



Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965

NC Public Schools of North Carolina

March 4, 2010

NC NCLB News

This e-newsletter is designed to share information on No Child Left Behind (NCLB), also known as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as reauthorized. Please contact the Office of Communications and Information at the N.C. Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) with any questions or story ideas: Vanessa Jeter, director, 919-807-3469, vjeter@dpi.state.nc.us or Charlotte Duren, NCLB communications specialist, 919-218-9239, cduren@dpi.state.nc.us. To be added to the distribution list, click on “sign up for e-mail updates” at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/>.

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ESEA Hearings Begin in the House

The U.S. House of Representatives’ Committee on Education and Labor began a series of hearings in February as a start to rewriting the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law, the current version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The panel discussions, along with reform ideas reflected in President Barack Obama’s 2011 fiscal year budget proposal presented Feb. 1, seem to signal momentum toward overhauling the K-12 education law that was originally due for reauthorization in 2006.

The budget proposal refers to Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), a widely-debated accountability measure that is the linchpin of NCLB, as being replaced by a new metric that “gives a broader picture of school performance and looks at student growth and school progress.” That metric would measure student progress in reading and mathematics toward becoming ready for college or a career. The largest portion of ESEA, Title I, is renamed as College- and Career-Ready Students (CCR) in the proposal. In fact, the administration is pushing for the idea that Title I funding would be contingent on states adopting college- and career-ready standards. How specifically these standards relate to the Common Core State Standards Initiative led by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association is unclear.

Although the budget proposal lacks specifics on ESEA reforms, some ideas include:

- Requiring states to set high student academic standards and a high expectation of achievement within those standards. (This is in answer to the widely-held perception that some states have lowered their academic standards and/or student performance expectation bars to avoid sanctions.)
- Requiring rigorous change for the lowest-achieving 5 percent of schools. (This is a recurring theme for the Obama administration that is also found in requirements for 1003(g) School Improvement grants, Race to the Top grants, and phase two of State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSF). Central to the theme is the idea that AYP has failed as a diagnostic tool to identify schools needing improvement. A common argument is that the AYP identifier has spread funding too thinly over too many schools and left some schools in the bottom 5 percent as unidentified altogether.)
- Differentiating school performance on the basis of progress in getting all student subgroups on track, individual student growth, progress toward closing subgroup achievement gaps, graduation rates, and other measures. (This is in answer to the frequent complaint that the current law labels schools as failures if they do not make AYP, even if they are making progress or are meeting challenges in serving students from a high number of subgroups, in a one-size-fits-all process.)

The U.S. Education Department (USED) has not yet determined whether it will maintain the current law’s 2014 deadline for bringing all students to proficiency. The timeline for North Carolina is online at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/abcayp/overview/> under “Target Goals.” The 2010-11 school year represents a steep increase in student achievement needed in order for schools to make AYP.

Although most of the \$49.7 billion proposed for USED for fiscal year 2011 (Oct. 1, 2010-Sept. 30, 2011) would continue to be formula-based, a greater than ever percentage of the funding would shift to competitive grants. The emphasis on competitive grants is part of the Obama administration’s plans to reward states that sign on to reform initiatives, although it could leave some states without the federal funding needed to backfill declining state budgets.

Many of the Obama administration’s ESEA reform ideas are already evident in programs initiated last year with the introduction of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) stimulus package. The revamped and boosted 1003(g) School Improvement Grant (SIG) program within ESEA, the Race to the Top grant competition, and the thrust to produce uniform, rigorous academic standards across the states are reforms already prompting states to develop new policies and programs regarding charter schools, state data programs,

teacher-evaluation systems, etc. Stakeholders are invited to comment on ESEA reform ideas at eseacomment@mail.house.gov by March 26.

NCLB AND ESEA-as amended

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is the current version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 that was created as part of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty campaign. The ESEA established the Title I federal aid public school program aimed at reducing achievement gaps between rich and poor and among the races. Every few years, the law has been amended and reauthorized. NCLB is the name given to the reauthorization passed with bipartisan support in 2001 and signed into law by President George W. Bush on Jan. 8, 2002. President Barack Obama's administration refers to the law as "ESEA-as amended" rather than NCLB.

LEAs Must Decide on SIG Schools and Reforms

The NCDPI submitted an application for the state's estimated \$89.9 million share of the \$3.5 billion in federal School Improvement Grants (SIG) 1003(g) in February. These funds will be awarded by formula to states, which will then make competitive grants available to local education agencies (LEAs) over three years. This federal funding stream has been significantly increased and revamped based on a concern of President Obama's administration that the lowest-achieving schools are not implementing the kinds of rigorous interventions that lead to significant improvements in student achievement.

