

**MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION**

**Revised State Plan for Meeting
The Highly Qualified Teacher Goal**

September 29, 2006

Background Information:

Minnesota has always been considered a leader in the field of education. Many initiatives such as charter schools and open enrollment began in Minnesota as a way of providing students and their parents with choices that were more suited to the needs of students. Minnesota takes pride in SAT scores higher than the national scores in all three areas: reading, writing and mathematics. Minnesota 4th and 8th grade students also scored high in reading and math NAEP scores. In 4th grade math, the state ranked in the top five; in 4th grade reading, the state ranked in the top 18. Our 8th grade students scored equally as well. In 8th grade math, the state ranked in the top three and in 8th grade reading, the state ranked in the top 19. These are milestones that Minnesotans take pride in having achieved. However, when Minnesota disaggregates student data into the subgroups required by NCLB, we find that our most needy students are not performing at levels that are comparable to our majority student population. The achievement gap between poverty and non-poverty students has widened; and while we have seen improvement in the achievement of our ELL students, more improvement is needed to reach the goal of proficiency.

Minnesota takes the goals of NCLB seriously and to that end our educational leaders are committed to ensuring that our students receive a quality education. Research studies conducted over the past ten years have been consistent in their findings on the role teachers play in the academic success of students. The single most important factor in determining how much students learn is how much their teachers know - their preparation and qualifications, content knowledge and teaching skill.

Districts and schools:

In preparing this plan the Minnesota Department of Education identified districts and schools where teachers do not meet the highly qualified requirements of NCLB.

Minnesota has 343 districts. These 343 are typically classified into the following categories:

- 2 districts that are considered urban (Minneapolis and St. Paul);
- 46 districts that are considered non-metro and considered to be suburbs;
- 45 districts that are non-metro and have a student enrollment > than 2,000;
- 79 districts that are non-metro and have a student enrollment between 1,000 to 2,000;
- 92 districts that are non-metro and have a student enrollment between 500 to 1,000;
- 79 districts that are non-metro and have a student enrollment < than 500.

As stated above, Minnesota was the first state to promote the creation of charter schools. Under Minnesota Law, charter schools function as a district. They receive state and federal funds directly, hire their own teachers and are governed by a board that is elected

by the parents and teachers at school. Charter schools vary in student enrollment from as few as 24 to as many as 1067 students:

- 4 charter schools have an enrollment > than 500;
- 8 charter schools have an enrollment between 300 and 499;
- 64 charter schools have an enrollment between 100 and 299;
- 49 charter schools have < than 99 students enrolled.

The 296 districts/charter schools with less than 1,000 students enrolled, while not unique, present problems regarding employment of highly qualified (HQ) teachers in subject areas where classes contain few students.

To assist districts in finding teachers to fill hard-to-fill positions, the Minnesota Board of Teaching has granted waivers to districts to permit employing non-licensed teachers for a limited period of time. This practice presents a concern because of the commitment of the Minnesota Department of Education to ensure that all students receive a quality education. A key to achieving this goal is making sure that all students have HQ teachers. The department is concerned that this practice could enable districts to continue the practice of hiring non-HQ teachers beyond the limitations discussed under question 5.2 in this plan. A dialog between the Board of Teaching and the Department of Education has already begun. Resolving this concern will be a priority of the department.

Requirement 1: The revised plan must provide a detailed analysis of the core academic subject classes in the State that are currently not being taught by highly qualified teachers. The analysis must, in particular, address schools that are not making adequate yearly progress and whether or not these schools have more acute needs than do other schools in attracting highly qualified teachers. The analysis must also identify the districts and schools around the State where significant numbers of teachers do not meet HQT standards, and examine whether or not there are particular hard-to-staff courses frequently taught by non-highly qualified teachers.

1.1 Does the plan include an analysis of classes taught by teachers who are not highly qualified? Is the analysis based on accurate classroom level data?

The Minnesota Department of Education implemented the Staff Automated Reporting (STAR) System statewide in 1996-1997. All districts are required to report licensed and non-licensed staff data via the STAR System each October 1. Data collected include eighteen categories of licensed and non-licensed staff by assignment and by race/ethnicity and gender. A comprehensive collection of education-related data such as, but not limited to, full-time equivalencies (FTEs), salary, number of teachers in each content field, students enrolled in courses, education levels and years of experience is also collected.

