ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
June 16-17, 2003

TO: Illinois State Board of Education

FROM: Robert E. Schiller, Superintendent
       Lee Patton, Interim Director

Agenda Topic: Action Item: Illinois Criteria for Meeting the NCLB
Requirements for Highly Qualified Teachers

Materials: Proposed “Illinois Criteria for Meeting the NCLB
Requirements for Highly Qualified Teachers”

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Purpose of Agenda Item

• To review the NCLB requirements for a “highly qualified” teacher; and
• To consider the proposed Illinois Criteria for Meeting the NCLB Requirements for
  a “Highly Qualified” Teacher

Expected Outcome of Agenda Item

• Final Board action on the proposed Illinois Criteria for Meeting the NCLB
Requirements as a “Highly Qualified” Teacher

Background Information

To support the goal of academic success for all students, the No Child Left Behind Act
of 2001 (NCLB) established high expectations for teachers in core academic subjects
and required each state to assure that all such teachers meet those criteria by the end
of the 2005-2006 school year. Each state is expected to take the following actions:

• Develop criteria for being “highly qualified” in relation to the NCLB requirements
  and the state certification system;
• Develop a system for collecting and reporting data on the percentage of classes
  that are not taught by teachers who meet the “highly qualified” criteria; and
• Use federal funds, particularly Title II, at the state and local levels to increase the
  percentage of classes taught by teachers who meet the “highly qualified” criteria
  and move toward the goal of having all teachers of core academic subjects be
  “highly qualified” by the end of the 2005-2006 school year.
An important aspect of these requirements is that a teacher is “highly qualified” in relation to his or her teaching assignment(s) – that is, the teacher’s qualifications meet specific criteria for teaching at specific grade levels and in specific subject areas. The designation as “highly qualified” is not a judgment on the quality of each teacher as a professional educator.

Congress and the U.S. Department of Education gave priority to assuring that the teachers of children in high poverty schools have immediate access to “highly qualified” teachers. Thus, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) required that after the first day of the 2002-2003 school year, all newly hired teachers in programs supported with Title I funds must be “highly qualified” according to the definition set forth in the Act. Thus, whether teachers who were newly hired in a Title I-funded program for the 2002-2003 school year were new to the profession or veterans, they were immediately subject to the NCLB. The same immediate requirement for “highly qualified teachers” will apply to teachers newly-hired in Title I-funded programs in 2003-2004, 2004-2005 and 2005-2006.

By the end of the 2005-2006 school year, all teachers in core academic subjects must be “highly qualified” in each area of teaching responsibility. Core academic subjects are: English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history and geography.

Under the No Child Left Behind Act, teachers are considered “highly qualified” if they meet three basic requirements:

- have a bachelor’s degree,
- have full State certification, and
- have demonstrated subject matter competence in the areas taught.

As indicated above, each state is responsible for determining the application of these requirements within its own certification system and as they apply to new and veteran teachers. The state is not required to submit its criteria for being “highly qualified” to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) nor is the state’s action with respect to “highly qualified” teachers a required part of the state’s uniform system of accountability. However, when USDE makes an on-site visit to review state compliance with NCLB, the state must be able to justify the decisions it has made in aligning state criteria for “highly qualified” with federal regulations.

The Illinois State Board of Education adopted draft criteria for “Illinois Certification Requirements Related to NCLB Definition of Highly Qualified Teacher” in September 2002. That document was based on preliminary federal guidance and was identified as a draft pending receipt of final guidance from the USDE. The final federal guidance was issued in December 2002, and it was immediately apparent that the draft Illinois criteria adopted in September did not adequately align with federal expectations. As a result, State Board staff began an extensive revision of the September document. This
A new proposal entitled “Illinois Criteria for Meeting the NCLB Requirements for Highly Qualified Teachers” was discussed with the State Teacher Certification Board in May 2003 and then presented to the State Board of Education. State Board members indicated that they would like to have additional time for public comment as well as more extensive Board discussion and they deferred action on the proposal until the June meeting. The proposed criteria were subsequently distributed for public comment.

