The Elementary & Secondary Education Act (as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001) requires that all public schools have "highly qualified" teachers for core academic subject areas. SFUSD is committed to hiring teachers who meet the ESEA definition of a highly qualified teacher. Teachers are highly qualified compliant (HQT) when they meet the following criteria:

1. Hold at least a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college/university
2. Hold the appropriate state certification for each core subject taught
3. Demonstrate subject-matter competency in each core academic subject taught

The core subject areas are:

- Elementary/Multiple Subjects
- English/Reading/Language Arts
- Arts – Visual, Music, Drama, Dance
- Foreign Languages
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Science – History, Government, Economics, Geography

What is not a CORE subject area?

Generally, physical education and career technical education (CTE) courses are not core subjects under ESEA. If a dance class provides a student with physical education credit, then HQT requirements do not apply. If a CTE course is an alternate way to meet graduation requirements, then the HQT requirements do apply.

ESEA-HQ does not apply to librarians, speech therapists, school counselors, psychologists, social workers, or other related service providers.

NEW or NOT NEW

Your status as NEW or NOT NEW to the profession determines the options you may use to become highly qualified. If you received any type of intern, preliminary, professional or clear credential from any states BEFORE July 1, 2002, you are considered NOT NEW. All others are NEW.

Elementary New:

If you are new and are teaching at the Elementary level, you must pass a CCTC approved examination (currently the CSET-Multiple Subjects) in order to be highly qualified.

If you took the CSET or MSAT or another state’s examination, please subject evidence to test passage and we will update our records accordingly. A Special Education PRAXIS exam is not sufficient to be found highly qualified in California.
Elementary Not New:
If your first intern or preliminary credential was issued prior to July 1, 2002, then you have two methods for demonstrating subject matter competency in Elementary/Multiple Subjects.
• Pass a CCTC approved exam in multiple subjects
• Complete the HOUSSE qualification process.
  Review, complete, and submit the California Department of Education’s HOUSSE forms for approval. It is available here: http://www.cde.ca.gov/nclb/sr/tq/

Secondary New:
New secondary teachers may demonstrate subject matter competency through:
• Exam option: Pass a CTC-approved subject-matter exam in the ESEA core academic subject area
• Course work option:
  o CTC-approved single subject matter program in the core area
  o Major in the core area
  o Graduate degree in the core area
  o Major equivalent in the core area (32 units)
• Advanced Certification option: National Board Certification or Subject Matter Verification for Middle and High School Level Teachers in Special Settings (VPSS) in the core area

A “new” secondary special education teacher who is highly qualified in mathematics, English, or science, when hired, may use the HOUSSE process to demonstrate subject matter competency in the other core academic subjects he or she is teaching not later than two years after the date of employment.

Secondary Not New:
“Not new” middle/high school teachers have four options to demonstrate subject-matter competency:
• Exam option
• Course work option
• Advanced Certification option
• HOUSSE option: Completion of Part 1 and/or Part 2 of HOUSSE (see Chart 1 at the end of Section 1) in the core area

SPECIAL EDUCATION:
Special education teachers providing direct instruction must be certified in each subject taught. For elementary teachers, this means certification in Multiple Subjects. Most secondary level special education teachers must be highly qualified in one of the above core subject areas.
If a special education teacher provides only consultation services to the teacher of core academic subjects or delivers special instructional assistance only in the classroom in which the core academic subject is taught, he or she is not required to be ESEA-compliant. These teachers may carry out such activities as adapting curricula, using behavioral supports and interventions, or selecting appropriate accommodations for students. In addition, the special education teacher does not have to meet ESEA requirements if he or she assists students with study skills or organizational skills and reinforces instruction that the child has already received from a teacher who is HQ.

If you provide resource or itinerant services only, we recommend you obtain HQ status in either Multiple Subjects or any other core subject to provide maximum flexibility in your assignments. If a teacher only provides specific special education services such speech therapy or mobility for students with visual impairments, then HQ status is not required.

**VPSS**

The California Department of Education (CDE) recognized that there are circumstances when teachers in special settings such as Special Education, Alternative settings (such as continuation high schools) teach many, and sometimes all subjects. Teachers who provide core academic instruction in these environments must still meet the same ESEA teacher requirements other secondary teachers. To assist in the process, CDE created the subject matter Verification Process for Middle and High School Level Teachers in Special Settings (VPSS).

VPSS is an advanced certification and therefore available to “new” and “not new” teachers assigned to teacher in secondary special education programs. These essentially provide condensed course work on the content standards. There are counties that offer on-line VPSS courses that would provide the needed subject matter competency in Math, English, Social Studies, and Science. This is an alternative to taking a CSET in a subject or additional classes at a traditional university.

**Documenting Compliance:**

Upon request, a previous employer can issue a certificate of compliance verifying a teacher’s HQT status. Out-of-state HQT compliance may be transferable to California. If you do not have certificate of compliance, then you will need to show subject matter competency through exam results or applicable transcripts. Paper certificates indicating your HQ status are available upon request. Please contact the ESEA-HQ Compliance office for general questions. You may also contact us at highlyqualified@sfusd.edu if you have further questions.

*For additional information about the teacher quality component in California, please see: [http://www.cde.ca.gov/nclb/sr/tq/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/nclb/sr/tq/)*