

cde
Guidance for
Highly Qualified Teachers
in Colorado

Section 1119
The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001



Purpose

The objective of this publication is to inform educators and interested others about the implementation of the “Highly Qualified” teacher requirements of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, of 2001, in Colorado. **This pamphlet is organized into three major components:**

- **Part I: General information**, about “Highly Qualified” teacher requirements, including a description of the *general requirements* for “*Highly Qualified*” teachers and the *reporting requirements for schools and districts*.
- **Part II: Definitions**, that describe the *terms* mentioned in the “Highly Qualified” teacher provisions of NCLB.
- **Part III: Frequently asked questions (FAQ)** with regard to the implementation of the “Highly Qualified” teacher provisions, of NCLB.

Colorado’s Plan for Applying the Teacher Quality Provisions of NCLB

1. *The Federal No Child Left Behind Act, of 2001 (NCLB)*, requires that all teachers teaching in core-academic content areas meet the requirements for being designated as “Highly Qualified,” no later than the end of the 2005-2006 school year.
2. Core-academic content areas are defined as: English; Reading or Language Arts; Mathematics; Science; Foreign Languages; Civics and Government; Economics; the Arts; History; and Geography.
3. The Colorado plan for implementation of the Federal NCLB requirements, and presented in this document, represents the State’s on-going effort to consistently and sensibly apply the Federal requirements to all Colorado’s teachers.
4. The Federal Statute allows a wide definition of the term “Highly Qualified,” for *all* public Elementary and Secondary teachers. As such, for each grade level, the law requires that *all* teachers demonstrate competency in all *applicable* content areas - and outlines *multiple* mechanisms for *demonstrating* that competency.
5. **Note:** The Colorado plan should be viewed as a *working document*, to be updated and refined as the State continues its implementation of the Federal law. The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) will provide ongoing clarification of the plan, as necessary, as well as pursue options which will satisfy the requirements of NCLB, beyond those already outlined in this document.

For more information on this issue, please contact:

Bush White Ed.D.
Title II Coordinator
Consolidated Federal Programs Unit
Office of Special Services
Phone (303) 866-6901
white_b@cde.state.co.us

Desiree Sutter
Administrative Assistant
Consolidated Federal Programs Unit
Office of Special Services
Phone (303) 866-6715
sutter_d@cde.state.co.us

Table of Contents

SECTION I: COLORADO’S DEFINITION OF “HIGHLY QUALIFIED” AS SUBMITTED 9/03	1
“HIGHLY QUALIFIED” TEACHER FLOW CHART:.....	4
A “HIGHLY QUALIFIED”	5
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION TEACHER	5
A “HIGHLY QUALIFIED” MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER	6
A “HIGHLY QUALIFIED” HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER	8
LICENSING/ENDORSEMENT VS. “HIGHLY QUALIFIED”	10
24-Semester Hours.....	10
<i>Relevant Travel (up to 6-semester hours of content-area credit)</i>	11
“HIGHLY QUALIFIED” REQUIREMENTS FOR OTHER TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS.....	11
<i>Teachers in Settings other than a Traditional School Program</i>	11
<i>Charter School Teachers</i>	11
<i>Teachers Teaching in Facilities Serving Neglected or Delinquent Youth</i>	12
<i>Linguistically Diverse Education Teacher</i>	12
<i>Special Education Teachers</i>	12
TIMELINE FOR COMPLIANCE	14
<i>Parents Right to Know</i>	14
REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS	14
FEDERAL FLEXIBILITY PROVISIONS.....	15
SECTION II: RELEVANT DEFINITIONS.....	15
FULLY LICENSED	15
COLORADO’S ALTERNATIVE ROUTES FOR LICENSURE	15
24-SEMESTER HOURS OF COURSEWORK EQUIVALENCE	15
NATIONAL CONTENT CERTIFICATION	16
THE ARTS	16
SECTION III: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS	16

Section I: Colorado’s Definition of “Highly Qualified” As submitted 9/03

Colorado offers the following alternatives for teachers to be considered “Highly Qualified,” in compliance with Sec. 1119 of the No Child Left Behind Act, and as part of Colorado’s Consolidated State Plan, submitted to the United States Department of Education, in September, 2003.

Option I: “Highly Qualified” teachers are those who are licensed and endorsed in each/all core-academic content area(s) in which they are teaching.

A *fully licensed* teacher is one who has a *current valid Colorado*:

- Provisional (initial) License,
- Professional License, or
- Alternative Teaching License,

with an endorsement in the [core] academic content area(s) in which s/he is teaching.

To qualify for Colorado’s teaching license(s) and endorsement(s), the teacher must:

1. Hold a Bachelor’s, or higher, degree, and
2. Have completed:
 - an Colorado State Board of Education approved teacher preparation program, in Elementary Education, or in a Secondary Education content area, at an accepted institution of higher education,
 - *or* be participating in an Alternative Teacher Licensing preparation program, *and*:

For Elementary Education...

- The Elementary Education teacher shall have passed the adopted Elementary Education content assessment (based on the adopted Elementary Education teacher preparation standards, which include English/Language Arts, Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, Humanities, Wellness, and Physical Education, at the Elementary Education level).

For Middle School Education: (**Note:** *Colorado does not have a Middle School endorsement.*)

- *If* the Middle School teacher is a **generalist**, responsible for teaching students up through the *seventh grade*, in *all*, or *most*, of the core-academic content areas, s/he shall have passed the adopted *Elementary Education* content test (see above - Elementary Education teacher requirements).
- *If* the Middle School teacher is responsible for teaching a **specific secondary core-academic content area(s)**, and is teaching at **the 7th grade level or higher**, s/he shall have passed the adopted Secondary, or K-12, content-area test(s), (PLACE or Praxis) *in the content area(s) being taught* - **or** shall have acquired the equivalent of 24-semester hours in the core-academic content area(s) being taught.

