



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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JON S. CORZINE
Governor

LUCILLE E. DAVY
Commissioner

April 24, 2008

Ms. Carol Manitaras
United States Department of Education
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 3W251
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Ms. Manitaras:

New Jersey's State Plan for Meeting the Highly Qualified Teacher Goal, as submitted and approved by the USDE in June, 2006, was consistent with the USDE position that High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) should be phased out by June, 2007. New Jersey effectively terminated the HOUSSE options for all teachers as of June 30, 2007. However, at this time, the New Jersey Department of Education will amend its state plan to reinstitute the HOUSSE options for veteran special education teachers for a limited time period.

While New Jersey has made substantial progress toward the goal of 100 percent highly qualified teachers, the state still requires additional flexibility in meeting the highly qualified teacher requirement for veteran special education teachers. Since many school districts in New Jersey are currently reconfiguring their schools from self-contained K- 8 schools to K-5 and middle school configurations, school districts find that they need additional flexibility for placement of special education teachers across the grade levels in order to meet the highly qualified teacher requirements.

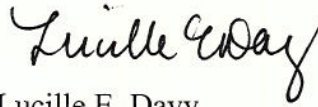
By reinstating the HOUSSE standard for a window of two years, New Jersey will provide an additional avenue for veteran special education teachers to use to meet the highly qualified teacher requirements. New Jersey believes that the use of this avenue for a short time frame will provide school districts with needed flexibility in utilizing staff while assuring all special education teachers meet the highly qualified teacher requirements. New Jersey, therefore, will reinstitute the HOUSSE for veteran special education teachers for a period of two years, ending June 30, 2010, to enable teachers who have not had adequate time under the existing plan to achieve highly qualified status. If, upon reauthorization, NCLB reverses states' prerogative to employ the HOUSSE, New Jersey will cease to administer the HOUSSE, consistent with statutory guidelines.

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Thank you for providing New Jersey with continued guidance as we administer the state plan. We are committed to compliance with these requirements and have aligned state policy to ensure that all of our teachers are highly qualified. If you have any questions regarding this correspondence, please contact Carol Albritton, teacher quality coordinator, at 609-777-4482.

Sincerely,



Lucille E. Davy
Commissioner

LED/JJ/CP/EAS/CA/ S:\Alfie\Highly Qualified Teacher Project\Ltr to USDE re HOUSE.doc

c: Willa Spicer
Jay Doolan
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