

## Key Definitions from No Child Left Behind

### Highly qualified teacher:

1. When the term “highly qualified teacher” is used with respect to any public elementary school or secondary school teacher teaching in a State, it means that:

The teacher has obtained full State certification as a teacher (including certification obtained through alternative routes to certification) or passed the State teacher licensing examination, and holds a license to teach in such State, except that when the term is used with respect to any teacher teaching in a public charter school, the term means that the teacher meets the certification or licensing requirements set forth in the State's public charter school law (see entry below for the definition of a highly qualified charter school teacher); and

The teacher has not had certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis.

2. When the term “highly qualified teacher” is used with respect to:

a. An elementary school teacher who is new to the profession, it means that the teacher has met the requirements of paragraph (A) above, and:

i) Holds at least a bachelor's degree; and

ii) Has demonstrated, by passing a rigorous State test, subject knowledge and teaching skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and other areas of the basic elementary school curriculum (which may consist of passing a State-required certification or licensing test or tests in reading, writing, mathematics, and other areas of basic elementary school curriculum); or

b. A middle school or secondary teacher who is new to the profession, it means that the teacher has met the requirements of paragraph (A) above, holds at least a bachelor's degree, and has demonstrated a high level of competency in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches by:

i) Passing a rigorous State academic subject test in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches (which may consist of a passing level of performance on a State-required certification or licensing test or tests in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches); or

ii) Successful completion, in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches, of an academic major, a graduate degree, coursework equivalent to an undergraduate academic major, or advanced certification or credentialing.

3. When the term “highly qualified teacher” is used with respect to an elementary, middle, or secondary school teacher who is not new to the profession, it means that the teacher has met the requirements of paragraph (A) above, holds at least a bachelor's degree, and:

- a. Has met the applicable standard in the clauses of subparagraph (B), which includes an option for a test; or
- b. Demonstrates competence in all the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches based on a high objective uniform State standard of evaluation that-
  - i) Is set by the State for both grade appropriate academic subject matter knowledge and teaching skills;
  - ii) Is aligned with challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards and developed in consultation with core content specialists, teachers, principals, and school administrators;
  - iii) Provides objective, coherent information about the teacher's attainment of core content knowledge in the academic subjects in which a teacher teaches;
  - iv) Is applied uniformly to all teachers in the same academic subject and the same grade level throughout the State;
  - v) Takes into consideration, but not be based primarily on, the time the teacher has been teaching in the academic subject;
  - vi) Is made available to the public upon request; and
  - vii) May involve multiple, objective measures of teacher competency [Title IX, Part A, section 9101(23)].

**Professional development:**

The term “professional development:”

4. Includes activities that:

- a. Improve and increase teachers' knowledge of the academic subjects the teachers teach, and enable teachers to become highly qualified;
- b. Are an integral part of broad schoolwide and districtwide educational improvement plans;
- c. Give teachers, principals, and administrators the knowledge and skills to provide students with the opportunity to meet challenging State academic content standards and student academic achievement standards;
- d. Improve classroom management skills;
- e. Are high quality, sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction and the teacher's performance in the classroom and are not 1-day or short-term workshops or conferences;

f. Support the recruiting, hiring, and training of highly qualified teachers, including teachers who became highly qualified through State and local alternative routes to certification;

g. Advance teacher understanding of effective instructional strategies that are:

i) Based on scientifically based research (except that this subclause shall not apply to activities carried out under Part D of Title II); and

ii) Strategies for improving student academic achievement or substantially increasing the knowledge and teaching skills of teachers; and

h. Are aligned with and directly related to:

i) State academic content standards, student academic achievement standards, and assessments; and

ii) The curricula and programs tied to the standards described in subclause (a) [except that this subclause shall not apply to activities described in clauses (ii) and (iii) of section 2123(3)(B)];

i. Are developed with extensive participation of teachers, principals, parents, and administrators of schools to be served under this Act;

j. Are designed to give teachers of limited English proficient children, and other teachers and instructional staff, the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and appropriate language and academic support services to those children, including the appropriate use of curricula and assessments;

k. To the extent appropriate, provide training for teachers and principals in the use of technology so that technology and technology applications are effectively used in the classroom to improve teaching and learning in the curricula and core academic subjects in which the teachers teach;

l. As a whole, are regularly evaluated for their impact on increased teacher effectiveness and improved student academic achievement, with the findings of the evaluations used to improve the quality of professional development;

m. Provide instruction in methods of teaching children with special needs;

n. Include instruction in the use of data and assessments to inform and instruct classroom practice; and

o. Include instruction in ways that teachers, principals, pupil services personnel, and school administrators may work more effectively with parents; and

5. May include activities that:

- a. Involve the forming of partnerships with institutions of higher education to establish school-based teacher training programs that provide prospective teachers and beginning teachers with an opportunity to work under the guidance of experienced teachers and college faculty;
- b. Create programs to enable paraprofessionals (assisting teachers employed by a local educational agency receiving assistance under Part A of Title I) to obtain the education necessary for those paraprofessionals to become certified and licensed teachers; and
- c. Provide follow-up training to teachers who have participated in activities described in subparagraph (A) or another clause of this subparagraph that is designed to ensure that the knowledge and skills learned by the teachers are implemented in the classroom [Title IX, Part A, section 9101(34)].

**Scientifically based research:**

The term “scientifically based research:”

1. Means research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education activities and programs; and
2. Includes research that--
  - a. Employs systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment;
  - b. Involves rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the general conclusions drawn;
  - c. Relies on measurements or observational methods that provide reliable and valid data across evaluators and observers, across multiple measurements and observations, and across studies by the same or different investigators;
  - d. Is evaluated using experimental or quasi-experimental designs in which individuals, entities, programs, or activities are assigned to different conditions and with appropriate controls to evaluate the effects of the condition of interest, with a preference for random-assignment experiments, or other designs to the extent that those designs contain within-condition or across-condition controls;
  - e. Ensures that experimental studies are presented in sufficient detail and clarity to allow for replication or, at a minimum, offer the opportunity to build systematically on their findings; and
  - f. Has been accepted by a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparably rigorous, objective, and scientific review [Title IX, Part A, section 9101(37)].