**Summary of May 14 Proposal**

The May 14 draft criteria included definitions of key terms and specific criteria through which “current” and “new” teachers may be considered highly qualified in relation to a specific teaching assignment.

The NCLB requirements allow states to establish a “high objective uniform state system of evaluation” (called HOUSSE) to determine the extent to which veteran teachers are “highly qualified.” The criteria presented to the State Board in May provided seven options for the Illinois HOUSSE, ranging from specific qualifications such as a master’s degree in the area of teaching responsibility to accumulation of points in relation to the area of teaching responsibility.

The proposed criteria for “new” teachers reflected the NCLB foundations of full certification appropriate to the grade level and students taught, plus multiple options for demonstrating subject matter competence. The latter included a major, or coursework equivalent to a major, passing a rigorous test, and an advanced degree.

**Analysis and Discussion of Public Comment**

Formal comments regarding the May 14 draft were presented in writing by the following organizations/entities:

- Chicago School District 299
- Illinois Advisory Council on Vocational Education
- Illinois Association for Multilingual Multicultural Education
- Illinois Federation of Teachers

The Certification Committee for the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools discussed the proposal and made verbal recommendations.

Additional comments were provided by numerous individuals throughout the state, primarily teachers, as well as agency staff.
Overview

Three themes were evident in the public commentary.

- The NCLB requirements and the proposed state criteria are not well understood, even by individuals with significant involvement in statewide educational issues.
- There is a great deal of frustration about the proposed criteria, which are perceived as one more denigration of teachers and one more unreasonable expectation that teachers must have additional training at their own expense.
- The State Board must proceed cautiously to avoid driving people away from teaching and exacerbating the teacher shortage.

Specific topics addressed in the public comments are discussed below.

Definition of “New Teacher”

NCLB allows states to differentiate the requirements for “current” and “new teachers.” The proposal presented to the State Board in May defined “new teachers” as those who were first certified in Illinois on or after July 1, 2002.

The Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) recommended that this definition be changed to “one hired on or after July 1, 2003.” The Federation indicated that Kansas is taking this approach, but noted that the teacher content tests in Kansas are not available until that date. IFT did not provide a rationale for this recommendation.

Chicago School District 299 asked whether teachers “hired this school year (02-03) are considered new teachers” and suggested making the requirements effective next year instead.

At this writing, Illinois is still waiting for federal guidance about data collection. Our understanding is that we will be expected to provide baseline data for the 2002-2003 school year; if this is required, it will require that Illinois have a basis for data collection. In addition, NCLB has established the 2002-2003 school year as the time for requiring that newly-hired teachers in Title I programs be “highly qualified.” These reasons support continuation of the definition as proposed in May.

In addition, since the Illinois testing system is in place, there is no compelling reason (such as that offered by Kansas) to defer the date for the “new” teacher definition until 2003-2004 or later.

Adopting the proposed 2002 certification date for determining a “new” teacher will enable the State Board and local school districts to collect highly qualified teacher data during the baseline year of 2002-2003. However, since the Illinois criteria were not available during the 2002-2003 school year, school districts should not be held accountable for compliance with related requirements, such as providing notice to parents, during that year.
Recommendation: Retain the definition of “new” teacher as one who was first certified in Illinois on or after July 1, 2002.

Veteran or “Current” Teachers

One of the primary concerns in the public commentary focused on the belief that the proposed criteria may result in long-time teachers being considered not highly qualified. At issue is whether the Illinois HOUSSE should accept subject area endorsements of less than 32 semester hours as a “stand alone” criterion. The May 14 draft requires that if a teacher has less than 32 hours of coursework in the area of teaching responsibility, they can be considered as “highly qualified” only if they provide evidence of experience and/or additional professional development (e.g., option six is a 24-hour endorsement plus five years of experience).

This issue is complicated by several factors.

