



**OKOLONA MUNICIPAL  
SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**One Team, One Goal: All students will be  
successful.**

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**Procedures Manual  
For Assisting Teachers  
Of Grades K-12  
In Reaching Highly Qualified Status**

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## **Okolona Municipal Separate School District Procedures for Assisting Teachers Of Grades K-12 in Reaching Highly Qualified Status**

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the Mississippi State Board of Education Policy for Identifying Highly Qualified Teachers require that all teachers of core academic subjects: English, reading/language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography in schools that receive Title I funds, be highly qualified.

**Minimum Criteria:** To be considered highly qualified, all teachers must meet three requirements. Each must:

1. Hold a bachelor's degree (for example, B.A., B.S.)
2. Be fully state certified/licensed to teach.
3. Have demonstrated sufficient subject matter competency.

The requirements differ by grade level taught-elementary, middle, or high school.

The district will ensure that poor and minority students and those in schools identified for improvement are not taught by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers at higher rates than are other students.

**When the Okolona Municipal Separate School District does not have all teachers highly qualified, or on-track to be highly qualified before the beginning of the school year, the following procedures will be followed:**

**Title II funds shall not be used to pay a teacher's salary that is not highly qualified.**

**Okolona Municipal Separate School District Plan for Assisting Teachers in Achieving Highly Qualified Status**

**(The conservator has the right to non-review the teacher's contract if he/she fails to complete the plan in the time frame described in the plan.)**

- A plan has been developed to describe the actions the school district will take and uses of federal funds to assist teachers in meeting the "highly qualified teacher" requirement.
  - The plan includes the district's right to consider changing teacher assignments within a school, within-school transfers, and between-school transfers to teach grade level(s) and subject(s) for which the teacher holds proper Mississippi certification and for which the teacher has been deemed highly qualified.
  - The plan includes the use of Title II funds as needed to assist teachers in completing their plan to become high qualified.
  - Title II funding will be used for reimbursements only.

- When a teacher successfully presents documentation reflecting as passing grade and registration payment for a test that is a part of their plan to become highly qualified, reimbursement will be made to the teacher.
- When a teacher presents documentation reflecting a grade of a “C” or higher on a course that is outlined in their plan to become highly qualified then reimbursement will be given to the teacher.
- The plan is on file at the district office and sent to the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) when requested.
- This plan will be reviewed and updated annually.

### **Individual Plan for Achieving Highly Qualified Status**

- An individual plan will be developed for each core subject teacher who is not highly qualified.
  - Each principal will meet individually with the teacher to review the plan, and each one will sign the plan that details the responsibilities of each.
  - Each teacher will have a copy of the signed plan.
  - A copy of the signed plan will be on record in the central office and/or principal’s office.
  - Each teacher’s plan will be reviewed in December and March to check for progress or completion of agreed upon actions.

### **Parent Notices**

- Parents are informed in the student handbook of the qualifications of a teacher and a teacher assistant who is providing instruction to the child.
- A letter informing a parent that their child is receiving instruction from a teacher who is not highly qualified but is working toward completing the necessary certification will be sent home not more than four weeks after the teacher begins teaching.
- A letter informing a parent that their child is receiving instruction from a substitute teacher who is not highly qualified while the regular teacher is out will be sent home not more than four weeks after the substitute begins teaching.
- During the school year, if a teacher change results in a student’s class begin taught by a non-highly qualified teacher, parents of each student in the class must be notified not later than the date by which students have been taught for four consecutive weeks.

### **Paraprofessionals**

- No paraprofessional shall be hired who is not highly qualified.