In addition to the STAR System, a comprehensive web-based system was implemented in 2005-2006 to collect the required “highly qualified” data for every teacher. The assignment data collected via STAR each October 1 pre-populates the web-based “highly qualified” system and school districts are required to indicate the “highly qualified” status of every individual teaching a core academic subject for every assignment reported. The data identify classes taught by “highly qualified” and not “highly qualified” teachers by school, district, region and state. This allows the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to identify staffing needs in schools that are not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and where significant numbers of teachers do not meet “highly qualified” requirements. These data also allow MDE to identify particular groups such as special education, math, science or multi-subject teachers in rural districts who require particular attention. The web-based “highly qualified” system also identifies districts that have a high percentage of classes taught by teachers who are not “highly qualified” and particular courses that are often taught by non-highly qualified teachers, while comparing the “highly qualified” status of teachers in schools in the top quartile of poverty in the state with schools in the remaining quartiles.

As a result of a number of factors including funding, the web-based “highly qualified” system was not developed and implemented until 2005-2006. Consequently, the first year of complete and accurate data is for the 2005-2006 school year. School districts completed entering their data on June 30, 2006. The complete data will be available to the public in the fall of 2006 as a component of Minnesota’s school performance report cards. Thus, parents and taxpayers will be fully informed regarding the percentages of

teachers and classes taught by “highly qualified” teachers in each school, district and in the state.

Table 1 provides HQT data on the number of classes by grade levels and poverty in Minnesota. The overall percentage of classes taught by highly qualified teachers is 97.65%. Thus 2.35% of all classes across the state are taught by non-HQ teachers. When broken down by grade span and poverty, high-poverty secondary school data indicate that 5.95% of classes are taught by non-HQ teachers.

Table 1 – Classes Taught by HQ Teachers Statewide

School Type	Total Number of Core Academic Classes	Number of Core Academic Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers	Percentage of Core Academic Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers
All Schools in State	88,606	86,524	97.65 %
Elementary Level			
High-Poverty Schools	7,889	7,584	96.13 %
Low-Poverty Schools	7,608	7,503	98.62 %
All Elementary Schools	31,068	30,426	97.93 %
Secondary Level			
High-Poverty Schools	8,776	8,254	94.05 %
Low-Poverty Schools	21,710	21,395	98.55 %
All Secondary Schools	57,538	56,098	97.50%

1.2 Does the analysis focus on the staffing needs of schools that are not making AYP? Do these schools have high percentages of classes taught by teachers who are not highly qualified?

Over all, the percentage of classes taught by non-HQ teachers is low; however, Minnesota is committed to the goal of ensuring that all teachers are highly qualified by 2006-2007 and will hold all local education agencies (LEAs) accountable. Minnesota has

decided to target schools where less than 80% of the classes are taught by HQ teachers. Analysis of the data indicates the following:

- that 512 entities¹ reported data;
- that 114 schools located in 46 districts have less than 80% of classes taught by HQ teachers;
- that 36 out of the 46 districts are charter schools, the remaining 10 are traditional districts; and
- that a total of 361 classes in the 46 districts are taught by non-HQ teachers.

Since Minnesota will target technical assistance to all schools where less than 80% of classes are taught by HQ teachers, the following table provides an analysis of the schools that did not make AYP and that have less than 80% HQ teachers.

Table 2: Schools not making AYP with less than 80% classes taught by HQ teachers

School	% of classes taught by HQ teachers	Number of classes taught by non-HQ teachers
Hall Elementary	62%	10
The Volunteers of American Middle School	50%	11
Minneapolis Employment Readiness Curriculum	71%	2
American Indian OIC	0%	10
Four Directions Charter School	60%	2
El Colegio Charter School	0%	32

The numbers and percentages of classes and teachers employed in each school are extremely low. There are 67 total classes taught by non-HQ teachers in the six schools not making AYP.

Schools identified above are from 2004-2005 AYP results. Minnesota requested and was granted by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) a one-time delay to publish final AYP data for 2005-2006 results. These data will not be published until November 15th. Schools and districts have been required to use preliminary data to begin implementing AYP related consequences.