Although this funding is by far the largest ever SIG funding, the expectations for recipients is also greater than ever and, unlike some federal funding, the money cannot be used to fill state revenue holes. The expected SIG reforms are large in scale, such as replacing the principal and half of the staff or closing the school and starting over.

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has said that he is "more interested in quality than quantity." He expects the money to impact less than 1,000 schools nationwide this year. He has set a goal of turning around the bottom 5 percent of schools in the next five years.

"The bottom" persistently low-achieving schools (including public regular, charter, alternative, and special education schools) were federally defined, with minimal state flexibility, as follows.

Tier I: Any Title I school in any year of Title I School Improvement (TISI) that is among the ***persistently lowest-achieving*** 5 percent of TISI schools in the state or is a ***high school*** with a ***graduation rate*** of less than 60 percent. The NCDPI identified eight Tier I schools in the state's draft application including one alternative middle school, two charter K-12 schools, two traditional elementary schools, and two traditional high schools.

Tier II: Any high school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that is among the ***persistently lowest-achieving*** 5 percent of high schools in the state or has a ***graduation rate*** of less than 60 percent. This represents the first time that Title I money will be applied directly to non-Title I schools. The NCDPI identified 33 Tier II schools which include 11 traditional high schools, 19 alternative schools, and three special education schools.

For Tier I and Tier II schools, LEAs must implement one of four school intervention models: turnaround model, restart model, school closure, or transformation model.

Turnaround model: Replace the principal and rehire no more than 50 percent of the staff and grant the principal sufficient operational flexibility (including in staffing, calendars/time, and budgeting) to implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student

outcomes. (Note: This model differs from North Carolina’s “Turnaround School” program, which began in 2005-06.)

Restart model: Convert a school or close and reopen it under a charter management or an education management organization and enroll any former student who wishes to attend.

School closure: Close a school and enroll the students in higher-achieving schools.

Transformation model: Implement each of the following strategies: (1) replace the principal and take steps to increase teacher and school leader effectiveness; (2) institute comprehensive instructional reforms; (3) increase the total number of school hours and create community-oriented schools; and (4) provide operational flexibility and sustained support.

LEAs may request funds for eligible schools identified in North Carolina’s draft application in amounts between \$50,000 and \$2 million per year for each school served through the program. With approved waivers, funds are available July 1, 2010, through Sept. 30, 2013. LEAs committing to serving schools in Tiers I and II and showing sufficient capacity to implement the proposed interventions will have funding priority.

The state’s draft application, a list of eligible schools, and the LEA application template, are online at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/program-monitoring/>. Although the state’s draft application is awaiting U.S. Department of Education (USED) approval, LEAs should plan their use of SIG funds including selecting participating eligible schools and reform models.

If funds remain after proposed plans for Tier I and Tier II schools have been sufficiently appropriated, Tier III schools may be funded. Tier III top priority schools, per federal regulations, are Title I-eligible, but not served, **elementary and middle schools** in the **lowest-achieving** 20 percent of all schools, which comprised of 513 identified schools in the state’s draft application. All categories of Tier III schools combined to 729 identified schools.

Persistently lowest-achieving schools were determined by a less than 50 percent proficiency score by "all students" in reading/language arts and mathematics combined for 2008-09 and one of two prior years (2007-08 or 2006-07) and/or a school with a four-year cohort **graduation rate** of less than 60 percent in 2008-09 and one of two prior years (2007-08 or 2006-07). A **high school**, or secondary school, was defined as any school that graduates students or has any of the grades 9-13. An **elementary/middle school**, or non-secondary school, was defined as any school that has any of the grades K-8.

SIG 1003(g) PROGRAM TIMELINE	
February 2010	NCDPI submits draft application to the USED.
March 15, 2010	NCDPI asks for letters of intent from LEAs with participating Tier I and/or Tier II schools and offers technical assistance.
March 30, 2010	LEA letters of intent for participation by Tier I and/or Tier II schools are due to NCDPI.
Unknown	USED approves NCDPI’s plan.
April 30, 2010	LEA final applications incorporating schools in Tier I and/or Tier II are due to NCDPI.
June 15, 2010	LEA final applications incorporating schools in Tier III are due to NCDPI (if applicable).
June 30, 2010	NCDPI notifies LEAs of plan approval.
July 1, 2010	SIG 2010-11 funds are disbursed by NCDPI to the LEAs.