- In the past, the state education agency did not specify subject area endorsements on a certificate. Many individuals with twenty-plus years of experience in a field met the requirements at the time but their subject areas were not specified by the state education agency. Teachers with such certificates are still considered “qualified” (i.e., they meet the minimum requirements) in their own district or in another district, even though the requirements for that subject area may have changed.
- Even now, an individual who meets the minimum state requirements in a subject area is not required to have his or her certificate endorsed for that subject area. However, with or without the formal endorsement, a teacher who meets the minimum requirements can be assigned by the district to teach that subject.
- The minimum requirement for many subject areas is 24 semester hours, and some subject areas require even fewer.

IFT has recommended elimination of option #6 for veteran teachers and the addition of the following in its place: “Have submitted a professional development plan that includes a plan to accumulate 120 points (in #7) by the end of school year 2005-2006.”

Chicago School District 299 has recommended that “ISBE consider a pre-2004 endorsement as a specific ‘additional requirements/option for veteran teachers to qualify.’” This would allow all individuals in the circumstances described above to be considered “highly qualified.” This approach was also supported by the Regional Superintendents Certification Committee.

Options 6 and 7 in the May 14 draft were included as ways to make “highly qualified” those veteran teachers who have met the minimum state requirements for a given subject area and who have been teaching in these areas for several years. These two options would probably have incorporated most veteran teachers in the areas to which they have been assigned, but they would have required a substantial amount of
documentation as evidence. Given the fact that veteran teachers have had experience in the classroom, given that the minimum requirements for assignment to Illinois classrooms remain in effect, and given the fact that all Illinois teachers must now engage in professional development as a condition for certificate renewal, thereby expanding their knowledge and skills, the State Board could reasonably accept pre-2004 “endorsements” or their coursework equivalent as a stand-alone criterion to be considered “highly qualified.”

If the Board accepts this approach, HOUSSE option 2 would need to be modified and options 6 and 7 could be eliminated as unnecessary.

Recommendation: Eliminate HOUSSE options 6 and 7 and modify HOUSSE option 2 as follows:

2. Have an endorsement or its coursework equivalent that is sufficient to meet the Illinois minimum requirements for the area of teaching responsibility.

Special Education

During the May Board meeting, the State Superintendent pointed out that the federal government has not yet provided clear guidance about what is required for special education teachers to be considered “highly qualified.” He indicated that he would not recommend additional requirements for special education teachers until that guidance is available and we know what if any changes may be necessary.

The public comment provided strong support for deferring any additional requirements by the State Board. Some argued that the current requirements are adequate and additional requirements should never be adopted. Others suggested only that the State Board wait for clarification from the federal government before deciding whether or not additional requirements are needed for NCLB.

The May 14 proposal indicated that current certification requirements are sufficient for a special education teacher to be considered highly qualified. The fact that the qualifications of special education teachers will be strengthened over the next few years, as the new rules for enhanced content in the special education standards (to be presented for final action during the June 2003 Board meeting) are implemented in teacher preparation programs and the state testing system, argues for maintaining the May 14 proposal.

Legal staff have suggested that the Board could also exclude special education teachers from the current criteria, pending further guidance from the Department of Education. This would avoid the implication that the current requirements are in fact sufficient to allow the teacher to be considered “highly qualified.”

If special education teachers are included in the criteria, it should be understood that there are no procedures in place to collect data that would differentiate between those
who are essentially “consulting” teachers and those who have primary responsibility for teaching their students the content aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards. Thus, the baseline data for special education teachers would include all teachers with a “special education” assignment on the Teacher Service Record.

If additional requirements for special education teachers are developed in the future and the distinction between consulting and primary-responsibility teachers becomes important, the agency will need to develop new data reporting procedures.

Throughout the proposed criteria, certification by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards is considered a stand-alone way to demonstrate competence and be considered “highly qualified.” However, when the special education section of the original draft (pre-May 14) was modified, this criterion was eliminated. Its reinstatement would acknowledge the high level of expertise required to obtain this certification.