¹ Entities include districts, charter schools, co-ops and regions. Only those entities that exist for the purpose of educating students are being held accountable for hiring HQ teachers. An example of an entity that is not included in the HQ data are regional service centers that provide training to teachers but not services to students.

1.3 Does the analysis identify particular groups of teachers to which the State’s plan must pay particular attention, such as special education teachers, mathematics or science teachers or multi-subject teachers in rural schools?

The analysis of the data for all Minnesota schools with less than 80% of classes taught by highly qualified teachers identifies special education teachers as the main subgroup of non-highly qualified teachers to which Minnesota’s plan must pay particular attention.

- 2005-2006 data indicate that in Minnesota, there were 1,718 total courses taught by non-highly qualified teachers; 920 were related to special education.

Table 3: Number and Percent of courses taught by non- HQ teachers in all classes and in Special Education

Courses	Taught by non-HQ teachers	Special Education Taught by non-HQ Teachers	Percent of Special Education
English/Reading/Language Arts	523	361	69%
Math	433	300	69%
Science	261	103	39%
Civics & Government, Economics, History, Geography	148	79	53%

The above table shows that the area of Special Education will be a priority for the Minnesota Department of Education. Non-HQ teachers teaching content in the areas of English/Reading/Language Arts, Math, Science and Civics & Government, Economics, History and Geography will each be required to have a plan for the steps they and the district will take to ensure they meet the HQ requirements of NCLB and submit that plan to the department as of November 15, 2006.

In response to the unique circumstances at the elementary and middle school level, particularly for single subject specialists, Minnesota is phasing in a middle school specialty endorsement. Beginning with this school year, all Minnesota elementary education graduates will be required to have this specialty endorsement. Each elementary education graduate must have one of the following specialties in order to be recommended for licensure: Math, Science, Social Studies or Communication Arts and Literature. This specialty endorsement allows an individual to teach his/her specialty to children in grades K-8. This specialty endorsement will reduce the number of elementary and middle school teachers serving as single subject specialists who do not meet federal highly qualified requirements.

Minnesota is also phasing in a non-renewable license. This license allows school districts to work with a teacher who is highly qualified in one subject, but assigned to a licensure

area for which he/she is not licensed and to give him/her time to complete the requirements of the new licensure area while teaching. With a nonrenewable license, the teacher has up to three years to complete the requirements of the new licensure area.

1.4 Does the analysis identify districts and schools around the state where significant numbers of teachers do not meet HQT standards?

Minnesota has a total of 2,092 schools. Of that total, 1,574 schools reported they have 100% of their teachers meeting HQ requirements. An additional 307 schools reported they have between 99 to 90% of their teachers meeting HQ requirements and 97 schools reported they have between 89 to 80% of their teachers HQ. As previously indicated, Minnesota will target schools that have less than 80% of their teachers meeting HQ requirements. Table 4 below gives a breakdown of the number of schools that did not meet the target.

Table 4: Schools with less than 80% classes taught by non-HQ teachers

Percentage Range HQ Teachers	Number of Schools
Between 75 to 79%	19 schools
Between 70 to 74%	14 schools
Between 65 to 69%	10 schools
Between 60 to 64%	10 schools
Between 55 to 59%	10 schools
Between 50 to 54 %	9 schools
Between 40 to 49%	8 schools
Between 20 to 39%	10 schools
< than 19%	24 schools

Table 5: Charter schools with less than 80% classes taught by HQ teachers

Data collected from the 512 reporting districts indicates there are 46 districts with less than 80% of classes taught by HQ teachers. Thirty six of these are charter schools. As previously stated, charter schools in Minnesota function as a district. Because charter schools tend to serve small populations of students, the majority of these schools have low numbers. Nevertheless, they do not meet the criteria set by the department.