For Secondary Education (excluding Middle School – see above): The core-academic Secondary Education content-area teacher shall have passed the adopted Secondary, or K-12, content-area test(s), (PLACE or Praxis) in each/all content area(s) being taught.

Options II & III: Colorado teachers teaching *outside* of their licensed and endorsed core-academic content area(s) can become “Highly Qualified,” by:

Option II:

...Providing documented evidence of having completed *24-semester hours*, or its equivalent, in the core-academic content area(s) being taught, **OR**

Option III:

...Having passed the adopted, **or** a national certification *core* content-area test(s) (PLACE or Praxis) *in the content area(s) being taught*.

An educator who holds a Colorado Provisional (initial) or Professional License, but who is teaching in a core academic content area outside of his/her endorsed content area(s), may be considered “Highly Qualified,” if that educator:

- Has acquired 24-semester hours of credit in any *additional* [core] academic content-area(s) being taught, *as verified by the school district of employment*.
- The *school district* shall keep all related documents on file, electronically *or* in hard copy.
- Once a Colorado teacher has been determined to be “Highly Qualified,” by any Colorado school district, *that recognition shall be reciprocal throughout the State* (FAQ, page.17).
- The 24-semester hours of credit may be accumulated, as follows:
 - **College/university credit:**
 - Coursework must be relevant *and* applicable to *each/all* of the teacher’s non-endorsed [core] academic content area(s) being taught.
 - College/university credit must be awarded by a *accepted* two *or* four-year institution of higher education.
 - Verification of the teacher’s successful completion of this requirement *is the responsibility* of the educator’s *employing school district*, which is, therefore, required to keep *all* related transcript credits/documentation *on file*, either electronically *or* in hard copy.
 - **Professional development activities:**
 - To count professional development credits for determination of “Highly Qualified,” the activities must be relevant *and* applicable to *each/all* of the teacher’s *non-endorsed* [core] academic-content area(s) being taught.
 - Credit may be awarded for, but does not have to be limited to, *content relevant* district, and other district-approved, professional development activities, inservices, workshops and education reform activities, such as, but not limited to, curriculum review and development/design.
 - The teacher must provide *documented evidence* that the professional development activities were *relevant* and *applicable* to the acquisition of knowledge and skills in *each/all* of the non-endorsed [core] academic content area(s) taught.
 - **Relevant travel:**
 - The teacher must have approval from the school district, certifying that the travel is applicable to the enhancement of skills and knowledge in the non-endorsed [core] academic content area(s) being taught.

- The teacher must provide evidence, including, but not limited to reports, materials or work products, documenting the relevance and applicability of the travel to increasing the educator’s knowledge and skills in the relevant non-endorsed [core] academic content area(s) being taught.
 - *One-semester hour of credit* may be awarded for each *15-clock hours of documented travel, up to a maximum of 6-semester hours.* (Travel time to and from the intended destination is not to be included.)
- **Passing the -adopted content test in the non-endorsed [core] academic content area(s) being taught.**

A teacher may be considered to be “Highly Qualified” if the teacher passes:

1. the adopted content-area test, (PLACE or Praxis) in the non-endorsed core academic content area(s) being taught.
2. **Note:** Also acceptable is a national certification content test in the additional content-area(s) being taught, *when applicable.*

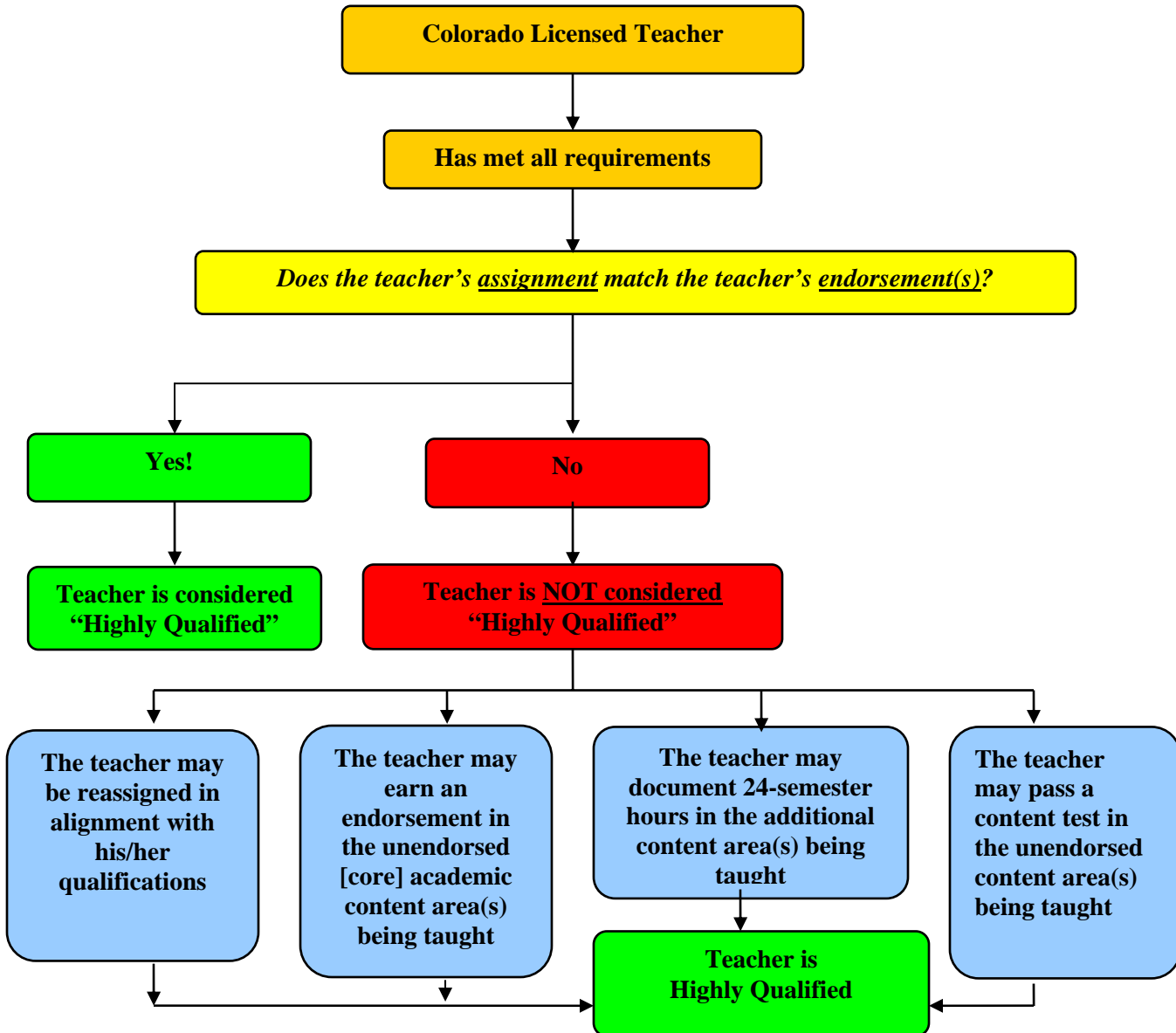
The above options for determining whether or not Colorado teachers have met the requisite 24-semester hours of credit to determine them to be “Highly Qualified,” have been based on the Colorado Code of Regulations 301-37. These Rules establish the Standards and criteria for the issuance of Colorado licenses and authorizations to teachers, special services providers, principals and administrators.

