

Frequently Asked Questions

Purpose

1. What is the purpose of the new Title II, Part A, Improving Teacher Quality State Grants program?

The purpose of Title II, Part A (Title II-A), Improving Teacher Quality State Grants, is to increase the academic achievement of all students by helping schools and school districts improve teacher and principal quality and ensure that all teachers are highly qualified.

In exchange, agencies that receive funds are held accountable to the public for improvements in academic achievement. Improving Teacher Quality State Grants provides these agencies with the flexibility to use these funds creatively to address challenges to teacher quality, whether they concern teacher preparation and qualifications of new teachers, recruitment and hiring, induction, professional development, teacher retention, equity, or the need for more capable principals and assistant principals to serve as effective school leaders.

Georgia was allocated \$74+ million of for the Title II, Part A Program.

Budget and Local Planning

1. May Title II-A funds supplant State and local funds used for authorized Improving Teacher Quality State Grants activities?

No. LEA funds received under the Title II-A program must supplement and cannot supplant State and local funds.

2. May Title II-A funds be used to pay substitute teachers for working while regular teachers attend professional development activities?

Yes. Title II-A funds may be used to pay substitute teachers that work while regular teachers participate in professional development activities.

3. In addition to Title II-A funds, are there other Federal programs that permit funds to be used to improve teacher quality?

A searchable database of all teacher and principal grant opportunities at the United States Department of Education is available at the following Web site:

www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/TPR/index.html

Ensuring that the results of this needs assessment drive the development of sound multi-year program plans that (a) include teacher mentoring and incentives, as well as provision of professional development in subject matter content and effective instructional strategies that is based on a review of scientifically based research, and risk of failing to meet the State's academic standards;

Incorporating objective benchmarks for success and clear statements of desired outcomes into the LEA's multiyear plan;

Continuously examining standards, assessments, curricula, and teaching practices to ensure that they fit together;

Instituting merit pay programs, tenure reform, financial incentives, special mentoring help, and other means to (a) make teaching in the district attractive to mid-career professionals and others with special knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm, and (b) encourage the district's most effective teachers not only to stay in the district, but to teach in its highest-need schools;

Instilling a strong commitment to professionalism among teachers, principals, and other school and district staff and actively promoting the importance of strong school leaders; and

Creating a strong community expectation that the students and their schools can succeed, and a strong expectation among all school and district staff that all teachers will have the subject matter knowledge and teaching skills they need to enable each of their students to succeed.

9. What kinds of leadership efforts might LEA officials undertake to ensure that their use of Title II-A funds reflects a strong local agenda that promotes significant improvements in teacher quality?

See answer to question 9.

10. How do teacher quality requirements apply to individuals working in extended learning time programs? What are the requirements for teachers providing supplemental educational services?

If services offered outside of regular school hours in a Title I extended learning time program provide instruction in core academic subjects designed to help students meet State or local academic standards, the persons providing such core academic instruction must meet the highly qualified teacher requirements. In extended learning time programs (which can include summer school), the school's regular teaching staff extends or continues the school's instructional day using the same or similar curricula, and therefore they must be highly qualified. However, if the instructor is not an employee of the school district, the teacher quality requirements do not apply.

An extended learning time program that offers core academic instruction because an LEA has determined that particular students need additional time to learn to State standards can be

distinguished from an after-school program offering academic enrichment, tutoring and homework assistance, including supplemental educational services under Section 1116 of *No Child Left Behind*. In the latter case, the highly qualified teacher and paraprofessional requirements do not apply. It is up to the LEA to draw the distinction between extended time and enrichment programs.

11. How do systems amend carryover funds into the Consolidated Application budget?

The complete guidance for carryover funds and amendments is available for download on the Consolidated Application web site:

<http://portal.doe.k12.ga.us>

Carryover of Funds

Carryover Funds are determined once completion reports are submitted (See Completion Reports). The carryover amount will be added to the consolidated application for budget amendment. System should check Consolidated Application for amount. A budget amendment is required to be submitted to GDOE through the consolidated application.

12. When are all other Title II-A budget amendments required?

Budget amendments are required for the Title Programs (I-A, II-A, II-D, IV-A, V-A, and VI-B) any time there is an increase or decrease in the total grants, a change in the scope of the grant, and/or a 25 percent change at the function level. The last day to amend these budgets is May 15th.