District Name	Classes Non-HQ	% HQ Classes
CEDAR RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOL	22	58
WORLD LEARNER CHARTER SCHOOL	9	63
NEW VOYAGE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	4	20
HIGHER GROUND ACADEMY	8	62
ECI' NOMPA WOONSPE	5	0
LAKE SUPERIOR HIGH SCHOOL	40	55
GREAT RIVER EDUCATION CENTER	4	56
FOUR DIRECTIONS CHARTER SCHOOLS	2	60
EL COLEGIO CHARTER SCHOOL	32	0

FAMILY ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	15	55
RIVERWAY LEARNING COMMUNITY CHTR	8	79
RIVERBEND ACADEMY	3	72
AURORA CHARTER SCHOOL	4	64
YANKTON COUNTRY CHARTER SCHOOL	12	0
PILLAGER AREA CHARTER SCHOOL	16	33
BLUESKY CHARTER SCHOOL	4	75
SAGE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	25	42
GREAT EXPECTATIONS	12	40
MINNESOTA NORTH STAR ACADEMY	3	40
MINNESOTA INTERNSHIP CENTER	4	73
HMONG ACADEMY	3	77
LIBERTY HIGH SCHOOL	20	44
GENERAL JOHN VESSEY JR LEADERSHIP	12	56
AUGSBURG ACADEMY FOR HEALTH CAREERS	6	45
FRASER ACADEMY	6	77
ASCENSION ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	2	78
ST. CROIX PREPARATORY ACADEMY	14	73
UBAH MEDICAL ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	4	71
EAGLE RIDGE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	30	72
WORTHINGTON AREA LANGUAGE ACADEMY	5	58
MARY MCEVOY EARLY LITERACY ACADEMY	2	50
LIGHTHOUSE ACADEMY OF NATIONS	5	69
SOUL ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	5	74
NORTHERN LIGHTS COMMUNITY SCHOOL	12	64
TWIN CITIES GERMAN IMMERSION CHRTR	1	75
RECOVERY SCHOOL OF SOUTHERN MN	2	50

Highlighted schools are also on the AYP list.

The remaining ten districts are not charter schools and can be found in Table 6 below:

Table 6: Districts with less than 80% classes taught by HQ teachers

District Name	Classes Non-HQ	% of HQ Classes
Evansville	11	77%
Grygla	10	77%
Browerville	31	68%
Intermediate District 917	34	75%
Meeker & Wright Special Education	4	71%
Oak Land Vocational Center	12	40%
Martin County West	24	76%
Zumbro Education District	8	45%
MN River Valley Education District	5	75%
River Bend Education District	72	79%

Highlighted districts are also AYP districts.

In their reports, districts identified individuals teaching under a Minnesota Board of Teaching special permission (Waiver) who are highly qualified in at least one assignment. For purposes of this report and the evaluation of HQ data, MDE assumes that each individual taught five classes, in one of which they met federal highly qualified requirements. Consequently, River Bend Education District was identified as having 18 experimental program waivers. For purposes of this section, classes taught by non-highly qualified teachers were (18 x 5 = 90 of which 18 were taught by an individual who met federal highly qualified requirements) 72. These numbers are included in Table 6.

1.5 Does the analysis identify particular courses that are often taught by non-highly qualified teachers?

As previously indicated in Table 3, Minnesota schools reported a total of 1,718 classes taught by non-HQ teachers. These fell across four subject areas, as shown below. Of this total, 920 were related to special education. The areas identified by the schools fall into the following four content areas:

Table 3: Number and Percent of Courses Taught by Non-HQ Teachers in all Classes and in Special Education

Course Area	Total classes taught by non-HQ Teachers	Total classes in Special Education by Non- HQ teachers	% of classes taught by non-HQ in Special Education
English/Reading/Language Arts	523	631	69%
Mathematics	433	300	69%
Science	261	103	39%
Civics & Government, Economics, History, Geography	148	79	53%

These non-HQ teachers are found in 114 schools.

Requirement 2: The revised plan must provide information on HQT status in each LEA and the steps the SEA will take to ensure that each LEA has plans in place to assist teachers who are not highly qualified to attain HQT status as quickly as possible.

2.1 Does the plan identify LEAs that have not met annual measurable objectives for HQT?

Minnesota first implemented the Staff Automated Reporting (STAR) System statewide in 1996-97. All districts are required to report licensed and non-licensed staff data via the STAR System each October 1. Minnesota's goal in the plan submitted in September 2003 was to expand the system to include the data needed to report and to meet the 100% HQ requirement. As a result of a number of factors including funding, the web-based "highly qualified" system was not developed and implemented until 2005-2006. Consequently, the first year of complete and accurate data is for the 2005-2006 school year.