Note: Licensed and endorsed teachers, who have been verified as being “*Highly Qualified*” in a [core] academic content area being taught, but who have not as yet been *endorsed* in that additional content area, are encouraged to consider completing the requirements for an added Colorado *endorsement* in that content area. Information regarding Colorado educator licensing is available on-line, at www.cde.state.co.us, then click on Educator Licensing.

“Highly Qualified” Teacher Flow Chart:

“Highly Qualified” teachers are those who have met the requirements for a current and valid Colorado Provisional (initial) or Professional teacher license. These teachers:

- Hold a bachelor’s or higher degree; and
- Have completed an approved teacher preparation program, in an accepted institution of higher education, *or* are enrolled in an Alternative Teacher Licensing preparation program, in elementary or secondary education, as appropriate.

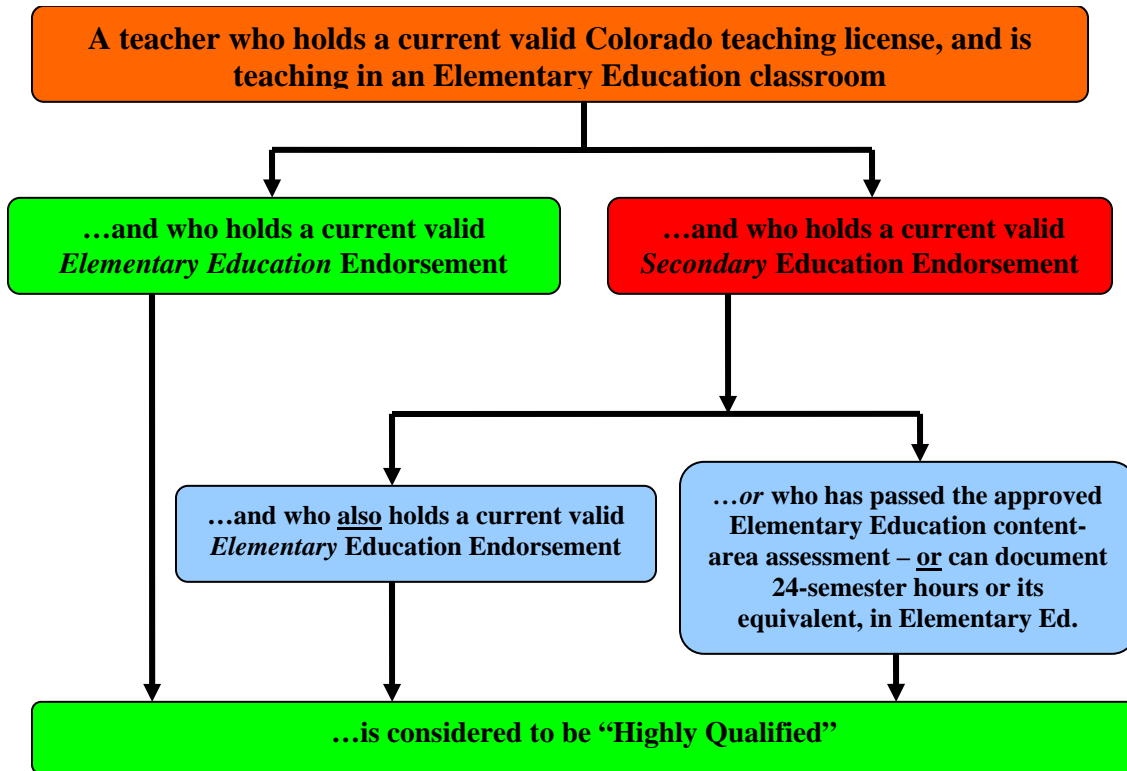


**A “Highly Qualified”
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION Teacher**

A “Highly Qualified” *Elementary Education* teacher, teaching in an Elementary classroom, is one who is *fully licensed*, in Colorado, and *endorsed* to teach in *Elementary Education*. The “Highly Qualified” Colorado Elementary Education teacher:

- Holds a Bachelor’s, or higher, degree,
- Has completed:
 - an approved teacher preparation program, at an accepted institution of higher education, *or*
 - is participating in an approved Alternative Licensing Teacher preparation program, *and*:
- Has passed the adopted Elementary Education content-area assessment, based on the-adopted Elementary Education teacher preparation standards, which include English/Language Arts, Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, Humanities, Wellness, and Physical Education, at the Elementary Education level.

