

OFFICE OF CHIEF ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Item
Consent Agenda
August 21, 2025

OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEADING
OFFICE OF EDUCATOR LICENSURE

- H. Approval of a temporary rule and to begin the Administrative Procedures Act Process: To revise Miss. Admin. Code 7 – 4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12 to remove references to and associated requirements related to the Highly Qualified Teacher Status as formerly defined and required by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
(Has cleared the Administrative Procedures Act process without public comments)

Background Information: In accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2, the purpose and duty of the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development (Licensure Commission) is to make recommendations to the Mississippi Board of Education regarding standards for the certification, licensure, and continuing professional development of individuals who teach or perform educational tasks in Mississippi's public schools.

Therefore, on June 3, 2025, during a special-called meeting, the members of the Licensure Commission granted approval to petition the Mississippi State Board of Education to consider approving a temporary rule and to begin the Administrative Procedures Act process to remove from the Licensure Guidelines, references to and associated requirements related to the Highly Qualified Teacher Status as formerly defined and required by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 which was replaced by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015.

The NCLB aimed to improve public education by holding schools, districts, and states accountable for student performance. A key requirement of NCLB was that teachers providing direct instruction and assigning grades to students in core academic subjects be considered “highly qualified.”

In 2015, ESSA replaced significant portions of NCLB. While ESSA maintained the requirement for standardized testing, it provided greater flexibility in how tests are administered and how teachers are evaluated. Notably, ESSA eliminated the federal requirement for teachers to meet the “highly qualified” teacher standard.

In essence, ESSA shifted from the NCLB's focus on qualifications to that of educator effectiveness which harnesses a focus on a teacher's ability to positively impact student growth and achievement.

The temporary rule and final action are necessary to implement the policy revisions immediately upon its filing with the Secretary of State in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 25-43-3.113(2)(b)(ii). See also Miss. Code Ann. § 25-43-3.108. For a rule to become effective immediately upon its filing, the Board is required to make a finding that the rule only confers a benefit or removes a restriction on the public or some segment thereof.

The public comment period was open from June 19, 2025, through 5:00 p.m. July 21, 2025. The MDE received no public comments.

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

APPENDIX G
Guidelines for “Highly Qualified” Status

NEW TEACHERS

~~The “No Child Left Behind Act” of 2001 (NCLB Act) mandates that teachers new to the profession (employed for the first time in a Mississippi public school after the first day of school 2002-2003) meet the following “highly qualified” status:~~

New Elementary K-6

- ~~Hold a baccalaureate degree~~
- ~~Complete one of the following:~~
 - 1. ~~an approved pre-service teacher preparation program for elementary education from a regionally/nationally accredited Institution of Higher Learning~~ **OR**
 - 2. ~~an approved alternate route to certification program (4-6 only)~~
- ~~Pass designated Praxis tests~~

New Secondary 7-12

- ~~Hold a baccalaureate degree~~
- ~~Complete one of the following:~~
 - 1. ~~an approved pre-service teacher preparation program for middle/secondary education from a regionally/nationally accredited Institution of Higher Learning~~ **OR**
 - 2. ~~an approved alternate route certification program for middle/secondary education~~
- ~~Pass designated Praxis tests~~
- ~~Hold an endorsement for every core academic subject taught (*English, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, foreign language, civics, government, economics, arts, history, geography*)~~

VETERAN TEACHERS

The “No Child Left Behind Act” of 2001 (NCLB Act) mandates that teachers *not new* to the profession (employed in a Mississippi public school before or on the first day of school, 2002–2003) have until the end of the 2005–2006 school year to meet the following “highly qualified” status:

Veteran Elementary K–6

- Hold at least a bachelor’s degree
- Pass the Praxis Subject Assessment
- Hold at least a valid Class A Educator License
- Teach in a grade covered by that license

Veteran Secondary School 7–12

- Hold at least a bachelor’s degree
- Hold at least a Class A Educator License with an endorsement for every core academic subject taught (*English, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, foreign language, civics, government, economics, arts, history, geography*)

Options for “Highly Qualified” Status for Secondary School 7–12:

- Pass the Praxis Subject Assessment), **OR**
- Pass Praxis Subject Assessment (assessment for middle school available 9/04), **OR**
- Hold a master’s degree in each core academic subject taught, **OR**
 - Obtain an endorsement with a minimum of 18 hours of coursework with a grade of “C” or higher for each core academic subject taught (*English, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, foreign language, civics, government, economics, arts, history, geography*)