Data collected during this first year of implementation shows that of the 512 entities that reported, all but 46 districts met the 80% criteria established by the Minnesota Department of Education as the goal for 2005-2006.

- 290 districts reported 100% HQ teachers;
- 141 districts reported 99 to 95% HQ teachers;
- 59 districts reported 94 to 80% HQ teachers; and
- 46 districts reported less than 80% HQ teachers.

Of these 46 districts, 36 are charter schools. Tables 5 and 6 on pages 7 and 8 provide a list of charter schools and districts that did not meet the 80% established target.

2.2 Does the plan include specific steps that will be taken by the LEAs that have not met annual measurable objectives?

LEAs that have not met the 80% requirement will be required, at a minimum, to implement the following steps:

- hire teachers who have met the HQ teachers requirements;
- retain documentation related to advertising positions, efforts to recruit highly qualified candidates, applications, resumes received and notes from the interviewing process, including a commitment by any non-HQ teacher to fulfill requirements of a mutually agreed-upon plan to achieve highly qualified status, using the most expedient option but no later than the end of the current school year.
- provide an assurance that the teacher receives support and assistance related to content knowledge and teaching skills needed for the teaching assignment,

- including teacher mentoring and high quality professional development as defined in NCLB.
- conduct a meeting with each teacher who has not yet met the HQT requirements and develop an individual action plan;
 - provide review materials for the appropriate PRAXIS exam when needed;
 - use district Title II-A funds or funds from a special grant with the Education Testing Service (ETS) for non-HQ teachers taking the PRAXIS test for special education teachers;
 - review other resources that can be used to ensure that teachers have the opportunity to meet the HQ requirements;
 - promote the use of USDE eLearning courses to fulfill professional development requirements; and
 - place non-highly qualified teachers in the subject area for which they are highly qualified.

2.3 Does the plan delineate specific steps the SEA will take to ensure that all LEAs have plans in place to assist all non-HQ teachers to become HQ as quickly as possible?

The SEA is requiring each district that does not meet the HQ requirements to develop and submit a plan outlining how each teacher that did not meet the definition outlined in section 1119 (a)(3) will meet HQ. In addition to responding to the steps outlined in requirement 2.2, each plan will include the following information:

- the reason the teacher(s) did not meet the highly qualified requirement;
- the specific plan of action that will be taken, e.g., classes, content exam, professional development, etc. in order for the teacher(s) to meet the definition of high qualified;
- how the district will use Title I Part A, Title II Part A funds and/or state professional development funds towards activities that will ensure teachers meet the requirements;
- the date when the teacher(s) will meet the requirements.

(See Attachment A)

Staff from the Divisions of NCLB Programs and School Improvement is responsible for working collaboratively to review and approve NCLB Consolidated Applications.

Each staff member is responsible for working with and providing technical assistance to approximately 50 districts. The designated staff member will also have the responsibility of providing technical assistance to ensure that each district submits the plan. Implementation of the plan will also be monitored by the designated SEA staff. Districts will also be required to attach to their plans a copy of the letter of notification sent to parents in instances in which the non-HQ teacher is teaching a core academic class in a Title I setting. For the 2006-2007 school year, the plans will be due December 15, 2006. During subsequent years, the plans will be submitted electronically as an attachment to their NCLB Consolidated Application.

Districts and schools in consequence stages of not making AYP will receive assistance and monitoring for their HQ plans through the Title I AYP improvement process. This SEA effort will become part of the technical assistance that is provided by School Improvement Specialists within the School Improvement Division. The technical assistance design includes the placement of high quality professional development modules regionally across the state, and the participation of School Improvement Specialists as members of School Support Teams that include district representatives and outside expert educators.

Requirement 3: The revised plan must include information on the technical assistance, programs, and services that the SEA will offer to assist LEAs in successfully completing their HQT plans, particularly where large groups of teachers are not highly qualified, and the resources the LEAs will use to meet their HQT goals.

3.1 Does the plan include a description of the technical assistance the SEA will provide to assist LEAs in successfully carrying out their HQT plans?

Minnesota will use the following initiatives to assist LEAs in successfully carrying out their HQT plans.

