

Dear Parent or Guardian,

On January 8, 2002, President Bush signed the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 into law. The law states that any school that receives funds for educationally disadvantaged students (Title I funds) must inform parents if their child is assigned a teacher for **four** or more consecutive weeks who is not "highly qualified" under NCLB.

According to the *No Child Left Behind* law, a "highly qualified" teacher is one who:

1. Has obtained a Bachelor's degree or higher;
2. Has obtained full State certification - in South Dakota this means that the teacher has a South Dakota teaching license; and
3. Has demonstrated competency in the core academic subject area(s) that he/she teaches by passing a content area test or having a major in the content.

The core academic subjects are English; Reading or Language Arts; Mathematics; Science; Foreign Languages; Social Studies (Civics, Government, Economics, History, Geography) The Arts (visual arts & Music).

All teachers who teach the core academic subjects (have/had) until the end of the (2006/2007) to meet all three NCLB requirements. Although South Dakota has some of the most demanding certification requirements in the country, these requirements do not automatically mean that every teacher meets the highly qualified standard, even if he or she has been teaching for years and has been performing at high levels. Certain teachers, even outstanding veteran teachers, may need to take the time to comply with the new expectations if they happen to change class assignments and do not have the proper certification.

As of this writing, your child's teacher (Mr./Ms._____) has met the (*Bachelor's degree requirement/State certification requirement/subject matter competency requirement*), but has yet to complete the (*requirement*). (*He/she*) is, however, currently working to meet the new requirement and we have full confidence in (*his/her*) ability to teach effectively in this assignment.

If you have any questions regarding (*teacher's name*) qualifications, please feel free to contact (me/the district office). For additional information about the federal highly qualified teacher requirements and South Dakota policies related to them, please visit the South Dakota Department of Education website at: <http://doe.sd.gov/oatq/> and look for the link related to highly qualified teachers!