

CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

P.O. Box 944272
Sacramento, CA 94244-2720



For Immediate Release
June 11, 2003

Contact: Phil Garcia
(916) 319-0827

State Board of Education Approves Conceptual Plan to Meet “Highly Qualified” Teacher Provisions of NCLB

SACRAMENTO – Capping months of consultation with various stakeholders, the State Board of Education today unanimously approved a conceptual plan for compliance with a mandate in the federal No Child Left Behind Act that all classrooms have a “highly qualified” teacher by 2005-06 – a requirement that new hires at Title I schools must now meet.

The heart of NCLB’s highly qualified teacher provision is the requirement that all teachers demonstrate they are competent in the subject areas they teach. Under the State Board’s conceptual plan, all new teachers at the elementary school level will need to pass a subject matter test, while those entering the profession at the middle and high school level will need either a major in each subject they teach or pass a test.

At the same time, the State Board’s conceptual plan seeks to meld those broad requirements with California’s existing teacher preparation and training programs, thereby avoiding the imposition of an entirely new and separate credentialing process.

“Under this plan, we will improve upon California’s well-developed system of teacher preparation and credentialing, enabling our teachers to meet NCLB’s teacher requirements,” said Reed Hastings, president of the State Board of Education. “California students and their parents can be assured that California’s teacher workforce will meet the high standards in NCLB’s teacher quality requirements -- and will do so by the end of the 2005-06 school year.”

The conceptual plan, however, makes clear that certain categories of teachers currently do not meet NCLB’s requirement for demonstrating subject matter competence.

The following categories of teachers would not be deemed highly qualified under the State Board’s plan: individuals teaching on emergency permits; teachers with a local or a supplemental authorization, based a minor degree, for the subject taught; individuals teaching with state or local waivers for the grade or subject taught; and individuals enrolled in what are called “pre-internship” teacher programs.

Under NCLB, the law lays out how a teacher may demonstrate subject matter competence, depending on whether a teacher is “new” to the profession or “not new” to the profession, and whether the teacher works at an elementary, middle or high school.

--more--

State Board of Education
NCLB Teacher Requirements
June 11, 2003
Page Two

Working within the parameters of those definitions and the subject matter requirements in NCLB, the State Board plan provides a roadmap for compliance by placing teachers into one of three categories:

- Teachers who already meet NCLB teacher requirements;
- Teachers who must meet immediately seek to meet NCLB teacher requirements because they were hired to teach in a Title I school after July 1, 2002;
- Teachers who have until the end of the 2005-2006 school year to meet NCLB teacher requirements

NCLB provides several options by which new middle and high school teachers can demonstrate their subject matter competency, but the law requires that elementary teachers new to the profession must pass a “rigorous state test.”

The State Board and the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) will ensure that these new teacher candidates will have the opportunity to meet NCLB’s highly qualified teacher requirements while obtaining their credential.

There also has been much discussion about how teachers not new to the profession could demonstrate subject matter competence under NCLB if they had earned their teaching credential by taking and completing state-approved coursework. (Under the State Board plan, “not new” is defined as a teacher who earned a credential, or was enrolled in or had completed a teacher intern program, before July 1, 2002).

Those teachers would be able to satisfy NCLB’s requirements for demonstrating subject matter competence through an alternative evaluation process contained in NCLB. That process would entail a “high, objective, uniform State standard of evaluation,” or HOUSE. Use of the HOUSE process will allow teachers not new to the profession to demonstrate their subject matter competence in conjunction with evaluations that they currently experience every two years under the state’s Stull Act.

The State Board approved the conceptual plan in a motion that directed staff to seek technical assistance from the U.S. Department of Education to ensure that the plan meets federal requirements. Final approval of the conceptual plan -- which won support from officials from the California State University, the CTC and the NCLB Liaison Team established by the Legislature -- would then come at the State Board’s July meeting.

The State Board’s conceptual plan for meeting NCLB’s teacher requirements is available on the Internet as follows: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/>

###