Training

School Support Teams: An intensive and sustained statewide system of support is the framework for MDE’s Title I AYP improvement process for schools and districts in the consequence stages of not making adequate yearly progress. The School Improvement Division manages this systematic network for providing consistent technical assistance from MDE and other expert educators through School Support Teams that work directly with the districts. The School Support Teams assure the schools have the technical assistance for developing and implementing improvement plans. This technical assistance takes the form of high quality professional development and ongoing evaluation to inform continuous improvement; other administrative and instructional coaching may be included as determined by the School Support Teams. Other specialists and providers may be assigned to work with individual schools based on the improvement plans developed by the School Leadership Team, especially if the school has an HQT plan. These teams will assist the LEA in carrying out their HQT plans.

NCLB Area Directors: Staff from the NCLB Program Division each work with approximately 50 districts throughout the year. These staff members, who are responsible for reviewing and approving the district’s NCLB Consolidated Application, participate in monitoring visits, conduct regional training and assistance upon request. As part of the training calendar for the school year, regional meetings and training sessions have been scheduled throughout the school year. Assistance on carrying out HQT plans will be provided to districts through these regional meetings.

Minnesota Association of Charter Schools: Since a significant number of districts not meeting HQ requirements are charter schools, the MDE is working closely with the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MAC) so that staff from MAC has the knowledge and information necessary to work with charter schools in carrying out their HQT plans. MAC works with current schools and also provides extensive assistance to groups that are interested in creating a new charter school. Therefore, MDE staff is working with MAC towards incorporating federal and state requirements into their training so they can assist charter schools in carrying out their HQ plans and meeting 100% HQ requirements.

On-Site Visits

Through MDE's Title I AYP improvement process for schools and districts, the districts with schools identified as not meeting the 80% target for HQ teachers will receive on-site support from School Support Teams and other specialists and providers as determined by the School Support Teams as part of the improvement plan.

As part of their responsibilities, Area Directors from the NCLB Consolidated Programs will conduct on-site visits to the other districts that have HQ plans.

Training and information will be provided to MDE Charter School Staff as well as staff from the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools so they are aware of charter schools that have HQ plans. Charter School program staff from the MDE as well as staff from MAC work with charter schools throughout the year. They will assist these schools in carrying out their HQ plans.

Technology

To further support LEAs in carrying out their HQT plans, the department will:

- maintain current information regarding HQ teacher requirements;
- maintain current information on the MDE Web site on conferences and regional training that would pertain to teacher quality;
- ensure accurate data is collected from schools and districts through STARS;
- update the department's Website to include new guidance and information from USDE regarding HQ; and
- maintain current the information contained on the Minnesota Teacher Recruitment Center Website.

On-Going Assistance

Staff in the various programs that work with Titles I, II, Professional Development and teacher licensure will:

- respond to inquires from teachers and administrators in a timely manner;
- respond to teachers through phone calls or emails with information that is specific to their needs; and
- present information at meetings with statewide educational organizations and to school administrators at monthly meetings.

3.2 Does the plan indicate that the staffing and professional development needs of schools that are not making AYP will be given high priority?

An education specialist will be assigned to serve as the MDE representative for guiding technical assistance to districts and their schools in the consequence stages of Needs Improvement, Corrective Action and Restructuring. The AYP improvement process and its technical assistance are considered to be of the highest priority in the School Improvement Division. A specialist will be assigned based on district improvement concerns and strategies (root cause/problem to be addressed), and the specialist becomes an additional member of the School Support Team. They support the improvement plan development, implementation and reflection process. As a member of the School Support Team, they will collaborate on technical assistance decisions for professional development training, along with district leadership and the AYP Improvement Coordinator. High quality professional development and ongoing evaluation to inform continuous improvement are a part of all plans. The implementation of plans will be monitored by evaluation specialists.

3.3 Does the plan include a description of programs and services the SEA will provide to assist teachers and LEAs in successfully meeting HQT goals?

In addition to the technical assistance outlined under 3.1, the following programs and services will be provided to LEAs so that all teachers are HQ by 2006-2007.