Recommendation: Retain special education as part of the criteria for meeting NCLB requirements for “highly qualified” teachers and include National Board certification in special education as an acceptable option. Modify the teaching responsibility reference to include all special educators.

**Transitional Bilingual Certification**

The September 2002 draft of the Illinois criteria indicated that holders of the Transitional Bilingual Certificate (Type 29) could not be considered “highly qualified.” The May 14 draft proposed that the holders of this certificate could be considered “highly qualified” if the employing district provided them with a strong system of support/induction/mentoring consistent with the federal definition of an “alternative program.” Because that federal option is limited to three years, the proposed criteria indicated that a Type 29 teacher participating in such a program could be considered “highly qualified” only if he or she completed the program within three years.

The comments provided by the Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education and the Illinois Association for Multilingual Multicultural Education indicated that they understood the May proposal to mean that the holder of a Type 29 certificate would have just three years to meet state certification requirements and if he or she did not, the certificate would be revoked.

This was not the intention of the proposal and demonstrates the difficulty of differentiating state requirements from the options for being considered “highly qualified” for NCLB.

State law gives Type 29 holders six years to fulfill the requirements (typically completion of a teacher preparation program and passage of the appropriate certification tests) and if the certificate holder has not met the requirements in six years, he or she can request a two-year extension. The State Board has sought legislation to limit the validity of the Type 29 certificate to four years and to provide checkpoints that would assure progress.
by the teacher toward full certification. However, these proposals have not been adopted by the General Assembly and the law remains as described above.

The May 14 proposal related to “highly qualified” would not have had any impact on the amount of time available to the Type 29 certificate holder to obtain full certification.

However, because the proposal for the support program for Type 29 holders has generated so much confusion, its value is questionable. Moreover, the goals of promoting stronger support programs and encouraging these teachers to achieve full certification as quickly as possible can be addressed through other strategies.

Recommendation: Delete the reference to the district support program and clarify that Type 29 certificate holders cannot be considered “highly qualified.”

Middle Grades Teachers

The requirements for middle grade teachers continue to be among the thorniest of the many issues related to NCLB. The May 14 proposal depended on the newly-named Elementary/Middle Grades Test as a demonstration that the teacher has sufficient academic content knowledge in each teaching areas.

If the Board adopts the proposed change regarding veteran teachers (see veteran teacher section above), it would allow the Board to indicate that veteran teachers who hold the middle grades endorsement or its coursework equivalent could be considered “highly qualified.” The teacher would still be required to take the applicable test but would have identifiable specialization (i.e., 18 hours in the first area of teaching responsibility and 9 hours in the second) for teaching in a departmentalized setting.

Unfortunately, the middle grades endorsement in Illinois does not provide the equivalent of a subject area major in NCLB terms so the use of this endorsement for “new” teachers may not be sufficient.

Further complicating this situation is the fact that both NCLB and Illinois requirements allow middle grade teachers in a non-departmentalized setting (e.g., a traditional K-8 structure or its equivalent) to hold the elementary certificate and demonstrate competence through passage of an appropriate test. This provides a way to address the “highly qualified” status of middle grade teachers in a non-departmentalized setting but it reinforces a set of requirements that some believe are discriminatory – i.e., higher requirements are set for teachers of students in departmentalized settings than for teachers of students in non-departmentalized settings.

Finally, in lieu of adopting a middle grades certificate, the State Board has asked the middle grades task force to make recommendations for enhancing the current endorsement. The report of that group is not yet available, but we know that it will be recommending a separate middle grade test.
For the short term, the best approach regarding “highly qualified” status for middle grade teachers appears to be that recommended in the May 14 proposal – i.e., the elementary certificate holder who passes the elementary/middle grade test will be considered highly qualified regardless of any other qualifications. (Note – this does not exclude the other options.)

If the Board also endorses the proposed change for veteran teachers, the veteran teacher who holds an elementary or secondary certificate holder and who teaches in a departmentalized middle grade setting may also be highly qualified by virtue of their middle grade endorsement.

