



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

APR 4 2007

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Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Idaho Department of Education  
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650 West State Street  
P. O. Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0027

Dwight A. Johnson  
Executive Director  
Idaho State Board of Education  
650 West State Street  
Boise, ID 83720-0027

Dear Superintendent Luna and Executive Director Johnson:

I am writing to you in regards to conditions related to inaccuracies in the highly qualified teacher (HQT) data that were reported by the Idaho State Department of Education (ISDE) to the U.S. Department of Education as part of the 2005 Consolidated State Performance Report (CSPR). These conditions were placed on the State's Title I, Part A and Title II, Part A grants for fiscal year 2006.

These conditions, which were discussed in a May 25, 2006, letter addressed to Dwight Johnson of the Idaho State Board of Education and Marilyn Howard of ISDE, were issued primarily because ISDE had counted as highly qualified those veteran elementary school teachers who were fully certified but had neither passed a State content test nor completed a "high objective uniform State standard of evaluation" (HOUSSE). In order to resolve the grant conditions, Idaho agreed to submit complete and accurate HQT data for the 2006-07 school year by January 1, 2007. Because of a change in administration at ISDE, Idaho did not meet the deadline.

Since the change in administration at ISDE, the State's new Director of Certification and Professional Standards, Dr. Christina Linder, has worked closely with Department staff to address Idaho's difficulties in producing accurate HQT data. It is clear from the Department's many communications with Dr. Linder that the State is working with great diligence to provide accurate HQT data. On March 16, 2007, Dr. Linder submitted preliminary HQT data for the 2006-2007 school year. While these data show a significant reduction from the previous year in the percentage of classes taught by highly qualified teachers, the Department understands that ISDE is working with teachers to complete a review of their HQT credentials and that the State expects these numbers to

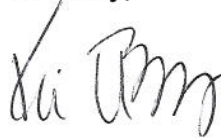
improve substantially in the very near future. The Department knows that the submitted data, while disappointing in some respects, represents a more accurate perspective on the number of classes in Idaho that are taught by highly qualified teachers. The Department commends ISDE, and Dr. Linder in particular, for its efforts in providing accurate data based on appropriate HQT definitions.

However, despite the hard work of the new administration at ISDE, the data submitted on March 16 does not fully satisfy the existing grant conditions. Until additional information is provided, the conditions cannot be lifted. In particular, the submitted data do not fully conform to the CSPR data reporting format and requirements, which reflect the statutory requirements for data reporting spelled out in the ESEA. The CSPR requires that HQT data be disaggregated by high and low poverty schools at both the elementary and secondary levels, and the submitted data do not meet this requirement. Further the data submitted is unclear in regards to the inclusion of special education classes. The data should include core academic subject classes taught by special education teachers, but not other special education classes where core subject instruction is not provided directly; we cannot tell which special education classes are included in the submitted data. Finally, ISDE must provide information on the reasons why teachers who teach core classes are not highly qualified.

To fully satisfy the grant conditions, ISDE must submit its 2006-2007 HQT data in the required CSPR format. Enclosed you will find a copy of the CSPR data collection instrument for HQT data—this is the format in which Idaho's data must be submitted. Please submit this completed form by Monday, April 30, 2007. If the State fully complies with this requirement, we do not anticipate imposing any additional sanctions on Idaho regarding this issue.

If you have questions about the enclosed form or about the CSPR data requirements, please do not hesitate to contact Libby Witt (202-260-5585 or [elizabeth.witt@ed.gov](mailto:elizabeth.witt@ed.gov)) or Margaret Miles (202-260-2531 or [margaret.miles@ed.gov](mailto:margaret.miles@ed.gov)).

Sincerely,



Kerri L. Briggs, Ph.D.  
Acting Assistant Secretary

Enclosure

## 1.5 TEACHER QUALITY

This section collects data on “highly qualified” teachers as the term is defined in Section 9101(23) of the ESEA.

### 1.5.1 Core Academic Classes taught by Highly Qualified Teachers

In the table below, provide the number of core academic classes for each of the school types listed and the number of those core academic classes taught by highly qualified teachers. The percentage of core academic classes taught by highly qualified teachers will be calculated automatically. Below the table are FAQ about the data collected in this table. The percentages used for high and low poverty schools and the poverty metric used to determine those percentages are reported in section 1.5.3.

Core Academic Classes taught by Highly Qualified Teachers

School Type	Total Number of Core Academic Classes	Number of Core Academic Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers	Percentage of Core Academic Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers
All Schools in State			
Elementary Level			
High-Poverty Schools			
Low-Poverty Schools			
All Elementary Schools			
Secondary Level			
High-Poverty Schools			
Low-Poverty Schools			
All Secondary Schools			

[Source –Manual entry by the SEA into the on-line CSPR collection tool.]

Business Rules / Edit Checks – The numbers for all elementary schools plus the numbers for all secondary schools should equal the numbers for all schools.