NCLB Area Directors: Staff from the NCLB Consolidated Programs is responsible for assisting districts in meeting the requirements under NCLB. These staff referred to as Area Directors work with approximately 50 districts. They will assist districts in developing their HQ plans and revising their Title I and Title II Part A budgets. This will ensure that funds are targeted towards meeting HQ goals outlined in their plans. Area Directors will also assist districts in identifying other resources to ensure that funds are targeted towards HQT goals.

Specialty Endorsement: In response to the unique circumstances at the elementary and middle school level, particularly for single subject specialists, a middle school specialty endorsement is required for all Minnesota elementary education graduates. Each elementary education graduate must have one of the following specialties to be recommended for licensure: Math, Science, Social Studies or Communication Arts and Literature. This specialty endorsement allows an individual to teach his/her specialty to children in grades K-8. This specialty endorsement will reduce the number of elementary and middle school teachers serving as single subject specialists who do not meet federal highly qualified requirements.

Recruitment Efforts and Center: In 2003, Minnesota received a Higher Education Act Title II, Part A, Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant. The establishment of a teacher recruitment center was one of the components of this grant. Eight districts with high

needs/high-poverty were given mini grants to re-tool teacher recruitment efforts. The remaining districts are given priority for training opportunities. In addition, the Minnesota Teacher Recruitment Center is an online system designed to assist Minnesota districts in filling open teacher positions. It works as a recruiting tool that provides districts with access to a large pool of highly qualified teachers resumes and candidates to posted teaching vacancies.

Teacher Induction Program: Minnesota's First Five Mentorship Program, a regional teacher induction program, provides mentoring and professional development to increase new teachers' subject matter expertise, instructional practices and classroom management and to increase retention of new highly qualified teachers.

Troops to Teachers: Minnesota participates in the Troops to Teachers program. Its purpose is to assist retired and separated members of the Armed Forces, as well as Guard and Reserve personnel in obtaining teacher certification and employment as teachers. The Troops to Teachers program provides support to personnel who are making the transition to teaching. Eligible veterans may receive either a stipend of not more than \$5,000 to assist in attaining teacher certification or a \$10,000 incentive grant bonus for participants who teach for three years in a high needs school.

Reciprocity: Minnesota has joined the Central States Licensure Exchange Agreement which recognizes licenses from other states with similar standards and qualifications. Individuals licensed in Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Wisconsin who have completed equivalent, state-approved programs and have been granted licensure may be granted similar licensure in Minnesota.

Q-Comp: In 2005, Minnesota passed legislation that promotes high quality instruction through professional development. Quality Compensation or "Q Comp" is a program designed to advance the teaching profession by providing structured professional development and teacher evaluation, as well as an alternative pay schedule that compensates teachers based on performance. Teachers also receive additional compensation for career ladders or career advancement opportunities in any of five areas: curriculum leaders, staff development leaders, school improvement team, mentors and team leaders.

Training:

Training in the content areas of reading/language arts, science, social studies and mathematics is provided through numerous MDE programs. Content specialists in these content areas have scheduled training regionally throughout the school year. The purpose of these training sessions is to increase teacher effectiveness and to encourage teacher retention. Training in the areas of science and math is also provided to Minnesota teachers through the National Science & Math Partnership Program. This training provides professional development in mathematics and science. Institutes of Higher

Education work collaboratively with schools in order to meet needs of teachers in the core content areas of science and math.

Portfolio:

Licensure via portfolio provides an alternative pathway to a full professional Minnesota education license. The portfolio process assesses knowledge, skills and competencies of license applicants who have not completed an approved teacher preparation program in Minnesota in the licensure field being sought.

3.4 Does the plan specifically address the needs of any subgroups of teachers identified in Requirement 1?

An analysis of the data indicated that special education teachers are the main subgroup of non-HQ teachers. Specific numbers and percentages can be found on page 7 Table 3.

Particular attention will be given to the following core content areas:

- English/Reading/Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Civics & Government, Economics, History, Geography

The focus of assistance and information that the Minnesota Department of Education will offer to districts to address the needs of special education teachers will be focused around the following initiatives:

Directors' Forums: Technical assistance will be provided to special education directors through the Directors' Forums. These quarterly forums will be used to provide information and training to directors on the requirements under both NCLB and IDEA. Since special education is the area where the most non-HQ teachers exist, it is critical that special education directors continue to be informed of the HQ requirements so that local hiring policies and practices can be revised to include HQ requirements. Current information will enable directors to assist teachers that are non-HQ in developing plans and assuring that resources are available to implement the plans. Information on HQ was presented in the spring of 2006 and again at the September 2006 forum. SEA staff will continue to work with Special Education Directors at future Directors' Forums. At the Fall Directors' Conference in October, 2006, there will be updates provided by staff from the MDE Licensing Division on HQ.