**Flow chart:
“Highly Qualified” Elementary Education Teacher**



A “Highly Qualified” MIDDLE SCHOOL Teacher

Note: *Colorado does not have a Middle School license.*

Because Colorado has a number of middle-school grade-level configurations, the determination of whether, or not, a Middle School Teacher is “Highly Qualified” is to be based on the teacher’s *content-area* assignment(s).

A Fully Licensed middle school teacher holds:

- a current valid Colorado Provisional (initial) License, Professional License, or Alternative Teaching License (see complete requirements, on page [1](#)).
- ...and is endorsed in the content area(s) in which s/he is teaching.

A “Highly Qualified” Middle School Generalist:

Is a Middle School teacher responsible for teaching students **through the sixth grade**, in *all*, or *most*, of the *core* academic content areas. S/he may either:

- *hold a current valid Colorado Teaching License* and be *endorsed* to teach in *Elementary Education* (see complete requirements, for Elementary Education, or K-12 Content Endorsements, on page [1](#)).

A “Highly Qualified” Sixth Grade Middle School Teacher

A Licensed sixth-grade middle school teacher is to be considered “Highly Qualified” *either* if:

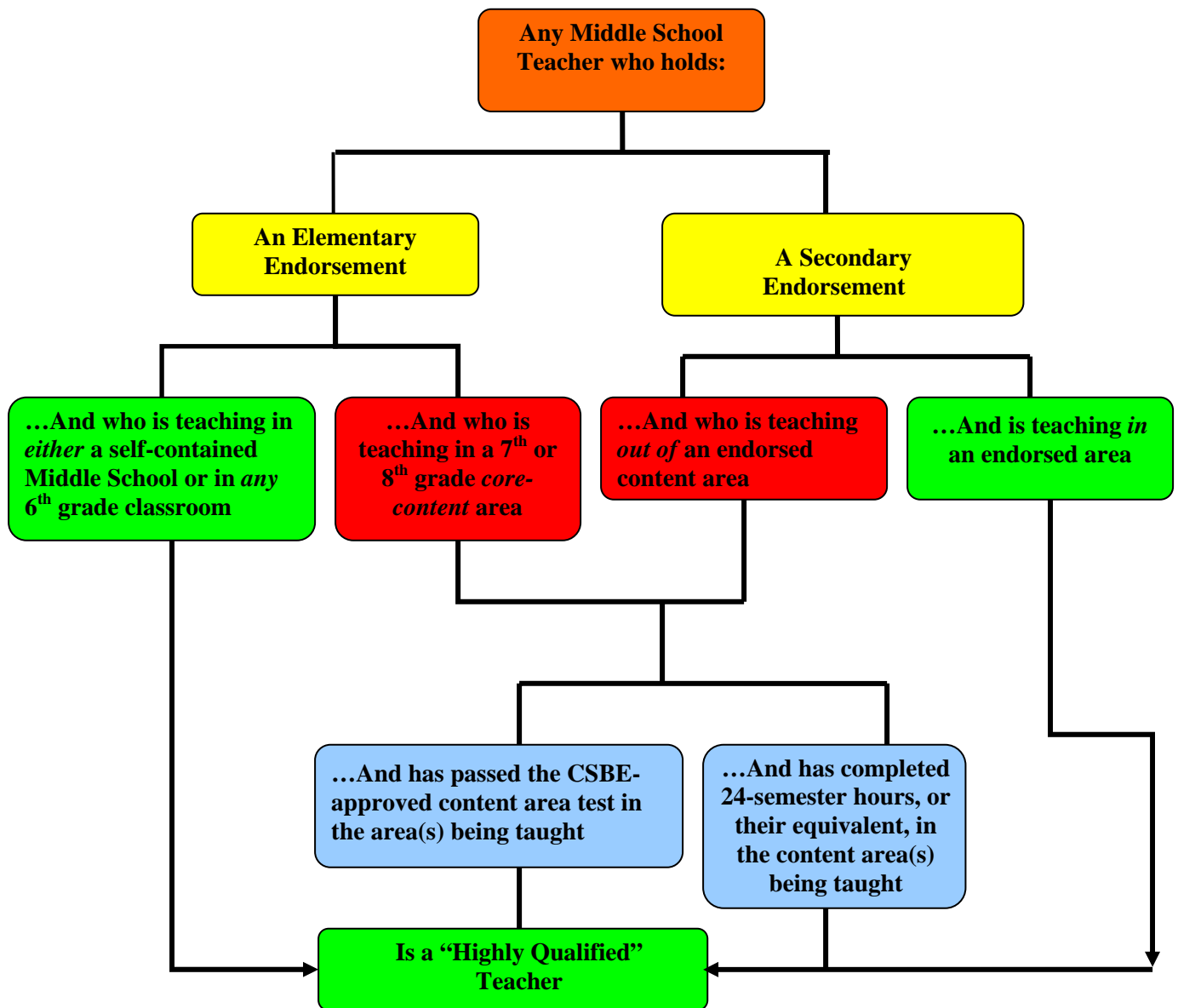
- the teacher holds a current valid Colorado Elementary Education license - if the teacher is teaching all or most of the core academic content areas, **OR**
- if the teacher is teaching in any one of the core academic content area(s).

