Title II, Part A, Improving Teacher Quality

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **What is the purpose of the needs assessment?**
   The needs assessment is a systematic process to acquire an accurate, thorough picture of the strengths and weaknesses of a school community that can be used in response to the academic needs of all students for improving student achievement and meeting challenging academic standards. The needs assessment is a process that collects and examines information about school-wide issues and then utilizes that data to determine priority goals, develop a plan, and allocate funds and resources.

2. **Who should participate in the needs assessment?**
   Parents, teachers, administrators, and other community members should be included in gathering data.

3. **What types of data should be collected for the needs assessment?**
   Staff Surveys, continuous improvement plans, Strategic Improvement Plans, student achievement data gleaned from K-2 portfolio assessments, End-of-Grade tests, End-of-Course tests, EVAAS, benchmarks, and school improvement plans may all be components of the needs assessment.

4. **Why is it pertinent to collect and analyze data?**
   Data is used to determine the LEAs strengths and weaknesses and to understand the current and future needs of the school, students, parents, teachers and the community, to determine short and long term goals, to develop a plan, and allocate resources.

5. **How should the funds be targeted?**
   Priority for Title II, Part A funds should be targeted to schools that have the lowest proportion of Highly Qualified (HQ) teachers, have the largest average class size, and are identified for school improvement under Title I, Section 1116(b), 2122(b)(3). Funds should also be used to ensure an equitable distribution of HQ teachers. The LEA should first target funds to assist with getting teachers HQ as soon as possible if it has not reached 100% HQ Status. Funds may also be targeted for recruitment and retention of HQ Teachers to schools with high poverty levels, and professional development for teachers, principals, and paraprofessionals.

6. **What must be addressed in the LEA Title II, Part A plan?**
   Based on the amount of funding and the results of the LEA/Charter needs assessment, it may not be possible to address each identified need. If the LEA/Charter does not have an Highly Qualified (HQ) status of 100%, then funds should be focused on helping teachers become HQ and an annual increase in HQ teachers. If the LEA/Charter has not met AYP, the funds should be focused on enhancing subject matter and teaching skills and an annual increase in the percentage

of teachers receiving HQ professional development for meeting the needs of students not making AYP. The local plan should describe the system's uses of Title II-A funds and why those uses are likely to produce positive results in teaching practice and student achievement throughout the school system. Local plans are intended to have each school system "think outside the box." In developing the plan, school district administrators, teachers, and other school staff should work together to comprehensively examine all approaches and strategies that can help the LEA ensure that all of its veteran and newly-hired teachers are HQ and that they are able to help all students succeed academically to the fullest extent.

7. **Why is the LEA required to communicate or consult with the non-public (private) schools regarding equitable participation with Title II, Part A activities? What are those specific consultation requirements?**

   No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires that LEAs must contact private schools within the boundaries of the school district **annually** to determine if the private schools want their teachers to participate in Title IIA-funded activities. School district personnel must consult with appropriate private school officials during the design, development, and implementation of the district's professional development plans to ensure the proposed activities meet the needs of the participating private school.

8. **When must the consultation take place?**

   The consultation with the non-public (private) schools must happen prior to the district decisions being made to determine if their teachers want to participate in the Title IIA-funded activities. Consultation is an ongoing process and must take place throughout the year to ensure the needs of the private school teachers are being met. The consultations must be documented whether via phone calls, emails or site visits.

9. **What information must be maintained as documentation of the consultation process?**

   The LEA must document the date, time, names of involved parties, and location of the consultation. The LEA must maintain documentation that serves as evidence that private school officials were provided an opportunity for input into the planning of the district's federally funded activities. The LEA must maintain documentation that the needs of both private and public school teachers were identified as part of the district's needs assessment, and that the LEA designed a project that permitted equitable participation by the private school.

10. **What does consultation cover?**

    The consultation covers the amount of funds available to serve the private school teachers, how the needs of private schools teachers will be met, what professional development services will be offered and how and where the services will be provided.

11. What are the characteristics of services provided private schools?

The services provided to private schools must begin at the same time that services begin in the public school; must be secular, neutral and non-ideological; must be provided independently of private school or any religious organization. Private school staff may not be hired to provide training.

12. What Title II A services are available to private school teachers?

Professional development for core teachers is the only Title IIA service available private schools. The professional development provided must be used to measurably raise student achievement.

13. Why must LEAs complete a Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) Improvement and or HQT Accountability Plan/Financial Agreement?

LEAs were expected to meet the annual measurable objective (AMO) of 100% core subject area classes taught by HQTs by 2006. For those LEAs unable to meet the HQ expectation in the time provided, Section 2141 of NCLB requires NCDPI to impose accountability requirements by developing an HQT Improvement Plan and/or a HQT accountability Plan/Financial Agreement.
http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/federalprograms/titleII/a/

14. How is the HQT Improvement Plan different from the HQT Accountability Plan/ Financial Agreement?

The HQT Improvement Plan is to be completed by LEAs that have not met the annual measurable objective of 100% core academic subject classes taught by highly qualified teachers for two consecutive years. The plan specifically addresses the issues that prevented the LEA from meeting the goal. The HQT Accountability Plan/Financial Agreement must be completed by LEAs that have not met the AMO of 100% core academic classes taught by highly qualified teachers for three consecutive years and also do not make adequate yearly progress (AYP) for three consecutive years are required to enter into a financial agreement with NCDPI on the use of the LEA's Title II Part A funds. The agreement ensures that all core academic teachers in the LEA will meet HQT requirements and Title II Part A funds are used in the process.

15. What does this mean for LEAs and how does it affect the use of Title I Part A funds and Title II Part A funds?

The Plans require LEAs to use Title II Part A funds to support teachers in their endeavors to become highly qualified and to enter into an agreement with NCDPI on the use of their funds. As part of the agreement, NCDPI shall develop (in conjunction with the LEA) strategies and activities for teachers and principals that the LEA will implement using Title II, Part A funds to assist core subject teachers in becoming highly qualified. After the LEA has been identified to complete the HQT Accountability Plan/Financial Agreement, Title I Part A funds must not be used by the LEA to hire any paraprofessional except when certain conditions apply. These conditions include:

- The need to fill a vacancy created by the departure of another paraprofessional funded under Title I and such new paraprofessional satisfies the Title I requirements (1119(c)).
- A significant influx of population which has substantially increased student enrollment (C)(i).
- An increased need for translators or assistance with parental involvement activities (C)(ii).

16. What if an LEA has to employ a teacher that is not Highly Qualified?

In the case that the LEA may have to hire a teacher who does not meet HQT requirements, or reassign a teacher who does not meet HQT requirements, the LEA should retain all documentation related to announcing the teaching position and its efforts to recruit HQ candidates, applications and resumes received, and all notes for the interviewing and selection process. The LEA should notify NCDPI, Division of Educator Recruitment and Development, Assistant Director or Title II Specialist and make sure Title II Part A funds are utilized to assist the teacher in becoming highly qualified as soon as possible. The LEA must ensure that the teacher receives support and assistance related to content knowledge, and complete the Individualized Teacher Plan for Achieving Highly Qualified Status, located at http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/federalprograms/titleII/a/ and continue to monitor the teacher's progress.