



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

October 30, 2007

Dear Colleague:

Recently, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) was notified by the United States Department of Education (USDOE) of an exception to the process whereby secondary (grades 9-12) special education teachers may demonstrate competence as a highly qualified teacher. One of the options made available to demonstrate competence as a highly qualified classroom secondary special education teacher was passage of the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC) elementary education test. This allowed those teachers to demonstrate competence across the core academic subjects taught to secondary special education students. While the USDOE has determined that this test is appropriate for a teacher assigned to an elementary (grades K-5) or middle (grades 6-8) self-contained special education classroom, it has been deemed inappropriate for use by a secondary level special education teacher who is the exclusive provider of direct instruction to demonstrate competence across the core curriculum.

In accordance with Section 300.18 of the federal implementing regulations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), special education teachers who teach core academic subjects exclusively to children who are assessed by alternate achievement standards may continue to use passage of the MTTC elementary education test to demonstrate that they are highly qualified. In addition, secondary special education teachers who team teach with a highly qualified general education teacher, or those who work in a resource program in which they facilitate instruction that has been provided by a highly qualified general education teacher, are not required to further demonstrate that they are highly qualified in core academic content subjects.

Secondary special education classroom teachers who have used the MTTC elementary education test to demonstrate that they are highly qualified must now use one of the following options:

- Have earned an academic major, or the equivalent coursework of an academic major, in each of the core content areas assigned to teach.
- Have taken and passed the appropriate MTTC secondary content test for each core content subject assigned to teach.
- Have completed one or more of the following high objective uniform state standards of evaluation (HOUSSE) options:
 - Have at least three years of teaching experience and have completed, after receiving the Michigan Provisional teaching certificate, a minimum of 18 semester hours in a core academic subject program of study or towards a

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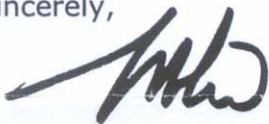
- master's or higher degree that supports the teaching of the core academic subject (HOUSSE Option 1).
- o Have at least three years of teaching and completed (in the last five years) an individual professional development plan of 90 clock hours of professional development or 6 semester hours of coursework in the content area (HOUSSE Option 2).
- o Demonstrated competence, as outlined in a local performance assessment of the employing district or school such as a portfolio, multi-subject portfolio, or classroom observation (HOUSSE option 3).

Given the disruption that this change in policy may create in local districts, the MDE has established June 30, 2009 as the deadline for secondary special education teachers who previously used the MTTC elementary education test to demonstrate that they are highly qualified to teach core content subjects by using one of the other options listed above and submit the attached revised "Highly Qualified Special Education Teacher Report" to the local district or school. In the meantime, local districts are directed to accurately report special education assignments in the Registry of Educational Personnel (REP) by reporting each core content subject taught by the secondary special education teacher and indicating whether or not the teacher is highly qualified to teach that content. In addition, if a non-highly qualified teacher is teaching in a Title I situation, parents must be notified in accordance with NCLB. All local districts are also required to have their plans in place to address the manner in which they will work with their non-highly qualified teachers. The Michigan Technical Assistance Project (MiTAP) monitors have been reviewing the local district "Highly Qualified Teacher Report & Assurances" form for compliance with this requirement. This form can be accessed online at:

[www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Michigan LEA HQ Report Form 173173 7.xls](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Michigan_LEA_HQ_Report_Form_173173_7.xls)

Failure to comply with these requirements may jeopardize Michigan's eligibility to continue to receive grant funding under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). If you have questions or need assistance regarding this issue, please contact Dr. Frank Ciloski in the Office of Professional Preparation Services at 517/373-6791 or email ciloskif@mi.gov. Your full cooperation in resolving this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Michael P. Flanagan
Superintendent of Public Instruction

cc: Sally Vaughn, Ph.D.
Flora L. Jenkins, Ph.D.
Jacquelyn Thompson, Ph.D.
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