A “Highly Qualified” Middle School Specific Content-Area(s) Teacher

If the Middle School teacher is responsible for teaching *one or more specific secondary* [core] academic content area(s), at the *7th grade level, or higher*, s/he may either:

- *hold a current valid Colorado Teaching License* and be *endorsed* to teach in a *Secondary Education* or K-12 content area (see complete requirements, for a Secondary Education or K-12 Endorsement, on page [1](#)) **OR**
- has documented evidence of 24-semester hours in the [core]content area being taught or its equivalent.

**Flow chart:
 “Highly Qualified” Middle School
 Teacher**



A “Highly Qualified” HIGH SCHOOL Teacher

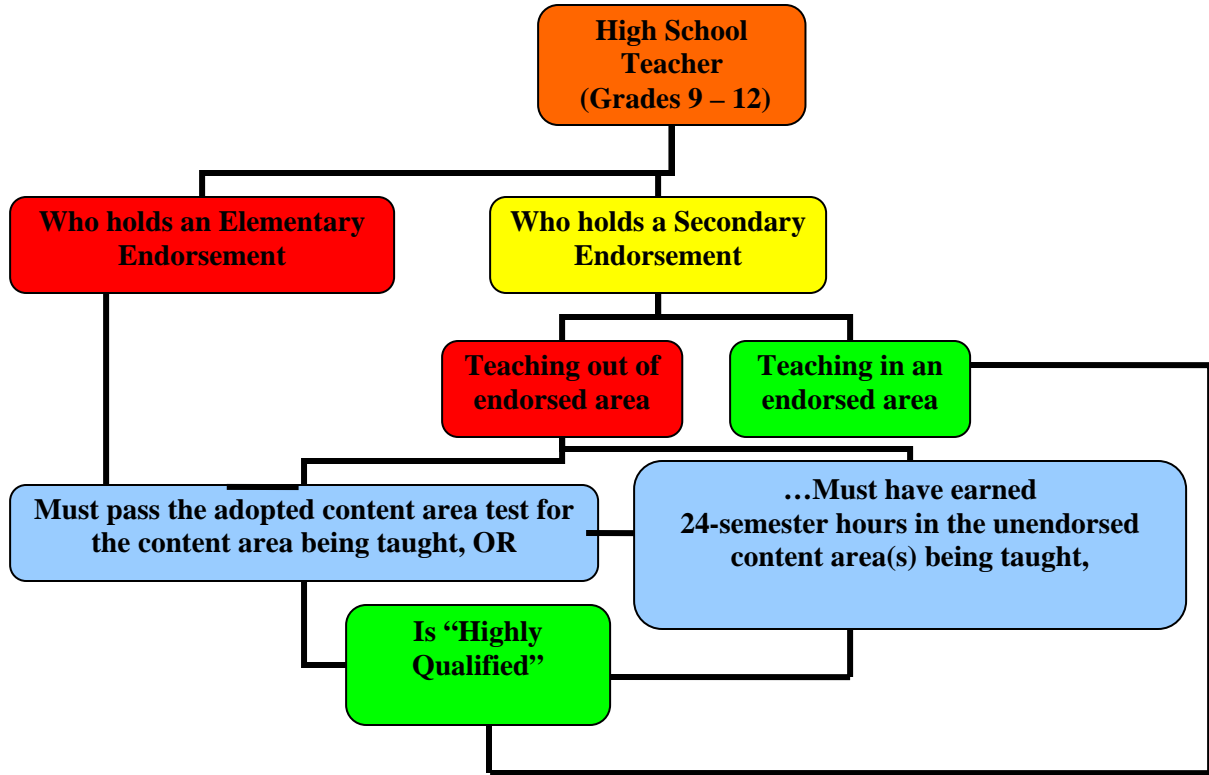
A “Highly Qualified” High School teacher (9-12), is one who holds a current valid Colorado teaching license and *is teaching in an endorsed* content area. The “Highly Qualified” Colorado High School teacher:

- Holds a Bachelor’s, or higher, degree,
- Has completed:
 - an approved teacher preparation program, at a accepted institution of higher education, *or*
 - is participating in a approved Alternative Licensing Teacher preparation program, *and:*
- Has passed the adopted content-area assessment, based on the adopted content-area teacher preparation standards.

A high school teacher (9-12), *teaching outside of an endorsed area*, may be considered to be “Highly Qualified” to teach in a content area if the teacher:

- holds a bachelor’s degree, or higher, from an accepted institution of higher education;
- has demonstrated competency in each content area assigned, by having passed the appropriate adopted content-area test (PLACE or Praxis), **OR**
- has completed 24-semester hours of content-area coursework in the content area being taught, or its equivalent; **OR**
- has passed a national certification organization exam in the content area.

Flow chart:
“Highly Qualified” High School
Teacher



Licensing/Endorsement vs. “Highly Qualified”

The requirements for *licensure/endorsement* in Colorado differ from the requirements for being “*Highly Qualified*.”

- It is *possible* to be *licensed and endorsed* in Colorado, but *not* be able to meet the requirements for being “Highly Qualified,” under the NCLB.
 - For example, a teacher may hold a *K-8* endorsement, but only teach *mathematics* in grade 8. S/he may *not* meet the “Highly Qualified” requirements for teaching 8th grade mathematics, *unless* the teacher has 24-semester hours, or their equivalent, in math-related content, *or* has demonstrated content-area competency in math, on the approved content assessment.
 - It *is* possible to be considered “*Highly Qualified*” in a content area, but not be *endorsed* in that area. For example, a high school teacher, endorsed in biology, who *also* teaches mathematics, but *does not* hold a mathematics endorsement, *may* be considered “Highly Qualified” to teach mathematics, *if* the teacher has completed 24-semester hours of mathematics-related content courses, or their equivalent, *or* has passed the approved mathematics content assessment.