For the long term, the Board may want to set a deadline for submission of recommendations regarding the middle grade requirements in Illinois -- e.g., October 2003.

Recommendation: Retain the proposed criterion related to elementary certification/passage of the elementary/middle grades test.

Staff Issues

• Definition of a “Major”

NCLB allows states to define a major and the May 14 draft is consistent with current Illinois rules that define a major as at least 32 semester hours. However, during this meeting (June 2003), the Board will be asked to consider emergency rulemaking which includes a change to the definition of a major. The proposed change – which defines a major or area of specialization as 32 semester hours or “as otherwise identified by the institution on the individual’s official transcript” -- is better aligned with NCLB requirements and with the state’s approach to standards-based teacher preparation.

Recommendation: Revise the proposed criteria to include this new definition.

• Vocational Teachers

Agency staff have pointed out that approximately 75% of the more than 300 Illinois high schools with approved agriculture education courses give academic credit for those courses. Typically this credit is given for science and it is accepted by higher education institutions as a lab science course. In this case the teacher must be a certified agriculture education teacher, with both coursework and work experience; however, he or she does not have a formal biology or science endorsement.

Although this example is specific to agriculture, other career and technical education courses are also used by school districts to award credit in core content areas. Staff have suggested that even though vocational education teachers are not addressed by the NCLB requirements, this circumstance makes them relevant.
Recommendation: Clarify that when vocational courses are used to award credit in a core academic subjects as defined by NCLB, the teacher must hold full certification in the vocational area.

**Superintendent’s Recommendation**

The following criteria have been modified from the May 14 version. New language has been underlined.

This document represents a preliminary recommendation. The State Teacher Certification Board will review this proposal during its meeting on June 13, 2003 and its recommendation will be presented to the State Board of Education on June 16.
Illinois Criteria
for Meeting the NCLB Requirements for
Highly Qualified Teachers

June 16, 2003
The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires that, by the end of the 2005-2006 school year, all teachers in core academic subjects must be “highly qualified” in the areas of teaching assignment. All teachers in programs supported with Title I funds who were or are newly hired after the first day of the 2002-2003 school year are required to be “highly qualified” at the time of employment.

According to the definition set forth in NCLB, teachers are considered “highly qualified” if they: (1) have a bachelor’s degree; (2) have full State certification; and (3) have demonstrated subject matter competence in the area(s) taught.

The following criteria define the specific requirements that Illinois teachers must meet to be considered highly qualified for NCLB purposes. The criteria define “full certification” and the options available for “demonstrating subject matter competence” for two groups: current teachers and teachers who are new to the profession.

This document is designed to serve as a resource that can be used by teachers, administrators and others to identify the options for being considered “highly qualified” at a given grade level, for a specific student population, and for special circumstances.

These criteria do not replace state requirements for teaching assignments; all such rules remain in place and must be observed by local districts in placing teachers into the classroom. The criteria for being considered “highly qualified” represent baseline qualifications necessary to meet the NCLB requirements.

Terms used in these criteria are defined as follows.

**Academic Major** - Federal requirements allow states to define an academic “major” for use in determining whether a teacher can be considered “highly qualified.” Illinois defines an academic major as 32 semester hours or as otherwise indicated by the institution on the individual’s official transcript.

**Arts** - NCLB allows states to define the core academic area of the “Arts.” The Illinois criteria for “highly qualified” teachers are based on a definition of the “Arts” as music and art.

**Content Area Test** – A test that assesses subject matter knowledge specific to each certificate or endorsement; this excludes the Test of Basic Skills and the Assessment of Professional Teaching (APT). The Elementary/Middle Grades Test, the Mathematics Test, the French Test and the LBS I Test are examples of Content Area Tests.
Core Academic Subjects – NCLB defines the “core academic subjects” as including English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history and geography. Note: NCLB has identified several specific subject areas under the general areas of the sciences and social sciences. The Illinois criteria treat these subject areas consistent with the new state certification structure and the standards for these academic areas. This includes an expectation for core competencies and specific designations related to subject areas.