13. Is the local superintendent's approval (sign-off) required on budget amendments?

All budget amendments require the superintendent's approval sign-off.

14. Who is the program manager for Title II-A?

Dr. David M. Hill, Division Director of Educator Preparation at the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, is the program manager for Title II-A. She is responsible for approving all the Title II-A budget amendments. She may be contacted at david.hill@gapsc.com.

15. What is the purpose of the required system needs assessment?

The purpose of the needs assessment is to determine the needs of the system's teaching force in order to be able to have all students meet challenging State content and academic achievement standards. Systems may use information such as student achievement data, information about numbers of teachers (disaggregated by subject taught and grade level) who lack full teacher

certification or licensure, assessments by administrators and mentor teachers who evaluate teacher and student performance, and teacher self-evaluations.

The needs assessment is used to identify the following needs: Local teacher quality, equity, hiring and retention, professional development and training needs, and any other local needs to attain/maintain annual yearly progress (See Section VI of the Title II-A Handbook).

For additional information on developing local system plans, see the "Guidance for Local Title IIA Plans" and the "Guidance for Local Use of Title II-A Funds" located on the Title II-A Web site: www.gapsc.com/nclb/admin/Files/Guidance_funds.doc.

Teachers and Paraprofessionals

16. Who is a highly qualified teacher?

The requirement that teachers be highly qualified applies to public elementary or secondary school teachers who teach a core academic subject. The term "core academic subjects" means English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts (visual arts, music, band and chorus), history, and geography. Refer to "Georgia's Implementation Guidelines" on the Title II-A website located at www.gapsc.com/nclb/admin/Files/Guidance.doc for more information and specific definitions for "highly qualified" teachers.

17. What is the timeline for teachers to meet the requirements for highly qualified teachers?

All teachers, including special education teachers, teaching core academic subjects must be "*highly qualified*" as of 2006.

The US Department of Education has determined that Georgia is making a good faith effort to meet the goal of having 100 percent highly qualified teachers (HQT) in all schools. As a result, the state has been approved to revise and resubmit its plan for achieving the 100 percent HQT goal. As part of the state plan, each school district must determine how it plans to get all teachers highly qualified, and report the remediation methods that will be used to the PSC by June 30th.

18. Are all systems required to develop plans to have all teachers highly qualified?

Yes. The requirement to develop this plan applies to all systems that received Title II, Part A funds.

19. Must alternative schools for disruptive or behaviorally challenged students that are generally self-contained classroom with a limited number of students meet the highly qualified requirements?

Teachers who teach in alternative schools and who are the “teacher of record” for any of the core academic subjects must meet the requirements of “highly qualified” as stated in this document. Alternative schools in Georgia include Performance Learning Centers, Evening Schools, and Crossroads Programs.

If a consultative model with the participation of “highly qualified” teachers is used, the teachers who are on-site in the alternative setting can defer the standard of being highly qualified to the home school teacher if they document a minimum of two contacts per month. Two contacts or more if applicable, per month with the “highly qualified” teacher must be documented and maintained. Please see the Sample Alternative Education Conference Record found in the Title II A Handbook.

The purpose of the conferences is to ensure students in alternative settings are provided the same content and quality of content expertise as students in a regular education setting. Conferences must be documented and address the academic progress and topics of instruction in the alternative setting and should ensure that students are receiving the same content as students in regular education.

Teachers in alternative school programs who facilitate the use of technology-based programs, such as computer-assisted programs that provide self-pacing and pre/post-testing or courses delivered through distance learning technologies, are not required to meet “highly qualified” teacher requirements if they are not responsible for delivering content instruction. The quality and rigor of the computer-based programs and distance learning courses for all subject areas and their alignment with state curriculum are the responsibility of the school system and teachers with content expertise must be made available as needed to support student learning. Each computer-based program and/or distance learning course must have scientifically based research to indicate that it is successful with student populations. Student performance data, for those students receiving instruction through computer-based programs, must be available for monitoring of Title II, Part A.

20. Can a teaching field be added to a clear renewable certificate by taking GACE in a subject area?

Yes. Teachers may add teaching fields to clear renewable certificates at the same level as their base level of certification by passing GACE examinations in subject areas. Teachers who have passed GACE and want to add the field to their teacher certificates may submit applications to Certification.

