service to the profession in the content area" and may be interchanged to demonstrate competence for either component. **Note:** A given activity **may not** be used for both "professional development" and "service to the content area."

Service to the Profession in the Content Area – See Attachment E

The sharing of content knowledge and pedagogical skill, and the application of principles and practices acquired by experience to the teaching and learning for the continuous improvement of schools is a critical means by which the teaching profession is sustained. For this reason, “Service to the Profession in the Content Area” is one of the four categories of the multisubject portfolio process.

Service to the Profession within the last five years must relate to the core academic areas. Experience and opportunities that may be used to demonstrate competence in this category may include, but is not limited to:

- A department chair or team leader;
- A mentor teacher;
- A cooperating teacher for student teacher;
- An officer in a regional, state, or national professional content organization;
- A content instructor at an institution of higher education;
- A recognized content specialist at the district level;
- A National Board assessor;
- A member of a district/building school improvement team;
- An author/publisher of professional literature related to core academic areas;
- A participant in the development, selection, validation, or evaluation of standard in any of the core academic areas;
- A participant in the development, pilot, evaluation of curriculum, instructional or assessment tools/procedures, etc., in any of the core academic areas; and
- A participant in the development/validation of state/national assessments.

Additional Information

The highly qualified mandate is not a “we/they” issue for teachers and management. Rather, it should be viewed as a collaborative partnership to meet a federal law. It is expected that elementary and secondary special education teachers and district personnel will work together to determine one’s highly qualified status, based on Michigan’s Definition for Identifying Highly Qualified Teachers.

Teachers must understand that they are ultimately responsible for making sure they are highly qualified, similar to their obligation of meeting all certification requirements and maintaining a valid state certificate. Teachers should first consult with their local administrative contacts. If more information is needed, the following people are resources:

For clarification of Michigan’s Definition for Identifying Highly Qualified Teachers, please contact:	
Frank Ciloski, Michigan Department of Education 517-373-6791 or CiloskiF@michigan.gov	Krista Ried, Michigan Department of Education 517-373-0699 or RiedK@michigan.gov
Linda Keway, Michigan Education Association 517-332-6551, ext. 6217 or lkeway@mea.org	Carolyn Logan, Michigan Education Association 517-332-6551, ext. 6212 or clogan@mea.org

HOUSSE Options Cover Page

Personal Information

Name of Teacher _____

Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Local District _____

Building _____

Current Position _____

Current Subjects/Grades _____

Number of Years in Teaching _____

Number of Years under
Contract with Current District _____

Teaching Credential Information

Check the type of Michigan certificate you hold (attach copy of certificate):

 Provisional Certificate Professional Education Certificate 30 Hour Continuing 18 Hour Continuing Permanent

Identify the level of certificate you hold:

 Elementary Secondary

Date Expires _____

Identify the subject area endorsement(s) and grade levels indicated on your Michigan teaching certificate:

Identify any subject area **majors** (30 or more hours in a core academic area) you have:

Identify the Michigan Test(s) for Teacher Certification (MTTC) passed, and date(s) passed:

Identify National Board Certification test or certification test taken in another state. Record type of National Board certification or test title and date passed:

Seeking HQ for the following core academic areas and HOUSSE Options

Check all applicable: HOUSSE: 1 2 3 ELA Science Social Studies Math All Four Other (specify) _____

**This portfolio should be retained by the school district. Do not return this form to MDE.
Teacher – Keep copy for personal records.**

Assessment of HOUSSE Options

Criteria for HOUSSE Options 1 and 2	Rating of Documentation
<p>HOUSSE Option 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the issuance of the provisional certificate, has completed 18 relevant semester hours in a planned standards-based approved program or a masters or higher degree • Examples of HOUSSE Option 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Methods of teaching Math ○ Reading in the content areas ○ Integrating technology (content related) ○ Strategies for instructing students with learning disabilities 	<p>Attach college transcript(s) and highlight relevant courses</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Meets Criteria <input type="checkbox"/> Criteria Not Yet Met</p>
<p>HOUSSE Option 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the issuance of the provisional certificate, has completed six semester hours in a core academic area within the last five years; <u>or</u> • Has completed 90 clock hours of professional development activities in a core academic area within the last five years 	<p>Attach college transcript(s) and highlight relevant courses, or use Attachment A for professional development activities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Meets Criteria <input type="checkbox"/> Criteria Not Yet Met</p>

