

**Acceptable Alternative Routes to Certification
Programs under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act**

The Board-approved Alternative Certification Programs and post-baccalaureate programs whose letter of intent have been reviewed and approved by SBEC have been annotated with the letters "NCLB" to reflect compliance with the USDE provisions. Individuals in these programs will serve on the Probationary Certificate during their year of internship as a teacher of record and can be considered as "highly qualified".

When hiring a teacher for a Title I campus that has not completed all requirements for certification in Texas the district should ensure:

1. the teacher has at least a baccalaureate degree,
2. is enrolled in an acceptable alternate route to certification program that has been reviewed under the NCLB criteria, and
3. has demonstrated content mastery. These teachers will fulfill the requirements of the USDE "highly qualified" under NCLB.

a. **Options available for demonstration of competency:** A "new" teacher, that is a teacher who is new to the profession, is much more limited in how competency may be demonstrated.

- i. A new elementary teacher may demonstrate competency only by passing the appropriate elementary ExCET or TExES exam.
- ii. A new secondary teacher may demonstrate competency in his/her subject by passing the subject-specific ExCET or TExES exam, or by having college coursework equivalent to an academic major in the subject.

USDE rule 34 CFR §200.56(a)(2)(ii) allows for a teacher participating in an alternative route to certification program who holds at least a bachelor's degree and has demonstrated subject area mastery to also be considered "highly qualified." The cited rule establishes standards for an acceptable alternative route to certification program as being one that:

1. Provides high-quality professional development that is sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction before and while teaching;
2. Provides intensive supervision that consists of structured guidance and regular on-going support for teachers or a teacher mentoring program;
3. Allows the candidate to assume the functions as a teacher only for a specified period of time not to exceed three years; and
4. Requires the teacher to demonstrate satisfactory progress toward full certification as prescribed by the State.