21. Can a paraprofessional exempt the GACE Parapro Assessment by scoring at least 1000 on the SAT?

No. Paraprofessionals cannot exempt the GACE Parapro Assessment by scoring 1000 on the SAT. No Child Left Behind requires that paraprofessionals hired after January 8, 2002 to have one of the following:

- Completion of at least two years of study at an institution of higher education; or
- An associate's (or higher) degree; or
- Met a rigorous standard of quality and can demonstrate through a state or local academic assessment:
 - ◆ Knowledge of, and ability to assist in instructing, reading, writing, and mathematics; or
 - ◆ Knowledge of, and ability to assist in instructing, reading, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness, as appropriate.

22. Can a paraprofessional be assigned to work with a teacher who is not highly qualified?

No. Title I of *No Child Left Behind*, Section 119, (G) (3) (A) states that paraprofessionals may not provide any instructional service to a student unless the paraprofessional is working under the direct supervision of a highly qualified teacher.

23. Can a teacher use experience as a paraprofessional to earn points on the HOUSSE evaluation?

No. Experience must be earned by teaching the subject/content area in a public or private P-12 school.

24. Are aides covered by the highly qualified requirement under No Child Left Behind?

No. The requirement addresses paraprofessionals, not aides.

25. Under No Child Left Behind, do vocational education teachers have to be highly qualified?

Under *No Child Left Behind*, teachers of core academic subjects must be “highly qualified.” Vocational education, health and physical education courses are not considered core academic subjects.

26. What are the core academic subjects in Georgia?

The core academic subjects in Georgia are English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, history, geography, visual arts, music, band and chorus.

27. Has there been a change in the definition of the arts in Georgia?

While the list of core academic subjects in the statute includes the arts, it does not define specifically which arts courses are core academic subjects. States may decide which arts

courses will be considered as core academic subjects. Effective November 2003, the core academic subjects in the arts in Georgia are visual arts, music, band and chorus. Dance and drama are not considered core academic subjects in Georgia.

28. How can I obtain information about Georgia's policies on highly qualified teachers as required by No Child Left Behind?

You may refer to the draft document: Georgia Implementation Guidelines, The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001: Title II Part A, Criteria for Highly Qualified Teachers located at www.gapsc.com. This document is stamped "draft" since it is considered a "living document" that will be revised as needed. However, it is an authoritative document intended to guide school system efforts to implement Title II-A requirements. For additional assistance, you may also contact the consultant for your school district at www.gapsc.com/nclb/home.html.

29. Where is testing information for educators located?

Testing information for educators may be located at the following web addresses:

<http://www.gace.nesinc.com>

30. Does an ESOL teacher teaching English need to be “highly qualified”?

Yes. English is a core academic subject. Under *No Child Left Behind*, all teachers teaching core academic subjects must be highly qualified. If the students are not receiving academic credit for the course, the teacher is not required to be “highly qualified”.

Neither the ESOL endorsement nor the ESOL (P-12) certificates are sufficient to meet NCLB requirements for demonstration of content knowledge. Teachers who hold ESOL endorsements or certificates and who teach core academic subjects identified by course number must meet the same “highly qualified” requirements as all core academic subject teachers. This includes teachers of any secondary (9-12) English Language Arts courses with a “23” prefix, including those designated ESOL I, II, III and /or IV.

ESOL (P-12) certified teachers and teachers holding a professional certificate in any field with the ESOL endorsement are in-field to teach any ESOL course in grades P-12 (course prefix “55”). These ESOL course are not considered core academic subject courses.

31. What core academic subjects am I considered highly qualified to teach by passing Praxis II Middle Grades Generalist or TCT Middle Childhood examinations prior to 2002?

After July 1, 2006, all middle grades teachers will need to have the areas of concentration that they are highly qualified to teach added to their certificate. This may require teachers to add course work, pass **GACE** tests, or add endorsements.

32. Can you provide an update on issues related to Middle Grades?

The GAPSC mandated that middle grades teachers be certified for the field in which they teach, a requirement to be phased in gradually over several school years. The Middle Grades Rule, effective June 1, 2002, established the schedule for the middle grades phase-in. The same schedule continues under the new Middle Grades Rule, effective March 15, 2004. (See http://www.gapsc.com/TeacherCertification/Documents/Cert_Rules_12_03/505-2-.084.pdf)

The following is the phase-in timeframe in which school systems must get their middle school teachers certified in the fields in which they are teaching.