Criteria for HOUSSE Option 3	Rating of Documentation
<p>Teaching Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Log of experience – up to 5 years teaching in at least one of the four core academic areas (math, science, social studies, reading-language arts) • Evaluations • Valid MI teaching certificate 	<p>Attachment B</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates Competency <input type="checkbox"/> Competency Not Yet Demonstrated</p>
<p>College Level Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 credit hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At least 6 hours in a core academic area or equivalent hours that support the teaching of core academic subjects ○ At least 3 credit hours in reading 	<p>Attach college transcript(s) and complete Attachment C</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates Competency <input type="checkbox"/> Competency Not Yet Demonstrated</p>
<p>Content Specific Professional Development Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 5 experiences within past 5 years that support the teaching of the core academic subjects • Written reflection of how these activities improved instruction 	<p>Attachment D, D-1 (written reflection)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates Competency <input type="checkbox"/> Competency Not Yet Demonstrated</p>
<p>Service to the Profession in Multisubject Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services within last 5 years • Related to core academic areas 	<p>Attachment E</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates Competency <input type="checkbox"/> Competency Not Yet Demonstrated</p>
<p>Other Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passed MTTC Elementary Education #83 • Passed at least 1 MTTC subject area test • Passed at least 1 National Board Certification test or certification test from another state • Attained National Board Certification in at least 1 subject area 	<p>Tests Passed and Comments:</p>

Assessment of Qualifications: Approved Qualifications not yet approved by the district (specify):

Team Members _____

Team Leader Signature _____ Date _____

Teacher's Name _____

Date _____

**Attachment B
Teaching Experience Report (HOUSSE Option 3)**

To meet the ESEA/NCLB highly qualified requirements through the Michigan Multisubject process, the secondary special education teacher may count up to five years of successful teaching experience in at least one of the five core academic areas: English/language arts, math, science, social studies, or reading.

Teaching Assignment(s):	
District name: _____	Phone _____
District address: _____ _____	
Taught full time under appropriate supervision from _____ to _____	Grades _____
Subject(s) _____	

Teaching Assignment(s):	
District name: _____	Phone _____
District address: _____ _____	
Taught full time under appropriate supervision from _____ to _____	Grades _____
Subject(s) _____	

Teaching Assignment(s):	
District name: _____	Phone _____
District address: _____ _____	
Taught full time under appropriate supervision from _____ to _____	Grades _____
Subject(s) _____	

Additional teaching assignments may be included on another page

This form is required as verification of work experience. Experience listed must be verified by the employing district(s). Misrepresentation or falsification of information may result in suspension or revocation of the teaching certificate.

I hereby certify that this teacher has fulfilled the teaching experience as noted above.

Signature of Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name and Position of School District Authority: _____

Signature of School District Authority: _____ Date: _____

Teacher's Name _____

Date _____

Attachment B – Teaching Experience Report

Teaching Assignment(s):

District name: _____

Phone _____

District address: _____

Taught full time under appropriate supervision from _____ to _____

Grades _____

Subject(s) _____

Teaching Assignment(s):

District name: _____

Phone _____

District address: _____

Taught full time under appropriate supervision from _____ to _____

Grades _____

Subject(s) _____

Teaching Assignment(s):

District name: _____

Phone _____

District address: _____

Taught full time under appropriate supervision from _____ to _____

Grades _____

Subject(s) _____

Teaching Assignment(s):

District name: _____

Phone _____

District address: _____

Taught full time under appropriate supervision from _____ to _____

Grades _____

Subject(s) _____

**Attachment C
College Level Course Work Report for the Michigan Multisubject Portfolio
(HOUSSE Option 3)**

In order to meet the ESEA/NCLB highly qualified requirement through the Michigan Multisubject Portfolio process, the secondary special education teacher must have successfully completed a minimum of 30 semester hours. At least 6 semester hours must be in each of the core academic areas of English/language arts, math, science, and social studies, or in courses that support the teaching of these core academic subjects. These 30 semester hours must include at least 3 semester hours in the core academic area of reading, which is required for a Michigan secondary level teaching certificate. All course work may have been completed anytime during the teacher's collegiate preparation program.

