

## **Answers to Frequently Asked Questions Regarding NCLB and IDEA 2004 “Highly Qualified” Teacher Legislation**

**Question:** I’m a special education teacher at a high school and I have no core content endorsements. Under the highly qualified teacher requirements, am I allowed to provide supplemental teaching in academic subject areas to my students?

**Answer:** Special education teachers can provide remediation, preteaching, or reteaching for any subject area in which their students need additional assistance. However, a student cannot earn core content credit for instruction that is provided by a teacher that is not endorsed in that core content. For example, a high school student with an IEP is earning her math credit in a class taught by a math-endorsed teacher. If that student needs additional assistance in preparing for a test or reviewing key concepts, the special education teacher can —and should - provide that assistance.

**Question:** I have 5-12 special education license and an English endorsement. I teach a class of students who all have IEPs. I’m told I don’t meet the highly qualified requirements because the students are all special education. Do I?

**Answer:** A special education teacher with a 5-12 English endorsement can teach English to any group of high school students including a group of special education students, a group of general education students, or a group of general and special education students. The make-up of the class has nothing to do with the teacher's ability to meet the highly qualified requirements. The confusion may be around the federal requirements on LRE; however, that is a different issue.

**Question:** I have a K-12 Strategist II MD endorsement, a master’s degree, and 20 years of teaching experience. Am I highly qualified to teach my high school students?

**Answer:** You meet Iowa licensure requirements; however, to meet the federal highly qualified teacher requirements you must hold core content endorsement to teach academic core content areas such as math, science, English, etc. or provide services through the consultative model. The Iowa Department of Education recommends that you provide services through the consultative model. If you teach only students who are assessed against alternate achievement standards, you meet the highly qualified teacher requirements if you hold a special education license appropriate to the needs of your students.

**Question:** If a student can’t earn a content credit from a teacher who isn’t endorsed in the content areas, what kind of course credit can students with IEPs earn during their skill-building time with special education teachers?

**Answer:** Schools have implemented course credits termed *Learning Strategies, Skill-Building, etc.*, for the courses in which students receive supplemental instruction with their special education teachers.

**Question:** I’m a teacher in a private school. Do the highly qualified teacher requirements apply to me?

**Answer:** No. Only public schools are held to highly qualified teacher requirements.

**Question:** I hear a lot about a test that teachers can take to show that they are highly qualified. Can I take a test in core content areas to become highly qualified?

**Answer:** Although some states have implemented core content competency tests (called High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation or HOUSSE), Iowa does not have such a test, nor does the state plan on implementing one.

**Question:** I teach in a segregated facility. Do highly qualified teacher requirements apply to me?

**Answer:** Teachers in separate facilities are held to NCLB and IDEA highly qualified teacher requirements under anyone of the following conditions:

- The teacher is employed by a public school district; or,
- The teacher is employed by an area education agency (AEA) and teaches in a public school setting; or,
- The teacher is employed in an AEA-operated facility that solely provides special education services.

**Question:** I teach math in an alternative high school. Do highly qualified teacher requirements apply to me?

**Answer:** Alternative high school teachers are held to NCLB and IDEA highly qualified requirements if a school district employs the teachers. For more information about implementation of the consultative model in alternative high schools, contact Marietta Rives, 515-281-6038, or [Marietta.rives@iowa.gov](mailto:Marietta.rives@iowa.gov).

**Question:** I have a 5-12 Strategist I endorsement and I'm teaching Level III high school students. Am I highly qualified?

**Answer:** Your question is about Iowa licensure requirements, not federal highly qualified teacher requirements. You need to contact the special education license consultant in the Board of Educational Examiners.

**Question:** I'm a college teacher who teaches dual credit courses to high school students. The courses can be taken for college credit, but they also fulfill high school graduation requirements. Do the highly qualified teacher requirements apply to me?

**Answer:** You are held to the highly qualified teacher requirements only if you are employed by the school district.

**Question:** I hold a K-8 permanent special education license that was issued prior to 1988. That license gives me authority to teach several content areas in grades K-8. Do I meet the highly qualified teacher requirements to teach core content in an elementary and/or middle school setting?

**Answer:** The K-8 and K-9 permanent special education licenses meet the highly qualified teacher requirements for elementary schools and for each subject area authorized by the license in middle school.

**Question:** I teach at a facility operated by the Department of Human Services (DHS) and I am employed by the area education agency. Do the highly qualified teacher requirements apply to me?

**Answer:** No. AEA teachers working in a building that is not part of the public school but is operated by an entity such as DHS, or Juvenile Justice aren't held to the highly qualified teacher requirements, but must meet Iowa licensure requirements.

**Question:** I hold an Iowa middle school endorsement and a K-8 special education endorsement. Do I meet the highly qualified teacher requirements for middle school?

**Answer:** Teachers who have a middle school endorsement meet the highly qualified teacher requirements for the subject areas authorized by the middle school endorsement. Teachers with K-8 special education endorsements can provide special education services up to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Subsequently, you meet all highly qualified teacher requirements for the academic subjects allowed by your endorsements.

**Question:** I have a 5-12 English endorsement. Can I teach reading at the high school level?

**Answer:** Not unless you also hold a reading endorsement. Teachers in Iowa must hold a secondary reading endorsement to teach reading at the secondary level. Likewise, elementary teachers must hold an elementary reading endorsement to teach pull-out or specialized reading to elementary students.

**Question:** I am not clear on how to write IEP goals for students in collaboratively taught classes. I also have questions about how to document consultative services on the IEP. Where can I get assistance in these areas?

**Answer:** Please contact Sharon Hawthorne ([Sharon.Hawthorne@iowa.gov](mailto:Sharon.Hawthorne@iowa.gov) or 515-281-5461) for guidance on IEP issues in the collaborative teaching model.