Teachers who have teaching assignments in one or more of the core academic content areas for which they do not have an endorsement must meet one of the following conditions to be considered a “Highly Qualified” teacher:

1. Licensed teachers may take the approved content-area test (PLACE or Praxis) for the content area in which they are teaching, but are *not endorsed*; **OR**
2. They may provide documented evidence of having completed 24-semester hours, or their equivalent, in the non-endorsed content-related area(s) being taught.

The school district of employment is responsible for making the judgment as to whether a teacher’s coursework is related to the unendorsed content-area(s) being taught, to establish whether or not the teacher meets the requirements for a “Highly Qualified” designation. The district is required to keep such documented evidence on file, either in an electronic or hard-copy file. **Once a Colorado teacher has been designated “Highly Qualified” in an unendorsed area being taught, that designation is reciprocal throughout all of Colorado’s school districts.**

24-Semester Hours

The documented evidence of 24-semester hours in the content area, shall be verified by college/university transcripts, professional development, education reform (curriculum development) and/or content-related approved travel.

- **College credit (may equal the entire 24-semester hours of content-area credit)**
 - Must be from an accepted two- or four-year institution of higher education.
 - Courses taken must be *specifically relevant* to the content area(s) being taught by the educator, to insure increased knowledge and skills in the non-endorsed content area, and there must be documented evidence of that relevance.
 - Relevant coursework is considered as if it were being counted toward an academic major.

- The district of employment is required to keep all college credits on file as evidence of successful coursework completion.
- **Professional Development Activities**
 - Professional development activities, specifically relevant to the non-endorsed content area(s) being taught by an educator, may be counted as part of the 24-semester hours.
 - The educator must provide documented evidence of the applicability of the content of the professional development activity to any unendorsed content area(s) being taught.
 - Professional development activities do not have to be *exclusively* “content.” They may include embedded pedagogy, *as long as* there is *evidence* of its applicability to content.
- **Relevant Travel (up to 6-semester hours of content-area credit)**
 - The educator’s travel must be approved by the district of employment.
 - The travel experience must be specifically relevant to the non-endorsed content area(s) being taught
 - Documented evidence of increased content knowledge and skills must be provided to the district in which the teacher is seeking “Highly Qualified” status.
 - One-semester hour of credit may be awarded for each 15-clock hours of travel, not to include transportation between content-relevant destinations.

“Highly Qualified” Requirements for Other Teaching Assignments

Teachers in Settings other than a Traditional School Program

At the elementary, middle and high school level, teachers who provide instruction to students in non-traditional educational placements must meet the same requirements for being designated “Highly Qualified,” as do teachers in traditional settings.

- At the middle and high school level, a teacher in an non-traditional school or program, teaching multiple content areas, may not meet the “Highly Qualified” requirements for all those content areas.
- Regular contact and a documented linkage between the non-traditional school/program teacher and a content-area teacher-of-record, in or out of the program/building/district, etc., who meets the definition of “Highly Qualified,” must be maintained.

Charter School Teachers

Many charter schools have a waiver from licensure, however, charter school teachers must meet the requirements set forth in NCLB. Charter school teachers:

- must hold a bachelor’s, or higher, degree; and
- have demonstrated competency in each academic content area in which they are assigned to teach; OR
 - the charter school teacher may show content area competency through one of the following:
 - passed one of the approved content-area assessments, or have passed a national certifying organization’s content-area assessment, in the content area being taught; OR
 - provide documented evidence of having completed 24-semester hours of content-related coursework or the equivalent.

Teachers Teaching in Facilities Serving Neglected or Delinquent Youth

Section 1119 of Title I requires each SEA that receives Title I, Part A funds to develop (and hence implement) a plan to ensure that all teachers teaching in core academic subjects within the State are highly qualified. This requirement extends to all teachers of core academic subjects who are employed by agencies or entities under the authority of the SEA. As a result, it applies to teachers employed by LEAs that must meet annual measurable objectives set by the SEA, as well as teachers employed by the SEA or other entities under the SEA's authority. Thus, if entities such as juvenile institutions, correctional institutions, and other alternative educational settings are either LEAs under State law or under the authority of the SEA, teachers of core academic subjects employed by those entities must be highly qualified.

If, however, the entities that employ these teachers are not either LEAs as defined under State law or are not under the SEA's authority, the section 1119 requirements regarding highly qualified teachers do not apply. Nevertheless, it is critical that all students, regardless of school setting, are able to achieve to the State's content and academic achievement standards, and we therefore urge all educational entities -- whether covered by the highly qualified teacher requirements or not -- to ensure that students have teachers with the content knowledge and skills needed to help them succeed.

Linguistically Diverse Education Teacher

The requirement that teachers be “Highly Qualified” applies to all public elementary or secondary school teachers - including teachers of Linguistically Diverse Education. In Colorado, having the designation of a “Highly Qualified” Linguistically Diverse Education teacher indicates that the teacher has met one or more of the following criteria:

- Holds a current valid Colorado license, with an endorsement in Linguistically Diverse Education (LDE); OR
- Holds a current valid Colorado license, with an endorsement other than LDE, but has demonstrated content-area competency by passing a approved LDE content assessment; OR
- Has completed 24-semester hours of content-related coursework, or its equivalent.

Special Education Teachers

Teachers who are licensed as a Special Education Generalist and who are teaching at the Elementary Education level, through the 7th grade, have taken an Elementary Education content-area test (PLACE or Praxis), and are, therefore, fully qualified to teach in any core academic-content area.

Note: Licensed Special Education teachers, teaching at the Elementary Education level are considered to be “Highly Qualified,” as Elementary Education teachers.