- 2004–2005 - 50%
- 2005–2006 - 75%
- 2006–2007 - 100%

Teachers who were issued a Middle Grades certificate and passed the Praxis II Middle Grades Generalist or the TCT Middle Childhood examination prior to 2002 have met the highly qualified requirements for social studies, science, language arts, reading and mathematics in grades 4-8, which includes 4th and 5th grades until July 1, 2006. After July 1, 2006, veteran teachers who were issued a middle grades certificate must have established concentrations through coursework, passed GACE content test in the appropriate middle grades field, or met the HOUSSE requirement in order to be considered “highly qualified,” provided the teachers’ assignments are appropriate for their certification areas and levels.

33. Is there a reading GACE test available?

The Early Childhood GACE (Test 001 and 002) includes reading as an assessed content area and will, upon passing, provide the teacher with “highly qualified” status for the elementary grades. A Middle Grades Reading GACE (Test 012) is available in Georgia. Even though the Middle Grades GACE Reading test is not currently validated for high school teachers, it may be used to establish content knowledge for high school reading teachers. The certificate for high school teachers who pass the Middle Grades Reading test will indicate Middle Grades Reading, not secondary school Reading. The Reading GACE (Test 117 and Test 118) is for those teachers who want to become Reading Specialists. Reading Specialists are highly qualified to teach reading to students in grades K-12.

34. Which certificates indicate that a teacher is “highly qualified”?

Teachers holding the following certificates are considered highly qualified if they are assigned to teach in their content area:

- Clear Renewable certificates
- Performance-Based certificates
- Provisional certificates

Intern certificates

Exchange certificates

Teachers holding a non-renewable certificate are considered highly qualified if they pass the GACE content test, or have a major/concentration in the content area, or obtain 100 points on HOUSSE, and be assigned to teach in their content area.

Teachers holding the following certificate are not considered highly qualified:

Waiver

35. What is HOUSSE?

HOUSSE is an acronym for High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation that is designed to assess veteran teachers' competency in academic subjects in which they teach by documenting years of teaching experience, college course work, professional development, service, scholarship, and teacher effectiveness related to the content areas in question. Detailed directions with examples for completing the rubric are available on the Georgia PSC website: <http://www.gapsc.com/nclb/home.html>.

Effective Fall 2006, the HOUSSE is available for a small number of multi-subject special education teachers, returning retired teachers and teachers holding life certificates only.

36. How are quarter hours converted to semester hours?

See conversion table below:

CONVERSION OF QUARTER/SEMESTER HOURS

- To convert quarter hours (QH) to semester hours (SH), multiply the number of quarter hours by .6
- To convert semester hours (SH) to quarter hours (QH), divide the number of semester hours by .6. (Use one decimal place and do not round up.)
- 1 PLU/CEU = 1 QH = .6 SH
- 10 Contact Hours = 1 PLU/CEU

Semester Hours	Quarter Hours/ PLU/ CEU
1	1.6
2	3.3
3	5
4	6.6
5	8.3
6	10
7	11.6
8	13.3
9	15
10	16.6
11	18.3
12	20
13	21.6
14	23.3
15	25

Title II-A Handbook: A Guide for Advancing Teacher Quality in Georgia Schools

16	26.6
17	28.3
18	30
19	31.6
20	33.3
21	35
22	36.6
23	38.3
24	40
25	41.6
26	43.3
27	45
28	46.6
29	48.3
30	50
31	51.6
32	53.3
33	55
34	56.6
35	58.3
36	60
37	61.6
38	63.3
39	65
40	66.6
41	68.3
42	70
43	71.6
44	73.3
45	75
46	76.6
47	78.3
48	80
49	81.6
50	83.3
51	85
52	86.6
53	88.3
54	90
55	91.6
56	93.3
57	95
58	96.6
59	98.3
60	100

37. What is HiQ?

HiQ is the Professional Standards Commission's web-based educator inventory system. HiQ assists school systems in complying with the requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* by profiling teachers, long-term substitutes and paraprofessionals. Educators teaching in core academic areas are rated as "highly qualified" or "not highly qualified" by comparing their teaching assignments to their certification history and other indicators of content knowledge appropriate to the teaching assignments.

Log-on to the Professional Standards Commission's Online Service Center at <http://www.gapsc.org> and click the lime green button labeled "HiQ2".