#### FAQs about highly qualified teachers and core academic subjects

- a) *What are the core academic subjects?* English, reading or language arts,

mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography [Title IX, Section 9101(11)]. While the statute includes the arts in the core academic subjects, it does not specify which of the arts are core academic subjects; therefore, States must make this determination.

- b) *How is a teacher defined?* An individual who provides instruction in the core academic areas to kindergarten, grades 1 through 12, or un-graded classes, or individuals who teach in an environment other than a classroom setting (and who maintain daily student attendance records) [from NCES, CCD, 2001-02]
- c) *How is a class defined?* A class is a setting in which organized instruction of core academic course content is provided to one or more students (including cross-age groupings) for a given period of time. (A course may be offered to more than one class). Instruction, provided by one or more teachers or other staff members, may be delivered in person or via a different medium. Classes that share space should be considered as separate classes if they function as separate units for more than 50 percent of the time [from NCES Non-fiscal Data Handbook for Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education, 2003].
- d) *Should 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes be reported in the elementary or secondary category?* States are responsible for determining whether the content taught at the middle school level meets the competency requirements for elementary or secondary instruction. See Question A-14 in the August 3, 2006, Non-Regulatory Guidance for additional information. Report classes in grade 6 through 8 consistent with how teachers have been classified to determine their highly qualified status, regardless if their schools are configured as elementary or middle schools.
- e) *How should States count teachers (including specialists or resource teachers) in elementary classes?* States that count self-contained classrooms as one class should, to avoid over-representation, also count subject-area specialists (e.g., mathematics or music teachers) or resource teachers as teaching one class. On the other hand, States using a departmentalized approach to instruction where a self-contained classroom is counted multiple times (once for each subject taught) should also count subject-area specialists or resource teachers as teaching multiple classes.
- f) *How should States count teachers in self-contained multiple-subject secondary classes?* Each core academic subject taught for which students are receiving credit toward graduation should be counted in the numerator and the denominator. For example, if the same teacher teaches English, calculus, history, and science in a self-contained classroom, count these as four classes in the denominator. If the teacher is Highly Qualified in English and history, he/she would be counted as Highly Qualified in two of the four subjects in the numerator.

- g) *What is a "high-poverty school"?* Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii) defines "high-poverty" schools as schools in the top quartile of poverty in the State. The poverty quartile breaks are reported later in this section.
- h) *What is a "low-poverty school"?* Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii) defines "low-poverty" schools as schools in the bottom quartile of poverty in the State. The poverty quartile breaks are reported later in this section.

**1.5.2 Reasons for Core Academic Classes not being taught by highly qualified teachers**

In the table below, for elementary school classes and for secondary school classes, **estimate** the percentages for each reasons for why core academic classes are not being taught by highly qualified teachers. If the three reasons provided are not sufficient to explain why core academic classes are not being taught by highly qualified teachers, use the row labeled "other" and explain the additional reasons. The total of the reasons is calculated automatically and must equal 100%.

Reason For Being Classified as Not Highly Qualified	Percentage
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSES	
a) Elementary school classes taught by certified general education teachers who did not pass a subject-knowledge test or (if eligible) have not demonstrated subject-matter competency through HOUSSE	
b) Elementary school classes taught by certified special education teachers who did not pass a subject-knowledge test or have not demonstrated subject-matter competency through HOUSSE	
c) Elementary school classes taught by teachers who are not fully certified (and are not in an approved alternative route program)	
d) Other (please explain)	
Total	

SECONDARY SCHOOL CLASSES	
a) Secondary school classes taught by certified general education teachers who have not demonstrated subject-matter knowledge in those subjects (e.g., out-of-field teachers)	
b) Secondary school classes taught by certified special education teachers who have not demonstrated subject-matter competency in those subjects	
c) Secondary school classes taught by teachers who are not fully certified (and are not in an approved alternative route program)	
d) Other (please explain)	
Total	

The percentages at each level (elementary and secondary) must total to 100%.

### 1.5.3 Poverty Quartiles And Metrics Used

In the table below, provide the poverty quartiles breaks used in determining high and low poverty schools and the poverty metric used to determine the poverty quartiles. Below the table are FAQs about the data collected in this table.

	High-Poverty Schools	Low-Poverty Schools
Elementary Schools	More than _____%	Less than _____%
Poverty Metric Used		
Secondary Schools	More than _____%	Less than _____%
Poverty Metric Used		

[Source –Manual entry by the SEA into the on-line CSPR collection tool.]

#### FAQs on poverty quartiles and metrics used to determine poverty

- a) *How are the poverty quartiles determined?* Separately rank order elementary and secondary schools from highest to lowest on your percent poverty measure. Divide the list into 4 equal groups. Schools in the first (highest group) are high-poverty schools. Schools in the last group (lowest group) are the low-poverty schools. Generally, states use the percentage of students who qualify for the free or reduced

price lunch program for this calculation.

- a) *Since the poverty data are collected at the school and not classroom level, how do we classify schools as either elementary or secondary for this purpose?* States may include as elementary schools all schools that serve children in grades K-5 (including K-8 or K-12 schools) and would therefore include as secondary schools those that exclusively serve children in grades 6 and higher.