

Objectives:

- 1) Clarify federal teacher certification requirements for charter schools; AND
- 2) Protect charter school autonomy while ensuring schools meet these requirements

While Act 2 removed teacher certification requirements for charter school teachers under state law, charter schools should note that the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act place other requirements on schools. With the passage of Act 2, *ESEA and IDEA’s requirements set a different bar for Louisiana charter school teachers than what is required under state law.*

Background – Federal Requirements

General Education Teachers:

ESEA requires teachers of core academic subjects in public schools, including public charter schools, to demonstrate core area competency to meet highly qualified teacher (HQT) requirements. Core subjects include:

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|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| 1. English | 5. Foreign languages | 9. History |
| 2. Reading or language arts | 6. Civics and government | 10. Geography |
| 3. Mathematics | 7. Economics | |
| 4. Science | 8. Arts | |

Grade Level Taught	ESEA Requirements for Core Area Competency/HQT
Elementary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass a rigorous state test (Praxis exam) on elementary content
Middle/High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass a rigorous state test (Praxis exam) in each content area taught; or Complete an undergraduate major in each content area taught; or Complete a graduate degree in each content area taught; or Complete coursework equivalent to an undergraduate degree in each content area taught; or Complete advanced certification or credentialing in each content area taught.

Special Education Teachers:

IDEA requires teachers in public schools, including public charter schools, to meet the core area competency HQT requirements. The above requirements apply to any special education teacher who:

- 1) is the *primary* teacher of students; *and*
- 2) teaches a core subject listed above; *and*
- 3) has his/her salary paid for using IDEA funds.

Only Special Education teachers who meet *all three* of these criteria need to meet the core area competency HQT requirements. Special education teachers who are *not* the primary teacher in the classroom do not need to meet the core area competency HQT requirements.

Departmental Oversight

Charter schools are expected to be in compliance with the above requirements. These federal requirements will not be included in the Charter School Performance Compact. If a charter school is found to be out of compliance with federal requirements, the Department will support the school as it works to move into compliance.