- Special Education teachers, who teach in core academic-content area(s), at the middle or high school (secondary) level, must meet the NCLB requirements for being “Highly Qualified, unless the Special Education teacher:
 - is already endorsed in the content-area in which that teacher is teaching; OR
 - has passed the approved content test in the content-area being taught; OR
 - has provided documented evidence of having completed 24-semester hours, or their equivalent, in the unendorsed content area; OR

- is consistently supported by a strong IEP team that meets regularly to ensure that student content standards are being met; OR
- consistently maintains a documented direct reporting relationship with a related academic content-area teacher; OR
- is team teaching with a “Highly Qualified” academic core-content teacher.
- **Note:** Previously-licensed Special Education teachers, endorsed in mild/moderate, severe, and/or profound, may not be considered “Highly Qualified” to teach in a content-area unless they are qualified in that content-area, or can meet one of the other options suggested in this section.

Accountability

No Child Left Behind requires states and districts to develop plans to ensure that by 2005-2006 all students will be taught by "highly qualified" teachers. The Colorado Department of Education is required, as part of this plan, to establish annual, measurable objectives for the state and each local school district and school that address the following educator quality indicators:

- an annual increase in the percentage of classes taught by highly qualified teachers in the aggregate and in "high-poverty" schools;
- an annual increase in the percentage of teachers who are receiving "high-quality" professional development; and
- an annual increase in the percentage of instructional paraprofessionals in Title I targeted assistance and school-wide programs (excluding those with sole duties as translators and parental involvement assistants) who are qualified.

Each district receiving Title I, Part A funds is required to develop a plan for ensuring that it is working toward meeting these educator quality indicators. The details of this plan will be included as part of the district's consolidated federal programs application.

NCLB requires that the Colorado Department of Education determine if a district has made progress toward meeting the state's measurable objectives for increasing teacher quality within the district and its schools. If the district **fails for two consecutive years** to make progress toward meeting the annual objectives, then the district must develop an "improvement plan." The improvement plan must be designed to help the district meet the state's annual measurable objectives for increasing the percentage of highly qualified teachers and must address issues that prevented the district from meeting those objectives.

If the district has **failed to meet its annual measurable objectives and AYP for three consecutive years** under section 1111(b)(2)(B) of Title I, Part A, the Colorado Department of Education must enter into an agreement with the district on its use of Title II program funds under which the Department will:

- Develop (in conjunction with the district, teachers, and principals) professional development strategies and activities based on scientifically based research that the district will use to meet the State's annual measurable objectives for improving teacher quality;

- Require the district to use these professional development strategies and activities; and
- Prohibit the district from using Title I, Part A funds to fund any new paraprofessionals, except under certain limited instances.

Timeline for Compliance

The “Highly Qualified” requirements of NCLB apply to *all* public elementary, middle, and high school teachers who teach in *core academic content areas*. The timeline for implementation of the requirements of the Act varies, depending on the date of the teacher’s employment, and on whether or not the teacher is working in a school or program supported by Title I funds. Implementation timelines, beginning with the adoption of NCLB, are as follows:

- Teachers of core academic subjects newly hired after the first day of the 2002-2003 school year, who teach in a program supported by Title I funds (schoolwide or targeted assistance), must meet NCLB requirements, upon employment.
- Teachers of core academic subjects hired to teach in a school or program that is NOT supported by Title I funds, must meet the requirements *by the end of the 2005-2006 school year*.
- Teachers of core academic subjects hired *before the 2002-2003 school year*, regardless of whether they teach in a program supported by Title I funds or not, *must* meet the requirements by the end of the 2005-2006 school year.
- **Note:** The first day of school is defined as the first day that *students* report and is based on the employing school district’s calendar.

Parents Right to Know

- Beginning with the start of the 2002 – 2003 school year, *each* school district receiving Title I funds *must* notify parents of their right to know the qualifications of their child’s teacher(s).
 - Upon written request from a parent, the district must provide information about specific teachers’ qualifications.
 - **Note:** This information must *not* violate any confidentiality rights of a teacher, e.g. it is inappropriate to provide parents with/show teachers’ official transcripts.
- If a student is being instructed, for longer than four weeks, by a teacher/substitute teacher who does not meet the Federal definition of “Highly Qualified,” a letter informing his/her parents of this information must be sent, in a timely manner.
- Beginning with the 2006 – 2007 school year, whenever a teacher in any Colorado public school does *not* meet the Federal definition of “Highly Qualified,” parents must be informed, in writing, in a timely manner.

Reporting Requirements for School Districts

Beginning with the 2002 – 2003 school year, each local educational agency (LEA) will provide information with regard to:

- the number of its “Highly Qualified” teachers, and
- the number of its classes taught by “Highly Qualified” teachers

Each LEA is required to include, as part of its annual report to the public:

- the professional qualifications of its teachers teaching in the core academic subjects;
- the percentage of its teachers teaching with emergency or provisional credentials; and
- the percentage of its classes not taught by “Highly Qualified” teachers.

Federal Flexibility provisions

Under a new policy, teachers in eligible, rural districts (Classified as Small Rural) who are highly qualified in at least one subject will have three years to become highly qualified in the additional subjects they teach. The LEA must provide professional development, intense supervision, or structured mentoring to help a teacher become highly qualified in additional subjects. This new policy gives each eligible rural school until the end of the 2006 – 2007 school year to meet the 100% highly qualified teacher provision of NCLB.

Eligible rural school districts are districts that meet the following conditions.

- District must have less than 600 students in average daily attendance Or
- A District in which all the schools are located in a county (ies) with a population density of less than 10 people per square mile.
- A district in which all schools with in the district must have a locale code of 7 or 8

Section II: Relevant Definitions

Fully licensed

A teacher who holds a current valid Colorado provisional, professional, or alternative license is considered fully licensed to teach in Colorado.

Colorado’s alternative routes for licensure

Colorado’s alternative routes include the Alternative Teacher Licensure Program (ATLP) or the Teacher in Residence Program (TIR).

