

HOUSSE for Multi-Subject Special Education Teachers in Secondary Schools
Who is eligible for Colorado’s Multi-Subject Special Education HOUSSE?

Based on *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB), the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), and guidance from the U.S. Department of Education, the following are the eligibility criteria for special education teachers to use this HOUSSE provision. Candidates must meet all criteria that apply to be eligible for the HOUSSE provision

- Candidate is the sole provider of instruction for two or more core content classes in a secondary grade (i.e., 6th through 12th grade).
- Candidate has a Colorado license with the proper special education endorsements.
- (If new teacher: less than one full year of teaching experience) Candidate is already highly qualified in at least language arts, math or science without the use of this HOUSSE provision.

Do all secondary-level special education teachers have to be highly qualified in core academic areas?

No. Only those special education teachers who are the sole deliverer of instruction in a core content area need to be highly qualified. Special education teachers who provide consultation and resources to subject-certified regular education teachers by performing activities such as co-teaching, supplementing instruction, adapting curriculum, selecting accommodations, and providing behavioral supports/interventions are not considered the teacher of record. While these teachers do not need to be highly qualified in core academic areas, they must still meet the requirements applicable to all special education teachers (e.g., proper endorsement).

Who is a secondary-level teacher?

Secondary teachers teach any grade from sixth through twelfth grade. Elementary teachers teach kindergarten through 6th grade.

Notice that sixth grade overlaps at both the elementary and secondary levels. If the 6th grade teacher is teaching general elementary, he/she must meet the elementary requirements to be highly qualified. If she/he is teaching a content area, she/he may meet either the elementary or the secondary requirements to be highly qualified.

Standard HOUSSE Questions
What is a HOUSSE?

Under the federal *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) law, all teachers must be “highly qualified.” To be considered highly qualified in Colorado, a teacher must: (1) hold a bachelor’s degree, (2) be fully licensed in Colorado, and (3) demonstrate subject-matter competency in the core academic areas in which he or she teaches.

States have been allowed to create High Objective Uniform State Standards of Evaluation (HOUSSE) as an alternative way to demonstrate subject matter competency for certain categories of teachers. Currently, Colorado has created (1) an Elementary HOUSSE for Veteran Teachers, (2) a Secondary HOUSSE for Multi-Subject Special Education Teachers and (3) a Secondary HOUSSE for Multi-Subject Rural Teachers. Colorado is also considering a HOUSSE provision for International Teachers.

What are the core academic content areas?

English, Reading, or Language Arts; Mathematics; Science; Foreign Languages; Social Studies (Civics, Government, History, Geography, Economics); the Arts (Visual Arts, Drama, and Music).

Seventh and eighth grade teachers who act like a generalist elementary teacher (i.e., teaches at least three core subjects) may also be considered highly qualified by meeting the elementary requirements. In many instances, it may be easier for teachers to become highly qualified this way, rather than using the multi-subject HOUSSE provision.

What about secondary special education teachers who typically teach students performing at low achievement levels as a result of their disabilities? At what level do these teachers need to be highly-qualified?

If the teacher is working *exclusively* with students who are working toward alternate standards which are below the secondary level (e.g., CSAP A eligible), then the teacher must meet the elementary qualifications to be highly qualified. In that case, this HOUSSE provision would not apply.

Do teachers need to be highly qualified under this HOUSSE for each core subject areas they teach?

Yes. LEAs must gather evidence that each core academic class is taught by a highly qualified teacher. The multi-subject HOUSSE does not waive this requirement; it provides a more flexible way to gather the necessary evidence. It should be noted that Colorado allows teachers who teach multiple science subjects (e.g., chemistry, biology, and/or physics) and multiple social studies subjects (e.g., history, economics, geography) to show that they are generally qualified in science and/or social studies.

When will the new HOUSSE provisions be available?

The special education HOUSSE provision became available in spring 2007. To submit new data, LEAs will complete the HOUSSE rubric through the online HQ Teacher Plan system. This online system opens once the initial HR Collection (through ADE) closes in late winter.

If a special education teacher becomes highly qualified in multiple subjects under the special education HOUSSE provision and then moves to teaching in general education classes, is the teacher still consider highly qualified in those subjects?

No. This is one situation where a teacher's HQ status is not portable. The teacher would need to meet criteria for being highly qualified like other general education teachers.

What assistance is available to teachers to help them meet the requirements of this HOUSSE?

The type of assistance available to non-highly qualified teachers is an LEA decision. Title II funds are aimed at getting teachers highly qualified and becoming highly effective.

Acknowledgement

A special thanks to everyone that participated on the Teacher Quality Committee that created the HOUSSSE for Multi-Subject Special Education Teachers in Secondary Schools.

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