



HIGHLY QUALIFIED STAFF

Recognizing the importance of effective teachers, the Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) requires that schools be staffed with highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals. Additionally, professional development activities must ensure that teachers and paraprofessionals meet the highly qualified provisions of ESEA. Local educational agencies (LEAs) must notify parents of their rights to request information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers. Also, in Title I schools the LEA must require the principal of each Title I school to submit an attestation annually requiring compliance with this provision.

Teachers

In Title I Programs, all teachers hired who teach core academic subjects must be highly qualified. This includes teachers in targeted assistance schools who are paid with Title I funds, teachers in school-wide Title I schools, and any other teachers paid with Title I funds who teach eligible private school students. To be considered highly qualified to teach in the State of Georgia, teachers must be fully **certified to teach** by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) and be teaching in their field(s) of certification.

New teachers must:

- § • Hold a bachelor's degree from a PSC accepted accredited institution of higher education.
- § • Hold a valid Georgia teaching certificate.
- § • Have evidence of specialized training in the subjects they teach, such as an academic major or the equivalent in the subjects and a passing score on the required content assessment for the area/subjects they teach.
- § • Have a teaching assignment that is appropriate for the field(s) listed on the Georgia teaching certificate.

Veteran teachers must:

- § • Hold a bachelor's degree from a PSC accepted accredited institution of higher education.
- § • Hold a valid Georgia professional teaching certificate.
- § • Have a teaching assignment that is appropriate for the field(s) listed on the teaching certificate.



§ • Have evidence of specialized training in the subjects they teach, such as an academic major or the equivalent in the subject, **and a passing score on the required content assessment for the area/subject they teach** or evidence that they have met the requirement of a HIGH OBJECTIVE UNIFORM STATE STANDARD OF EVALUATION (HOUSSE), as adopted by the PCS.

A teacher who is **new** to the profession is a beginning teacher, defined as a teacher in a public school who has been teaching less than a total of three complete school years [Title IX, Part A, Section 9101(3)].

A **veteran** teacher is one who is not new to the profession and is defined as a teacher in a public school who has been teaching a total of three or more complete school years.

Teachers who are fully certified and highly qualified have met all requirements including:

§ • Clear renewable certificate and major/concentration in the content area or

§ • **PSC required content assessment** or

§ • HOUSSE, if applicable, and

§ • Appropriate teaching assignment

Core academic subjects include English, reading, language arts, mathematics, broad-field science (such as physics, biology, or chemistry), foreign languages, broad-field social studies (such as civics and government, economics, history, geography), and the arts (visual arts, music, band and chorus). Dance and drama are not core academic subjects in Georgia. All teachers teaching a core academic subject, including remedial, extended day, evening, or summer school classes, must be highly qualified to teach the subject.

The Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) requires states to develop plans with annual measurable objectives that will ensure that all teachers teaching in core academic subjects are highly qualified. Beginning with the 2002-2003 school year, states and LEAs must report annually on their progress toward this goal.

Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessional requirements are strengthened in the Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), Section 1119, and requires that all paraprofessionals who work in an instructional program supported by Title I funds (school-wide program or targeted assistance program) be highly qualified.



A paraprofessional is an individual with instructional duties. Individuals **who work solely** in non-instructional roles, such as food service, cafeteria or playground supervision, personal care services, and non-instructional computer assistance are not considered to be paraprofessionals for Title I purposes. The requirements do not apply to paraprofessionals who work with special education students performing non-instructional duties, such as assisting with mobility and bodily functions. The Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) requirements do NOT apply to paraprofessionals with:

1. Primary duties to act as a translator or
2. Duties consisting solely of conducting parental involvement activities.

The requirements do not apply to aides.

Paraprofessionals who are hired after January 8, 2002, must have:

§ • Completed at least two years of study at an institution of higher education. (Two years of study at an institution of higher education requires completion of a minimum of 60 semester hours at a Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) approved accredited institution of higher education.)

§ • Obtained an associate's degree (or higher) or

§ • Met a rigorous standard of quality and demonstrated through a formal state approved assessment the knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing, reading, language arts, writing and mathematics or reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness.

In lieu of completing at least two years of postsecondary study or an associate's degree to meet these requirements, a paraprofessional may complete a PSC approved paraprofessional qualification assessment. If eligibility is established through the assessment, the applicant must also hold a high school diploma or a General Education Diploma (GED) equivalent.

All individuals holding a current paraprofessional certificate in Georgia must meet the new requirements (if not previously met) for certificate renewal effective June 30, 2009 or the effective renewal date thereafter.

Paraprofessionals who work in a school-wide program or who are paid with Title I funds and work in a targeted assistance school may be assigned the following instructional support duties:

§ • One-on-one tutoring if the tutoring is scheduled at a time when a student would not otherwise receive instruction from a teacher.

§ • Assisting in classroom management.



- § • Assisting in computer instruction.
- § • Conducting parent involvement activities.
- § • Providing instructional support in a media center.
- § • Serving as a translator.
- § • Providing instructional support services.

These paraprofessionals may not be assigned duties inconsistent with the above list of instructional support duties. Additionally, paraprofessionals may not provide instructional support to students unless they are under the direct supervision of a highly qualified teacher.

A paraprofessional is deemed to work under the direct supervision of a teacher if the teacher plans the instructional activities for the paraprofessional, the teacher evaluates the achievement of students with whom the paraprofessional works, and the paraprofessional works in close and frequent physical proximity to the teacher.

A paraprofessional may assume limited duties that are assigned to similar personnel who are not working in a program supported with Title I funds including non-instructional duties if the amount of time the paraprofessional spends on those duties is the same proportion of total work time as the time spent by similar personnel at the same school.

Parental Notification

At the beginning of each school year, local educational agencies (LEAs) must notify parents of their rights to request information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers, including:

- § • Whether the teacher has met state qualifications for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher teaches.
- § • Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status.
- § • The baccalaureate degree of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher and the field or discipline of the certification or degree.
- § • Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals.
- § • Parent notification is not required for the following:
 - § • For teachers who do not teach core academic subjects in Title I school-wide or targeted assistance programs.*



§ • For paraprofessionals who are not highly qualified. *

If a student has been assigned to or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher of a core academic subject who is not highly qualified, the parents must be provided a timely notice.

All notices and information required must be in a uniform and understandable format, including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language that parents understand.

Annual Parent Notice - Right To Request Teacher Qualifications

Our school system receives federal funds for Title I programs that are part of the ***No Child Left Behind Act of 2001***. As a parent of a student you have the right to request certain information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher(s). Specifically, federal law requires the school district to provide you with the following:

- a. whether the Professional Standards Commission has certified or licensed the teacher for the grades and subject in which the teacher is providing instruction.
- b. whether the Professional Standards Commission has decided the teacher can teach under emergency status for which state certification requirements have been waived.
- c. the teacher's college major and the field of discipline for any graduate degree or certificate.
- d. the qualifications any paraprofessional working with your child.

If you would like to request this information, please contact the school with your **written request** and we will respond in a timely manner. Thank you for your interest and involvement in your child's education.



Feel free to contact the Director of Federal Programs if you have any questions or concerns.

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