State Board Submits Supplemental Budget Request

On Feb. 18, the State Board of Education approved the 2010-11 supplemental budget request for additional funding by the General Assembly during the 2010 short session. The Board's request focused on restoring the most essential areas totaling \$220.8 million, just short of the 3 percent allowed by the Office of State Budget and Management.

The top request was to reduce by 50 percent the \$304 million that school districts and charter schools are asked to return to the state in 2010-11 (known as LEA discretionary reduction or the LEA adjustment) to \$152.39 million. (School districts and charter schools returned \$225 million in 2009-10 as part of the 2009-11 budget passed in August 2009. This represented 2,466.04 regular classroom teaching positions including benefits.)

In 2009-10, \$790.4 million was cut from North Carolina's public schools budget when compared with the 2008-09 budget adjusted for inflation, average salary adjustments, increase in students served (known as average daily membership or ADM) and non-recurring budget changes. The 2009-10 public schools' budget represents a 4.72 percent decrease or cut and the 2010-11 budget represents a 7.15 percent cut *after* the influx of federal education funds through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

The 2009-10 budget was built on the assumption that there would be a 3.2 percent growth in state revenues, but the General Assembly's Fiscal Research Division reports that revenues through January are running \$35 million under projections. An almost-certain continued lag in state revenues will create a budget hole for the 2010-11 fiscal year which will need to be corrected through additional revenue or additional reductions. An overview of current revenue collections and forecasts is available online at http://www.ncleg.net/fiscalresearch/generalfund_outlook/generalfund_outlook.shtml.

The 2010-11 budget for public schools already includes almost \$1 billion (\$999 million) in cuts that the legislature approved last year. In January, the state budget office asked the NCDPI to identify options for cutting an additional 3 percent (\$214 million) from the 2010-11 budget. The request is still under consideration.

In addition, the state's public schools face a multi-million dollar funding cliff in 2011-12 as federal stimulus dollars run out and a temporary tax increase expires. The state's public schools are getting \$941.1 million in federal ARRA money for 2009-10 and another \$373.3 million for 2010-11. That brings the state's public schools funding hole to almost \$2 billion in 2011-12.

Other supplemental budget request items were: funds to cover replacement and special needs textbooks, \$30 million (The textbook budget was eliminated for 2010-11 and cut by \$115.4 million in the 2009-11 budget.); funds to cover a portion of under-funded but necessary items such as unemployment, short-term disability, longevity payments, and workers' compensation (General Support Services), \$14.75 million; restoration of a portion of school bus reductions, \$10 million; restoration of clerical and counselor positions at small specialty high schools, services to limited English proficient students, mentor teachers, Learn & Earn online, child and family support teams, and some of the cuts made to testing, \$11.19 million.

The supplemental budget request also asks for partial restoration of NCDPI funding worth \$2.47 million. (Position and operating fund cuts for the agency in the 2009-11 budget represent a 14 percent reduction over the previous budget at a time when the U.S.

Department of Education is requiring more state monitoring, reporting, and technical assistance.)

Federal funding of seemingly large amounts is not addressing the unprecedented budget challenge the state's schools are facing. For instance, the state's expected \$89.9 million in federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) 1003(g) money could be specified for less than 40 schools over three years according to federal stipulations. About one-fourth of this year's ARRA money was directed to Title I schools, which represent only half of the state's schools and less than a dozen high schools.

The N.C. General Assembly will return May 12, 2010, to convene the second year of the biennium 2009-11 legislative session.

Title I Distinguished Schools for 2010 Receive Recognition

District 7 Elementary (Cumberland County Schools) and South End Elementary (Rockingham County Schools) were recognized recently as Title I Distinguished Schools for 2010.

The Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Program showcases top schools that are organizing successful academic programs for the state's neediest students. Title I distinguished schools receive a \$7,500 award and school leaders represent the state at the National Title I conference, held this year in Washington, DC, Jan. 21-24.

"Congratulations to the administrators, staff, and students of District 7 Elementary and South End Elementary for improving student performance and achieving a high standard of citizenship," said Charlotte Hughes, director for the program monitoring and support division at the NCDPI. "As North Carolina Title I Distinguished Schools, they represent the strong efforts of our schools in promoting student success."

