



Bellwood-Antis School District

Pride - Tradition - Excellence

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Teacher Qualification Requirements

Date: Annual

To: All Teaching Staff

From: G. Brian Toth, Superintendent

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires teachers to have certain professional qualifications every five years. Teachers who fail to secure the necessary qualifications in time risk losing their teaching positions. The purpose of this memo is to make sure this does not happen to you.

You should understand that this law applies to you. If you have not done so already, you should begin planning now to ensure that you will have enough time to secure the qualifications you need.

Please read the qualification requirements below to help you determine what qualifications you need.

Minimum Qualifications

NCLB requires all teachers to have two minimum qualifications:

1. A bachelor's degree; and
2. Full certification, with a license to teach in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. If the PA Department of Education has waived your certification requirement on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis, you WILL NOT meet the minimum qualification requirement.

Additional Qualifications

In addition to the minimum qualifications listed above, NCLB requires you to have additional qualifications if you are new to the profession of teaching. You are considered "new to the profession" if you do not have a valid Pennsylvania certification.

- a. **If you are new to the profession:** You must meet the following qualifications, according to the grade level you teach:
 - Elementary school: You must pass a state test on knowledge and teaching skills in reading, writing, math, and other areas of basic elementary school curriculum.
 - Middle level or high school: You must either 1) pass a state test in each of the subjects you teach, or 2) have a college major, graduate degree, or advanced certificates in the subjects you teach (e.g., if you teach math and science, you must have a degree or certificate in both math and science, or pass state tests in both math and science).

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- b. **If you are not new to the profession.** You must either:
- Meet the same grade-level qualifications a teacher new to the profession must meet (see above); or
 - Pass a Praxis test in the content areas you teach (applies to grades 7 – 12).
 - Special Education teachers (7 – 12) are exempt from content level certification only if the students are not taking the PSSA or the students are at or below the 6th grade learning level as per the IEP. Otherwise the content level certification applies.

Please be advised that Act 48 of 1999 requires all professional educators holding Pennsylvania public school certificates to complete 6 collegiate credits or 6 PDE-approved in-service credits or 180 hours of approved continuing education (or any combination of the above) every five years in order to maintain their certificate active. Remember, you are responsible for completing all requirements to maintain your certificate.

You are responsible for completing the required hours. If the hours are not completed by the designated date, your certificate will have lapsed.