



NJDOE News

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Results of Fifth Annual Survey of Teacher Content Expertise Announced

More New Jersey teachers than ever meet the federal requirements for training and expertise, Commissioner of Education Lucille E. Davy announced today at the regular monthly meeting of the State Board of Education. The results of the fifth annual survey of teacher content expertise show that ninety-nine percent of New Jersey's teachers meet the federal "highly qualified teacher" criteria in the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)*.

To satisfy the federal HQT definition, teachers must have a bachelor's degree, have valid state certification for which no requirements have been waived, and demonstrate content expertise in the core academic subject(s) they teach through federal criteria specified in *NCLB*.

"We continue to see a sustained effort by school districts and educators to meet *NCLB's* goal to have one hundred percent of our teachers designated as highly qualified under the law," Commissioner Davy said. "We draw ever closer to achieving this milestone, which symbolizes a commitment to have every child's teacher meet the highest standards."

Commissioner Davy encouraged school officials statewide to keep up their efforts to ensure that all of their teachers are highly qualified.

Percentages of classes taught by highly qualified teachers in 2007-08 were similar to those reported by the previous year's survey. The gap between classes in high-poverty and low-poverty schools taught by highly qualified teachers decreased significantly between 2005 and 2006, from 7 percent to 1.6 percent. In the latest data collection, the gap has increased slightly to 2.1 percent.

When viewed by grade level, New Jersey's secondary schools show greater percentages of highly qualified teachers than do elementary schools. At the high school level, 99.4 percent of teachers are highly qualified in all subjects taught. In addition, the percentage of classes taught by highly qualified teachers in secondary classes is .6 percentage points higher than in elementary schools. The gap between high- and low-poverty schools is also smaller at the secondary level.

New Jersey's greatest challenge is recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers in mathematics, English as a Second Language (ESL) and special education, especially special education in middle school classrooms. The Department of Education will continue to provide technical assistance to all districts that have not met the HQT goal. *NCLB* requires districts that have not met the goal to outline strategies they will use to assist teachers who are not yet highly qualified.

All of the states are required to develop and implement an equity plan, which focuses on increasing the number of highly qualified teachers in high-poverty districts. Ongoing activities in New Jersey's plan include:

- Creation of additional data systems to track changes in the distribution of highly qualified teachers;
- Creation of urban education programs at colleges of education to provide novice teachers with specific knowledge and skills needed to teach racially, ethnically, economically and linguistically diverse students;
- Improvement of online recruitment services and tools;
- Increased emphasis on the training of mentors for new teachers; and
- Analysis of data on school working conditions.

A summary of the 2007 Highly Qualified Teacher Survey results is available from the following link:

<http://www.nj.gov/education/data/hqt/08/>

ADVISORY

In the district-level results of the Highly Qualified Teacher information released Wednesday by the Department of

Education, data was missing from some of the districts' special education columns. This was due to a merging problem with the many special education job codes. The problem has been fixed. In some of the other results, there are minor changes to data resulting from the addition of the special education records to the calculations. All have been revised accordingly.