District 7 Elementary, a PK-5 rural school serving 275 students under the leadership of Principal Renee Collins, was selected as a Title I Distinguished School based on its sustained student achievement and having at least 40 percent of its student population qualifying as economically disadvantaged.

"Going Above and Beyond," District 7's theme for the year, conveys the school's commitment, family orientation and friendly environment. The Creating Great Classrooms model drives instructional focus and professional development to actively engage all students, make learning meaningful, provide academic rigor, hold high expectations for all, give continuous quality feedback, promote a positive climate, and build organized lessons around clearly-defined objectives.



Students are challenged by rigorous lessons and high expectations and are honored for their accomplishments during formal celebrations where local government officials, service club members, and business partners applaud their achievements. Formal and informal assessments inform instruction and guide teachers to plan for rigor and differentiation.

Students engage in active thinking and learning through interactive whiteboard activities, learning centers, cooperative learning, and Paideia seminars. Quarterly in-school science “field trips” give students hands-on discovery learning experiences. Accelerated Reader, Accelerated Math, Fast ForWord® and Study Island further enrich instruction through technology.

Teachers stay abreast of educational technology and instructional strategies through programs in Creating Rigorous Classrooms, district-sponsored Targeted Objectives Workshops, Connected Schools, and interactive whiteboard training.

Learning is accessible and achievable for all students through the inclusion model with daily tutoring, one-on-one instruction, small group instruction, and peer instruction. English as a Second Language, Exceptional Children, Academically/Intellectually Gifted, and PreK staff members coordinate with each other and classroom teachers to ensure that every special need is met.

Community partnerships and volunteers support the school through the PTO, the Godwin Lyons Club, Town of Wade, Town of Godwin, Wade and Godwin Fire Departments, Cargill, Inc., and Southwest Airlines’ science program. The school supports its community through the Wade Founders Day and the Falcon Children’s Home Harvest Train. All parents at District 7 Elementary have a school library card and can check out books. District 7 has the highest circulation of library books in Cumberland County.

South End Elementary, a PK-5 school serving a 316-member student body under the leadership of Principal Elizabeth Lynch, was selected as a Title I Distinguished School based on closing the achievement gap between different groups of students.

Providing opportunities for all children to achieve is the center of the school’s mission. Students are welcomed daily with before-school activities that include a healthy meal, exercise through the morning mileage club, and a Morning Math Madness tutoring and remediation program.

The curriculum is aligned and supported through teachers’ daily common planning times and other planning meetings with classroom teachers, curriculum facilitators, support staff, school leadership and specialists from all areas. The school staff analyzes student data, discusses individual student achievement, and ensures a personalized student plan of action. Small, flexible literacy and math groups focus on specific needs.

In addition to professional development supporting instructional strategies including Reading and Math Foundations and Positive Behavior Support, South End teachers lead staff training and coordinate with instructional technology specialists to develop technology-rich, engaging lessons for students incorporating global positioning systems, digital videos and podcasts. Classrooms have interactive whiteboards, data projectors, document cameras, and specialized sound systems.



South End values the partnerships it has with parents, families and communities and the collaborative environment these partnerships encourage. Activities with parents are planned

during mornings, afternoons and evenings to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to participate. Lesson observation days encourage parents to visit classrooms and make-and-take writing and math activities give parents fun, unique resources to use at home.

Community agencies and programs support South End's mission and purpose through Reidsville Area Foundation grants that support science and wellness activities and other agencies and businesses that promote student recognition programs and help for needy students. Kids of Character is a program that recognizes students monthly and allows teachers to share with families positive character traits their child has practiced.

Nominees for Title I Distinguished Schools recognition were pre-selected at the state level with one candidate being selected from each region for each of the two categories. Other 2010 nominees for the sustained student achievement category were: Cape Hatteras Elementary, Dare County Schools; Collettsville School, Caldwell County Schools; Elizabeth Seawell Elementary, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools; Jefferson Elementary, Cleveland County Schools; W. Jesse Gurganus Elementary, Craven County Schools; Laurel Elementary, Madison County Schools; and Lead Mine Elementary, Wake County Schools. Other 2010 nominees for the closing the achievement gap category were: College Lakes Elementary, Cumberland County Schools; Creswell Elementary, Washington County Schools; Eastern Wayne Elementary, Wayne County Schools; Emma Elementary, Buncombe County Schools; E.O. Young Jr. Elementary, Vance County Schools; Shamrock Elementary, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools; and Mountain View Elementary, Burke County Schools.