38. How is a long-term substitute defined? What are the PSC reporting requirements for long-term substitutes?

Long-term substitute teachers should be reported to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission if they meet the following criteria: First, the long-term substitutes are teachers that taught in a classroom for four (4) consecutive weeks or more during the school year in a Title I or non-Title I school. If arrangements have been made for the use of long-term substitutes later in the school year, these persons should also be included in the annual long-term substitute report.

Second, long-term substitutes are teachers that are teaching a core academic subject. In Georgia, the core academic subjects include English, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, foreign language, civics and government, economics, history, geography, visual arts, music, band and chorus.

Third, long-term substitute teachers were the sole "teachers of record" and there were no regular teachers under contract for the classes. Reports on long-term substitutes should not include persons substituting for regular teachers who are simply away temporarily and expected to return, such as teachers on medical or maternity leave. The long-term substitute situations that should be identified and reported are those in which the school system was not been able to hire a teacher for the class and had to use a long-term substitute.

Long-term substitutes should be reported to the Professional Standards Commission for teachers employed in Title I and non-Title I schools who meet all three criteria: The person is teaching a core academic class for a period of four (4) consecutive weeks (20 consecutive school days) or more and is in a classroom that does not have a regular teacher on contract.

Long-term substitutes must be reported on HiQ2 at <http://www.gapsc.org>

Please Note: Parent Notification for Title I Schools and Programs

The No Child Left Behind Act requires each LEA to notify parents of any teacher who is NOT "highly qualified" (including long-term substitutes, teachers on temporary leave, etc.) if he/she teaches a core academic subject for four (4) consecutive weeks or more. This required parent notification applies specifically to teachers in Title I School-wide or Targeted Assistance programs as well as non-Title I schools.

Private Schools

39. Are private school teachers, principals, and other educational personnel eligible to participate in the Title II-A, Improving Teacher Quality State Grants program?

Under the Improving Teacher Quality State Grants program, private school teachers, principals, and other educational personnel are eligible to participate to the extent that the LEA uses funds to provide for professional development for teachers and others. Systems are required to provide private school teachers, and other educational personnel with educational services on an equitable basis and in a timely manner.

To ensure timely and meaningful consultation, an LEA must consult with appropriate private school officials during the design and development of the proposed programs.

The system is required to contact appropriate officials of all private schools within the boundaries of the school district annually to determine if they want their teachers to participate in the Improving Teacher Quality State Grants program, regardless of whether or not those officials have recently indicated any interest in program participation.

To meet its general record-keeping responsibility, an LEA should document that: (a) representatives of private schools were informed of the availability of Improving Teacher Quality State Grants services; (b) the needs of private and public school teachers were identified as part of a district-wide needs assessment; (c) private school officials were consulted and provided an opportunity for input into the planning of the system's program activities; and (d) the LEA approved a budget that permitted equitable participation for private schools.

Parents

40. Are school systems required to inform parents about the quality of its teachers?

At the beginning of each school year, all school systems that accept Title I Part A funding must notify parents of students in Title I schools that they can request information regarding their child's teacher, including, at a minimum: (1) whether the teacher has met the State requirements for licensure and certification for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; (2) whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; (3) the college major and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the

field of discipline of the certification or degree; and (4) whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications. Notice via standard mail or student handbooks (parent signature required) are both approved methods of informing parents.

41. Are Title I schools within the system required to provide parents with any additional information about the schools' teachers?

In a timely manner, an individual school must also notify parents:

- When their child has been assigned to a teacher who does not meet the qualifications of a highly qualified teacher, or
- When their child has been taught for four (4) or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet the highly qualified requirements

After July 1, 2006, ALL schools (both Title I and non Title I) within the system are required to notify parents:

- When their child has been assigned to a teacher who does not meet the qualifications of a highly qualified teacher, or
- When their child has been taught for four (4) or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet the highly qualified requirements

Additional Assistance

42. How can I get additional information about Title II Part A, Improving Teacher Quality?

For additional information on Title II, Part A, Improving Teacher Quality, you may visit the Title II-A Web site at <http://www.gapsc.com/nclb/home.html>, contact the Title II-A consultant in your area (www.gapsc.com/nclb/Contact/IIA_map.pdf), or call the Georgia Professional Standards Commission at (404) 232-2643.