“Current” Teachers – Teachers who received their first certificate in Illinois on or before June 30, 2002.

Elementary/Middle Grades Test – This is a new name for the Illinois Certification System Elementary Test. The name change is designed to more accurately reflect the content of the test and the range of grades covered; there has been no change in the content of the test.

“New” Teachers – Teachers who received their first certificate in Illinois on or after July 1, 2002.

Primary Responsibility - The requirements for consideration as “highly qualified” are linked to the teacher’s assignment and whether he or she has “primary responsibility” for providing content instruction. For the purposes of determining “highly qualified” status, “primary responsibility” is defined as being the sole teacher or the instructor of record.

The term “highly qualified” indicates that a teacher has the certification and subject matter competence required to teach a particular subject area, grade level and/or group of students. It is linked directly to the teacher’s specific teaching assignment, so a teacher may be “highly qualified” for one assignment and not for another. Use of the term “highly qualified” should not be construed as an evaluation of the professional teaching abilities of the teacher.

Additional information about Illinois certification requirements, the No Child Left Behind Act and highly qualified teachers may be found on the State Board of Education website at www.isbe.net.
Proposed
Illinois Criteria for Meeting the NCLB Requirements for “Highly Qualified” Teachers

Part I

Criteria for Current Teachers to be Considered “Highly Qualified”

All Illinois teachers must meet requirements of the Illinois Administrative Code for their specific teaching assignment.

To meet NCLB requirements, teachers who were first certified to teach in Illinois on or before June 30, 2002 and who retain a valid certificate are considered “highly qualified” in the area of teaching responsibility if they meet the following requirements.

*Hold a valid Illinois teaching certificate that is appropriate to the grade level and meet one of the following options.*

1. Pass the Elementary/Middle Grades Test or the Content-Area Test for the area of teaching responsibility.

2. Have an endorsement or its coursework equivalent that is sufficient to meet the Illinois minimum requirements for the area of teaching responsibility.

3. Have a major or coursework equivalent to a major in the area of teaching responsibility.

4. Have a master’s degree or other advanced degree/credential in the area of teaching responsibility.

5. Be certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in the area of teaching responsibility.
Part II

Criteria for New Teachers to be Considered “Highly Qualified”

All Illinois teachers must meet requirements of the Illinois Administrative Code for their specific teaching assignment.

To meet NCLB requirements, teachers who were certified in Illinois on or after July 1, 2002 are considered “highly qualified” in the area of teaching responsibility if they meet the following requirements.

**Elementary Grades (K-4)**

Teaching assignment: Primary responsibility for teaching content in the core academic subjects in a self-contained classroom.

Options to be considered “Highly Qualified”

1. Hold Elementary Certificate (Type 03) that is endorsed for self-contained general education and pass the Elementary/Middle Grades Test
2. Hold Elementary Certificate (Type 03) that is endorsed for self-contained general education and hold a National Board Certificate as a Middle Childhood Generalist (ages 7-12) (applicable only through grade 6)
3. Hold Early Childhood Certificate (Type 04) and pass the Early Childhood Test (option is applicable only through 3rd grade)
4. Hold Early Childhood Certificate (Type 04) and hold a National Board Certificate as an Early Childhood Generalist (ages 3-8) (option applicable only through 3rd grade)
5. Hold a Provisional Early Childhood or Elementary Certificate that is based on certification in another state or nation and pass the Early Childhood Test or the Elementary/Middle Grades Test within nine months of certification
6. Hold a Special K-12 Certificate (Type 10) and pass the Content-Area Test (option applicable only for the subject for which the certificate is endorsed -- e.g., art or music)
**Middle Grades (5-8)**

*Teaching assignment*: Primary responsibility for teaching content in the core academic subjects in a middle grades setting, whether self-contained or departmentalized.