Race to the Top: NC Is a Finalist for \$470 Million Grant

The U.S. Department of Education (USED) announced on March 4 that North Carolina was one of 15 states and the District of Columbia that are finalists for the Race to the Top (RttT) grants to be awarded in April. North Carolina applied for the grant, worth almost \$470 million for the state, in January.

A North Carolina delegation will go to Washington, D.C., in mid-March to present the application. Grant recipients for Phase 1 will be announced in April.

North Carolina's application, with participation from all school districts, addresses plans to use the money, spread over four years, to improve student outcomes through internationally-benchmarked standards, new data systems to measure success and improve instruction, support for effective teachers, and school turnaround efforts.

RttT funds must be used according to a state's plan as outlined in the state's application proposal. Application requirements guided many of the proposal's components. Fifty percent of the funds would be distributed via the Title I formula and the other 50 percent would be disbursed according to the state's proposal.

Proposal narratives from the 41 Phase 1 applicants, including North Carolina, are online at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/phase1-applications/>. Applicants' scores and reviewers' comments will be posted soon as well. The RttT grant competition, worth \$4.5 billion nation-wide, will include a second phase and the USED will announce all recipients by September 30.

Kentucky Signs On to Common Standards

In February, the Kentucky Board of Education approved the substitution of the common standards in mathematics and English/language arts for the state's own standards in those two subjects. The Kentucky Board referenced recent drafts in the Common Core State Standards Initiative, which is developing a grade-by-grade draft of common standards in mathematics and reading. So far, 48 states (including North Carolina, excluding Texas and Alaska) have signed on to the Initiative led by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association. The goal is to produce uniform, rigorous standards across states to establish a widely-shared and ambitious vision of student learning.

SES Provider Applications Due May 30

Supplemental Educational Services (SES) potential providers for the 2010-11 school year must submit an application to the NCDPI by May 30. Recommendations will be presented to the State Board of Education for approval at the August meeting. Applications are differentiated for new and renewing applicants. SES applications, manuals, a listing of the 154 2009-10 SES providers, and a listing of the per pupil SES cap and per LEA set-aside for SES are online at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/program-monitoring/titleIA/ses/>. This year, the NCDPI is conducting on-site monitoring of all SES providers.

SES IN NORTH CAROLINA IN 2007-08*	
Number of students eligible for SES	99,674
Number of students who applied for SES	16,478
Number of students who received SES	14,871
Number of LEAs required to offer SES	78
Number of schools required to offer SES	269
Number of state-approved SES providers	47
Dollars spent by LEAs on SES	\$13,931,887
Average dollars per SES student	\$937
<i>*according to the 2007-08 Consolidated State Performance Report</i>	

USED Sets SES- and Choice-Related Web Site Rules for LEAs

According to final Title I regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Education (USED) in October 2008, Sec. 200.39(c) requires that a local education agency (LEA) post on its Web site the following information in a timely manner to ensure that parents have current information on their public school choice and SES options:

- A list of available schools to which students eligible for public school choice may transfer for the current school year
- A list of SES providers approved to serve the district, as well as the locations where services are provided for the current school year
- The number of students who were eligible for and who participated in SES and public school choice, beginning with the data from the 2007-08 school year and for each subsequent year

In addition, according to 200.37(b)(S), LEAs must indicate those SES providers who are able to serve students with disabilities or limited English proficient students.

Graduation “Progress” Rate for AYP Changes

At its January meeting, the State Board of Education approved a new measure for how the graduation rate will be used in determining Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for 2009-10. Progress will be considered as at least a 2.0 percentage point improvement from the previous year for the four-year cohort rate, as opposed to the previously-defined .1 percentage point improvement. Progress for the five-year cohort rate will be an improvement over the previous year of 3.0 percentage points or more.

High schools must show progress on the four-year cohort graduation rate in order to make AYP. Progress is considered to be at least the pre-determined improvement or any fluctuation above the 80 percent threshold. The 80 percent threshold does not represent a change from last year.

Using last year’s four-year cohort graduation rate of 71.7 percent, the Board set a graduation rate target goal of 73 percent for 2010-11, 75 percent for 2011-12, 77 percent for 2012-13, and 80 percent for 2013-14 in compliance with October 2008 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)-as amended regulations and Race to the Top (RttT) applicant requirements.