Using the following format, identify at least six semester hours of course work that was successfully completed in the core academic areas listed.

English Language Arts			
College/University	Course Title	Year Completed	Credit Earned

Math			
College/University	Course Title	Year Completed	Credit Earned

Science			
College/University	Course Title	Year Completed	Credit Earned

Teacher's Name _____

Date _____

Social Studies			
College/University	Course Title	Year Completed	Credit Earned

Reading			
College/University	Course Title	Year Completed	Credit Earned

Courses that Support the Teaching of Core Academic Subjects			
College/University	Course Title	Year Completed	Credit Earned

This form is required as verification of the successful completion of course work in the core academic areas listed and must be documented by official transcript(s).

Signature of Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name and Position of School District Authority: _____

Signature of School District Authority: _____

Date: _____

**Attachment D
Record of Content and/or Multisubject Professional Development Activities
(HOUSSE Option 3)**

As defined by ESEA/NCLB, the term professional development includes activities that:

- Improve and increase teachers' knowledge of the core academic subjects they teach and enable them to become highly qualified;
- Are an integral part of broad school-wide and district-wide educational improvement plans;
- Give teachers and other members of the educational team knowledge and skills to enable students to meet and achieve state academic standards; and
- Involve many other experiences, activities and opportunities that are "not one-day or short-term workshops or conferences."

The teacher must list at least **five** professional development experiences in which he/she has participated within the last five years that support teaching and learning in the core academic areas. This might include participation:

- To develop, select or evaluate content standards;
 - To align local content standards with state standards;
 - To develop, validate or evaluate content assessments;
 - At local, regional or state professional development seminars/workshops;
 - In action research study groups;
- or**
- In the completion of the portfolio assessment for National Board Certification.

Content or Multisubject Professional Development Activities			
Date	Title/Activity	Purpose Addressed	# Hours Engaged

Attach additional pages as needed

Upon request, documentation of each of the above cited professional development activities will be provided.

Signature of Teacher: _____

Date: _____

**Attachment D-1
Reflection on Content or Multisubject Professional Development Activities (HOUSSE Option 3)**

In keeping with the State Board approved guidelines for a content area portfolio, this content specific professional development activities section of the multisubject portfolio must also include a reflection statement on how the combination of professional activities has improved/impacted your teaching practice/classroom instructional strategies. **Attach written reflection.**

**Attachment E
Service to the Profession in Multisubject Areas
(HOUSSE Option 3)**

The sharing of content knowledge and pedagogical skill, and the application of principles and practices acquired by experience to the teaching and learning for the continuous improvement of schools is a critical means by which the teaching profession is sustained. For this reason, "Service to the Profession in the Content Area" is one of the four categories of the multisubject portfolio process.

Service to the Profession within the last five years must relate to the core academic areas. Experience and opportunities that may be used to demonstrate competence in this category may include, but is not limited to serving as:

- A department chair or team leader;
- A mentor teacher;
- A cooperating teacher for student teacher;
- An officer in a regional, state, or national professional content organization;
- A content instructor at an institution of higher education;
- A recognized content specialist at the district level;
- A National Board assessor;
- A member of a district/building school improvement team;
- An author/publisher of professional literature related to core academic areas;
- A participant in the development, selection, validation, or evaluation of standard in any of the core academic areas;
- A participant in the development, pilot, evaluation of curriculum, instructional or assessment tools/procedures, etc., in any of the core academic areas; and
- A participant in the development/validation of state/national assessments.

Service to the Profession in Multisubject Areas		
Date(s) of Activity/Experience(s)	Activity/Experience	Content Area(s) of Focus

Attach additional pages as needed

Upon request, documentation of each of the above cited Service to the Profession activities/experiences will be provided.

Signature of Teacher: _____

Date: _____