- Teachers who are actively enrolled in one of these alternative route programs DO meet the requirements for being considered “Highly Qualified.”
- Teachers in alternative licensing route preparation programs must
 - hold a bachelor’s, or higher, degree and
 - have passed the approved content-area assessment in the endorsement area being sought.

24-Semester Hours of Coursework Equivalence

- 24-semester hours, in a content-area being taught, which equates to content-area proficiency, may be provided through documented evidence.
- The 24-semester hours can be provided through professional development, education reform (curriculum development) and/or approved content-related relevant travel.

- The formula for determining credit is that $\frac{1}{4}$ hour = $\frac{2}{3}$ (.66) semester hours or one semester hour is equal to 15 contact hours.

National Content Certification

- Several national associations provide certification for those seeking status.
- These organizations have rigorous content assessments.
- A teacher who has taken a national certification assessment in an unendorsed content-area being taught, is considered to be “Highly Qualified” in that content area.

The Arts

For the purposes of NCLB, music, art and drama do represent the core academic subjects of the arts.

Section III: Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Question** - What license must a middle school teacher have to be considered “Highly Qualified,” under NCLB?

Answer – A teacher in grades 7 or 8, who holds a current valid Colorado license,

- a. ...and who is teaching in a self-contained classroom, i.e. one that looks like an elementary school classroom, but is *located* in a middle school,
 - i. does *not* need to be endorsed in any *specific* content area.
 - ii. The teacher must have an *Elementary* Education endorsement or must have passed the approved Elementary Education content test.
 - b. ...and who is assigned to teach in one of the core content areas identified in the NCLB Act, must:
 - i. hold an endorsement in that content area, **or**
 - ii. have passed the approved (or approved national certification organization) content-area test (PLACE or Praxis), **or**
 - iii. have documentation of having earned 24-semester hours, or their equivalent, in the content area being taught.
2. **Question** - Is a teacher enrolled in an Alternative Licensing or Teacher in Residence (TIR) program considered to be “Highly Qualified”?

Answer - **Yes**. An Alternatively Licensed Teacher (ALT) or a Teacher in Residence (TIR) is considered to be “Highly Qualified” while going through the program - under the following conditions:

- a. The ALT/TIR must have passed the applicable approved content-area test (PLACE or Praxis); and
- b. The ALT/TIR is teaching **100%** of his/her time in the content area of his/her preparation.
- c. **Note**: The teacher’s Statement of Eligibility (SOE), issued by the CDE, indicates to the employing school district, the content area in which the teacher is eligible to teach.

3. **Question** - Under Federal guidelines, years of teaching experience *are considered* when determining teacher quality. Does Colorado take teacher experience into account, when defining State requirements for "Highly Qualified" teacher *qualification*?

Answer - No. Experience is very important to teaching "*quality*," but does not meet the Federal requirements for being designated "Highly Qualified."

4. **Question** - Does a teacher have to take a content-area test (PLACE or Praxis) if one did not exist when the teacher received his/her license?

Answer - No. Since the content-area test (PLACE or Praxis) did not exist at the time the license endorsement was first issued, and the teacher held full licensure and endorsement in that content area, the teacher is not required to take/pass a *new* content test, in their content area, but will be *reissued* their license endorsement - as long as the teacher submits documentation of 6-semester hours of coursework or its equivalent, as required for license endorsement renewal.

5. **Question** - Does a teacher with current valid Colorado teaching license, with an Elementary Education endorsement, who is *teaching in any or in a combination of core-content areas*, have to meet the NCLB requirements for Secondary core academic-content endorsement?

Answer - No. Teachers who teach 6th grade are still considered to be Elementary teachers, despite teaching in middle school, and therefore do not *necessarily* have to be endorsed in any of the specific content areas in which they may be assigned to teach.

6. **Question** - Does a teacher of Geography, History, and Economics need 24-semester hours or an endorsement in *each* of the individual content areas that comprise the Social Studies, to be "Highly Qualified" under NCLB?

Answer - No. Colorado does not have separate endorsements for the Social Studies (Civics and Government, Economics, History and Geography). A licensed endorsed teacher teaching *any* of the Social Studies meets the requirements of NCLB, for being "Highly Qualified," by

- holding a current valid license with a Social Studies endorsement on it; **or**
- being able to provide documented evidence of the equivalent of 24-semester hours in that content area; **or**
- having passed a approved Social Studies content-area test (PLACE or Praxis).

7. **Question** - Under NCLB, does a teacher of Biology, Physics and Chemistry need 24-semester hours, or an endorsement in each of the Science content sub-areas to be deemed "Highly Qualified?"

Answer - No. Colorado does not currently have *separate endorsements* for each of the Sciences. A teacher, teaching in any of the Sciences, meets the requirement of NCLB, by

- holding a current valid license with a Science endorsement on it; **or**
- being able to provide documented evidence of the equivalent of 24-semester hours in that content area; **or**
- having passed a approved Science content-area test (PLACE or Praxis).

8. **Question** - Is there portability of "Highly Qualified" status?

Answer - The "Highly Qualified" status, once documented, is portable and reciprocal throughout all Colorado school districts. If a teacher achieves "Highly Qualified" status in a

core-academic subject area(s) in one school system, his/her “Highly Qualified” status carries over for the same content area, when the teacher transfers to another Colorado public school system.

9. **Question** - May an LEA hire a *private school teacher* to provide Title I services to *private school students*?

Answer – Yes, as long as the private school teacher meets the “Highly Qualified” teacher requirements, of NCLB. The private school teacher can only be employed for Title I purposes, and must teach under the direct supervision of the LEA, with respect to all Title I activities.

10. **Question** – May a teacher substitute be considered a “Highly Qualified” teacher?

Answer – Yes. Teachers who hold a five-year substitute authorizations are consider “Highly Qualified” teachers.