The Board should hear regarding approval of the new progress rate and target goals by the U.S. Department of Education (USED) in March. If approved, these goals and definitions will become a part of the state’s official accountability workbook, which represents the agreement between the USED and North Carolina regarding how the state will implement the federal law. The workbook pending approval (Jan. 7, 2010) is online at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nclb/federal/consolidated/>.

Target goals are set for students as a whole and all student subgroups at the school, district and state level. Although states must report disaggregated graduation rate data, each student subgroup’s graduation rate at a school will not factor as individual targets necessary to meet to make AYP until 2011-12. Until then, the school as a whole’s graduation rate is used in calculating AYP.

Currently, individual student subgroup’s graduation data at a school is factored only if that student group does not meet the proficiency target in reading and/or mathematics. If the student group meets the 95 participation rate in testing and can show that the percent of students not proficient is reduced by at least 10 percent from the previous year for that subject and the group shows progress on the Other Academic Indicator, which is the graduation rate for high schools, the group is counted as making AYP.

Three other changes in the workbook previously approved by the Board and now under USED consideration include:

- The first retest can be used in AYP grade calculations. This was enacted for end-of-grade tests last year and will be in effect for grades 3-8 and end-of-course results for 2009-10.
- The NCCLAS alternate assessments were removed from the state's 2009-10 testing program, according to a USED ruling stating that research doesn’t support use of the test for students with limited English proficiency or students with disabilities.
- Revisions were included as a result of a new English language proficiency test introduced in 2008-09.

NCLB PLANS AYP RELEASE	
May/June 2010	End-of-grade and end-of-course assessments are scanned.
May 30, 2010	Applications from prospective 2010-11 SES providers are due to NCDPI.
June/July 2010	School districts determine choice schools and other procedures for schools in Title I School Improvement.
June 30, 2010	Local school systems submit test data, including data from EOG Retest I and EOC Retest I, to NCDPI.
Mid- to Late July 2010	Local school systems release preliminary AYP results.
August 2010	NCDPI presents ABCs and AYP results to the State Board of Education.
June-August 2010	Districts determine sanctions for Title I School Improvement schools.
June-August 2010	Districts notify parents of their school choice and other options at least 14 days before the beginning of school and allow parents at least 14 days after receiving notification in which to convey their decision.
August 2010	Local school systems post required SES and public school choice information on their Web sites.

NCDPI Responds to Title II Audit Finding

Recent Title II monitoring by the U.S. Department of Education (USED) determined that the Praxis 0511 Fundamental Subjects: Content Knowledge test does not satisfy Highly Qualified (HQ) requirements for exceptional children (EC) teachers in middle and high schools. The finding is based on the requirement that teachers of core content for exceptional children in middle and high schools must be held to the same standard as general education core content teachers. This ruling does not prevent exceptional children teachers from providing curriculum assistance in the core subjects as long as the assistance is in addition to regular instruction provided by an HQ content area teacher. Elementary EC teachers who have passed the Praxis 0511 are HQ to teach self-contained classes. In addition, this ruling does not apply to teachers in classrooms, at any level, in which only the Extended Content Standards are being taught.

For 2009-10, all middle and high school principals should not count as Highly Qualified any exceptional children teacher demonstrating core content qualification through Praxis 0511 if that teacher is delivering core content instruction in the courses covered by No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

Beginning with the 2010-11 academic year, all middle and high school principals should not count as Highly Qualified any exceptional children teacher of core content unless that teacher has been licensed in that core content area through the same process as general education teachers. Those teachers who were HOUSSEd using the EC multi-subject HOUSSE will no longer be Highly Qualified to deliver core content at the secondary level. This does not apply to EC teachers who were HOUSSEd with the general education core content HOUSSE.

Options for achieving HQ status compliance are:

- EC teachers can take the required Praxis II tests for the core areas they are teaching.

- Teachers can add core areas to their licensure if they have 24 semester hours of core content coursework in the areas they are teaching.
- Teachers licensed in the core content and teachers with EC General Curriculum licensure can teach the core content together.

A content certified teacher and an EC certified teacher can teach together in a separate setting. There are also instructional alternative models that can be facilitated with the use of technology so that the students can receive instruction from a teacher certified in the content area(s). The NCDPI is beginning the development of North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS) on-line training modules that will be accessible within Occupational Course of Study programs.

More information, including answers to questions regarding reporting, coursework, PRAXIS II testing, and service delivery options are online at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/ec/> under "Title II Audit Finding."

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*Inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination issues should be directed to: Dr. Rebecca Garland, Chief Academic Officer
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