



## Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

— Making a positive difference through education and service —

August 22, 2006

Dear

The federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act requires teachers of core academic subjects, (English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, the arts, and social studies) to be “highly-qualified.” NCLB defines highly-qualified teachers as those with at least a bachelor’s degree, full certification in the subjects they are teaching, and the documentation of content expertise.

Missouri has a long history of rigorous requirements for teacher certification, including, since 1988, the Praxis II exam for teacher certification. We felt that our certification and accreditation standards met the spirit of NCLB’s requirements. The U.S. Department of Education, however, disagrees, so we must now take steps to document the content expertise of about 16,500 veteran teachers.

Enclosed is a list of teachers in your district for the **2005-2006 school year**. The people on the list have assignments for which they are qualified under Missouri regulations. However, their certificates were issued prior to a requirement for a content area test. Therefore, the individuals listed do not automatically meet the federal definition to be a “highly qualified” teacher. The enclosed forms provide an alternative method for you to document these teachers’ content expertise.

High school special education teachers teaching in a designated content area also may be able to use this process to become “highly-qualified.” If your special education teachers cannot meet the rule for the content area that they teach or demonstrate content knowledge by having Missouri certification in the content area, you may want to consider a different delivery model for teaching students with disabilities at the high school level. Missouri’s class within a class model or a co-teaching model of instruction is a way to meet the requirement through a collaborative teaching partnership that accentuates the skills and expertise of both the special education and the content teacher. Please note that high school social studies teachers are NOT included in the enclosed list. We have been able to document their content expertise through another process.

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For the teachers listed, this is a one-time process. Their status as highly qualified teachers in the subject area will be established, and we will not need to collect this information again.

**Also enclosed** is a "High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation" (HOUSSE) form for each of the educators and content areas to be reviewed. This form is to be completed and kept on file in the district. Please note that it asks for an educator's signature. If that person is no longer in the district, or it would be difficult to acquire the signature, a district representative's signature on the summary page is acceptable.

**Please give this matter your immediate attention.** We are required to submit updated information to the U.S. Department of Education by November 1. The only item to be returned to our office is the summary form on which you should check "Yes" or "No" to indicate each teacher's status.

The summary form is to be completed and mailed to Federal Grants Management, PO Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102 or faxed to 573-526-6698 **before Monday, October 2, 2006**. If you have questions about this material, please contact Randy Rook, Federal Grants Management, at 573-751-3468.

Sincerely,



D. Kent King

Enclosures