## Highly Qualified Pertinent Information According to NCLB

- The Mississippi Department of Education has designated that middle grades will include grades 7-8, at a minimum.
- Teachers with a K-8 license are “highly qualified” to teach grades K-6 regardless of the classroom configuration.
- Teachers who teach grades 7-12 will be required to have an endorsement in the core academic subject that the teacher teaches to be considered “highly qualified.”
- All veteran teachers had until the end of the school year 2005-2006 to become “highly qualified.”
- All teachers have the opportunity to add endorsements with 21 hours of coursework with a grade of “C” or higher if the coursework is taken after September 1, 2004.
- The requirements that teachers be highly qualified do not apply to early childhood or pre-kindergarten teachers unless a State includes early childhood or pre-kindergarten as part of its elementary and secondary school system.
- Kindergarten teachers are considered to be elementary teachers.
- Any teacher who is providing instruction to students (both in and out of the core academic subjects) should be included in the licensed teacher category for purposes of the school and district report cards.
- It is strongly recommended that long-term substitutes meet the requirements for a highly qualified teacher.
- Title I of NCLB requires that parents must be notified if their child has received instruction for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified. This would include long-term substitutes.
- Teachers who teach core academic courses in vocational technical schools are required to meet the definition of a highly qualified teacher.
- Individuals who teach physical education, health, business, and instructional technology do not have to meet the highly qualified requirements that are outlined in the federal NCLB legislation. Teachers who teach these subjects must continue to meet the state’s laws and regulations related to certification and re-certification and should continue to participate in professional development activities that strengthen their professional knowledge and skills.
- Districts cannot count individuals as being certified if they have not yet received their certificate from the Office of Educator Licensure.
- A teacher of a core academic subject can demonstrate subject matter competency through National Board certification (NBC). The NBC must be obtained in a core academic subject area in which the educator does not currently hold an endorsement.

- A general Master's degree in Education will not satisfy the subject matter competency requirement because the statute specifically states that an educator may demonstrate competence through a Master's degree in the core academic subject(s) in which the teacher teaches.
- An elementary teacher (K-6) who holds an elementary endorsement and is providing direct instruction regardless of the structure of the school (team or self contained).
- Elementary certified teachers (K-8) who teach a core academic subject at the middle school level (7-8) may demonstrate subject matter competency through:
  - Successfully challenging the Praxis II Middle Grades Specialty Area assessment (Middle Grade Math-0069, Middle Grade Language Arts-0049, Middle Grade Social Studies-0089, or Middle Grade Science- 0439), **or**
  - Completion of an approved Middle Grades Professional Development Institute, **or**
  - Praxis II Specialty Area assessment, **or**
  - Completion of a master's degree in the core academic subject area, **or**
  - 21 hours of coursework, **or**
  - Obtaining National Board Certification in an area the teacher is not currently endorsed.
- Middle School certified teachers (middle school generalists) who teach a core academic subject or subjects at the middle school level may demonstrate subject matter competency through:
  - Successfully challenging the Praxis II Middle Grades Specialty Area assessment (Middle Grade Math-0069, Middle Grade Language Arts-0049, Middle Grade Social Studies-0089, or Middle Grade Science-0439), **or**
  - Completion of an approved Middle Grades Professional Development Institute, **or**
  - Praxis II Specialty Area assessment, **or**
  - Completion of a master's degree in the core academic subject area, **or**
  - 21 hours of coursework, **or**
  - Obtaining National Board Certification in an area the teacher is not currently endorsed.
- Special Education teachers, who work with Special Education students that are exclusively working below grade level may become highly qualified in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies by successfully completing the Praxis II Fundamental Subjects K-12 test 0511.
- Elementary Special Education teachers who teach exclusively Special Education students assessed against alternative achievement standards may become highly qualified by successfully completing the Praxis II Fundamental Subjects K-12 test 0511.
- Secondary Special Education teachers, whose student are assessed against alternate achievement standards can become highly qualified by successfully completing the Praxis II Fundamental Subjects K-12 test 0511.
- Secondary Special Education teachers, whose student are NOT assessed against alternate achievement standards can ONLY become highly qualified if they are endorsed in the

core subject or subject being taught. Subject area endorsements can be added to a standard 5-year Special education license through:

- 21 hours of coursework in the subject content area, **or**
  - Passing Praxis II subject area test, **or**
  - Completion of an approved program in the subject area at a college or university.
- Veteran teachers who are teaching out-of-field in a core academic subject for which they are not licensed may demonstrate subject matter competency for that out-of-field area by:
    - Successfully challenging the Praxis II Middle Grades Specialty Area assessment (Middle Grade Math-0069, Middle Grade Language Arts-0049, Middle Grade Social Studies-0089, or Middle Grade Science-0439), **or**
    - Completion of an approved Middle Grades Professional Development Institute, **or**
    - Praxis II Specialty Area assessment, **or**
    - Completion of a master's degree in the core academic subject area, **or**
    - 21 hours of coursework, **or**
    - Obtaining National Board Certification in an area the teacher is not currently endorsed.
  - An ESL teacher who provides students with instruction in the core academic areas and is the sole instructor for students in those core academic areas must demonstrate subject matter competency in each of the core academic subjects in which he or she teaches.
  - To the extent that an elementary ESL teacher is the only teacher of core academic subjects for any student, this teacher will be expected to meet the highly qualified requirements for elementary teachers. A middle school ESL teacher will be required to meet the requirements of middle and secondary school teachers.
  - NCLB requirements may be applied differently to teachers who teach within different educational settings. An ESL teacher who teaches in a self-contained classroom or provides instruction to students outside of the regular classroom will be expected to meet the highly qualified requirements for the core academic subjects that he/she teaches in these settings if the ESL teacher is the sole instructor in that content area. Conversely, if an ESL teacher is providing instructional assistance to a student who is receiving primary content instruction from another teacher, then the ESL teacher is not required to meet NCLB highly qualified requirements.
  - If teachers of English Language Learners provide instruction in core academic subjects, they must meet the requirements for highly teachers.
  - A non-teacher such as an administrator or a guidance counselor cannot utilize the provisions for becoming highly qualified to add endorsements for future assignments. In order to utilize the provisions for becoming highly qualified, the educator must currently serve as a classroom teacher who provides direct instruction and assigns grades to students in a core academic subject area.
  - When out-of-state teachers are hired, regardless of their out-of-state status, the educator would need to meet the state licensure requirements for Mississippi and demonstrate subject matter competency in each of the core academic subject areas taught in order to be designated as highly qualified.

# Appendix

## Financial Reimbursement Application for Achieving Highly Qualified Status

Print Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Grades Taught \_\_\_\_\_

Subjects Taught \_\_\_\_\_

Complete what applies to your individual plan:

**Documentation must be attached to receive reimbursement.**

Content Related College Level Course

Taken \_\_\_\_\_

(Schedule and receipt for class payment)

Grade Received \_\_\_\_\_ (Must earn a grade of a "C" or above for reimbursement purposes.)

(Attach Transcript from University)

Assessment Taken \_\_\_\_\_

(Attach receipt of payment for assessment)

Assessment Passing Score(s) \_\_\_\_\_

(Attach copy of assessment score from Scoring Center)

I attest to the fact that all the above information is accurate and valid with required documentation attached.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

(Please sign in Blue Ink)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The information below is to be completed by Central Office Personnel.

Date of receipt to Federal Programs Office: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Director of Federal Programs: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Superintendent: \_\_\_\_\_

**Individual Teacher Plan for Achieving Highly Qualified Status**

Teacher Name \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher's Assignment \_\_\_\_\_  
*Subject and grade(s)*

Certification \_\_\_\_\_ / Valid Period \_\_\_\_\_

*Copy information from the teacher's certificate*

.....  
\_\_\_\_\_ *(Teacher Name)* is not properly certified for the teaching assignment indicated above. As of the date of this agreement, \_\_\_\_\_ *(Teacher Name)* has not demonstrated core academic subject knowledge and teaching skills through an approved state option. During the 2010-2011 school year, \_\_\_\_\_ *(Teacher Name)* will use the following option to achieve highly qualified teacher status: *(Place a check mark in front of the option that will be implemented.)*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Completion of a state board of education approved program in the core subject taught
- \_\_\_\_\_ Subject-specific, state-approved Praxis II test for middle or secondary grades (code \_\_\_\_\_ )
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completion of a graduate degree in the core subject taught
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completion of coursework equivalent to an undergraduate academic major (18/21 semester hours)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completion of a state board of education approved alternative certification program

\_\_\_\_\_ *(Teacher Name)* will complete the following actions to accomplish the option indicated:

- *(Name and describe action and provide date action will be completed.)*
- *(Name and describe action and provide date action will be completed.)*
- *(etc., as needed)*

\_\_\_\_\_ *(LEA Name)*, through the leadership of \_\_\_\_\_ *(Name of LEA administrator)* will complete the following actions to facilitate accomplishment of the option indicated:

- *(Name and describe action, provide fund source(s) and amount(s), and provide completion date.)*
- *(Name and describe action, provide fund source(s) and amount(s), and provide completion date.)*
- *(etc., as needed)*

\_\_\_\_\_ *(LEA Name)* understands that the State Department of Education will provide oversight and monitoring for implementation of LEA and teacher plans for ensuring that all core academic subject teachers are highly qualified.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(LEA Authorized Signature)*      /      *(Date)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Teacher Signature)*      /      *(Date)*