



FY 2017 Recommended Budget Budget Question

Board Question #: 56

BUDGET QUESTION: What is the definition of a highly qualified teacher?

RESPONSE: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (also known as No Child Left Behind) requires all teachers of core academic subjects to be “highly qualified.” The federal law defines a highly qualified teacher as **a teacher who is fully licensed by the state, has at least a bachelor’s degree and has demonstrated competency in each subject taught.**

For most teachers, “competency in each subject taught” is measured by passing a rigorous test in the content area for which they are endorsed (Praxis II). For others, who are not new to the profession, the VDOE does allow some alternative paths to HQ through a master’s degree or other specific coursework in the subject area taught, specialized training, and/or professional development.

Teachers of Students with Disabilities who teach self contained sections of “End of Course” classes, must hold endorsement in both Special Education and in the content area taught. This continues to be the most challenging area for SCPS.

A teacher is deemed “highly qualified” in relation to what he/she is teaching. In other words, a teacher, licensed in Biology who also picks up a section of Oceanography (an Earth Science elective course) would be HQ for all of the Biology courses taught but not HQ for that one section for which he/she is teaching outside of the endorsement area held.