Options to be considered “Highly Qualified”

1. Hold Elementary Certificate (Type 03) and pass the Elementary/Middle Grades Test
2. Hold a Secondary Certificate (Type 09) and meet one of the following options:
   - Pass the Content-Area Test for each area of teaching responsibility (applicable only for grades 6-8)
   - Have a major or coursework equivalent to a major
   - Have a graduate degree or advanced certification (e.g., NBPTS) in each area of teaching responsibility (applicable only for grades 6-8)
3. Hold a Special K-12 Certificate (Type 10) endorsed in the area of teaching responsibility and pass the Content-Area Test
4. Hold a Provisional Elementary, Secondary or Special K-12 Certificate (as listed above) based on certification in another state or nation and pass the Elementary/Middle Grades Test or the Content-Area Test for each area of teaching responsibility within nine months of certification.

**Secondary Grades (9-12)**

*Teaching assignment*: Primary responsibility for teaching content in the core academic subjects in a secondary setting.

Options to be considered “Highly Qualified”

1. Hold a Secondary Certificate (Type 09) and meet one of the following options:
   - Pass the Content-Area Test for each area of teaching responsibility
   - Have a major or coursework equivalent to a major in each area of teaching responsibility
   - Have a graduate degree or advanced certification (e.g., NBPTS) in each area of teaching responsibility
2. Hold an Elementary Certificate (Type 03) and meet one of the following options:
   - Pass the Elementary/Middle Grades Test and the Content-Area Test in the area of teaching responsibility (applicable only for 9th grade)
   - Pass the Elementary/Middle Grades Test and have a major or coursework equivalent to a major (applicable only for 9th grade)
   - Have a graduate degree or advanced certification (e.g., NBPTS) in each area of teaching responsibility (applicable only to grade 9)
3. Hold a Provisional Elementary (applicable only to grade 9), Secondary or Special K-12 Certificate (as listed above) based on certification in another state or nation
and pass the required tests for each area of teaching responsibility (see above) within nine months of certification

Special Education

*Teaching Assignment* - *Responsibility for teaching students with disabilities at any grade level.*

Options to be considered “Highly Qualified”

1. Hold one of the four certification options as a teacher of special education and pass the test applicable to the certificate(s) held

2. Hold a Provisional Special Preschool-Age 21 Certificate that is based on certification in another state or nation and pass the applicable tests within nine months of certification

3. Hold a National Board of Professional Teaching Standards certificate in special education.

Bilingual Education and English-as-a-Second Language Education

*Teaching Assignment* -- *Primary responsibility for teaching content to students with Limited English Proficiency in a Bilingual or English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) program.*

Options to be considered “Highly Qualified”

- Hold an Early Childhood, Elementary, Secondary, Special K-12 or Special Preschool-Age 21 Certificate appropriate for the grade level of the teaching assignment and hold the Bilingual or ESL credential (Approval or Endorsement) appropriate to the certificate and meet one of the following options:
  - Pass the Content-Area Test for each area of teaching responsibility
  - Hold a major or coursework equivalent to a major in each area of teaching responsibility
  - Hold a graduate degree or advanced certification (e.g., NBPTS) in each area of teaching responsibility

Special Circumstances

*Charter school teachers* – No certification is required but to be highly qualified, the teacher must hold a bachelor’s degree and demonstrate competence in the area of teaching responsibility by passing the content test(s).
Alternative Certificate Holders – Hold an Illinois Alternative Certificate through an Illinois approved alternative program and demonstrate competence by passing the appropriate content test(s).

Resident Teacher Certificate Holders – Hold Resident Teacher Certificate through an Illinois approved resident teacher program and demonstrate competence by passing the appropriate content test(s).

International Visiting Teacher Certificate Holders – Hold a valid International Visiting Teacher Certificate.

Vocational Certificate Holders – Hold full certification for instruction in a vocational subject for which a school district awards core academic subject area credit (e.g., an agriculture teacher whose students are given science credit).

Transitional Bilingual Certificate (Type 29) Holders – Are not eligible for consideration as “highly qualified.”