PRAXIS Tests: The Special Education and Teacher Licensure staff is in the process of finalizing a two year contract with ETS for \$120,000. Funds from the Special Education Division were targeted for this initiative and will be used to pay for the PRAXIS registration fees and tests for special education teachers that did not meet the HQ requirements. For all other teachers, districts will target Title II Part A funds to pay for registration fees. This will facilitate the LEAs goal of meeting the 100% HQ target.

Regional Plans: The Minnesota Special Education Program has funded regional plans throughout the state to serve the needs of teachers working with low incidence students. These grants include training components for special education teachers working in these regions and not meeting HQ requirements. Information will be disseminated to regional facilitators on a regular basis. Minnesota’s data indicates that special education is the area where the largest number of non-HQ teachers exists. This is a result of the Minnesota licensure requirements needed to teach in the area of special education. Currently, a teacher working in this area does not need to have training in a content area. Teachers working with low incidence students are the most likely to be also teaching content. Special education is also an area with high teacher turn over rates. Therefore, technical assistance offered through these regional plans will **include:**

- HQ requirements;
- the need to review local hiring policies and practices so that they include information on HQ requirements;
- the development of plans and various strategies that teachers can use to meet the HQ requirements; and
- the responsibility of the district to prioritize resources that will enable these teachers to implement their plans.

Licensure: The responsibility for establishing licensure requirements is that of the Minnesota Board of Teaching. While the board is housed in the Minnesota Department of Education, it functions as a separate entity with its own governing board. MDE has initiated work with the board that will continue through out the year to encourage the board to review the requirements under NCLB and IDEA with respect to special education and to review its use of waivers. The MDE is concerned since the current licensure requirement for special education and the practice of granting waivers do not support HQ requirements and may result in districts being out of compliance. Therefore, MDE will meet monthly with the Board of Teaching to discuss ways to restructure or eliminate the use of waivers to ensure that all teachers in Minnesota schools are HQ.

3.5 Does the plan include a description of how the State will use its available funds (e.g. Title I, Part A; Title II, Part A, including the portion that goes to the State agency for higher education; other Federal and State funds, as appropriate) to address the needs of teachers who are not highly qualified?

State and federal funds supports activities and services described through out this plan. Title I Part A funds support the assistance provided by NCLB Area Directors to assist districts in carrying out their HQ plans. Title I Part A funds support the staff, training and assistance provided to districts and schools that do not make AYP. This support will be provided to districts that did not make AYP and did not meet the HQ target. Title II, Part A funds support the staff and training provided to districts that are participating in the Q-Comp Programs. The training received through this program is founded on scientifically based research that supports HQ requirements.

Federal funds from IDEA support initiatives described in section 3. 4 and payment for PRAXIS tests for non-HQ special education teachers and training and support for non-HQ special education teachers working in regional service centers.

3.6 Does the plan for the use of available funds indicate that priority will be given to the staffing and professional development needs of schools that are not making AYP?

The Title I AYP improvement process and its technical assistance are considered to be of the highest priority in the School Improvement Division. Each identified Title I school and district in a consequence stage for not making AYP will be assigned to receive services through a "cadre of educational experts" known as the AYP Support Team. These AYP Support Teams will be located regionally throughout the state to maximize resources. Each AYP Support Team includes (at a minimum) an AYP improvement coordinator, district leadership, an MDE professional development specialist, and an MDE evaluation specialist. Effective SY 2006-07, all improvement plans have incorporated HQ components in order to ensure there is a plan and it will be addressed. The make-up of these AYP Support Team ensure that the staffing and professional development needs of AYP schools are a priority.

Through the regional AYP Support Teams, AYP schools will receive intensive and sustained support in high quality professional development, ongoing evaluation to inform continuous improvement and other administrative and instructional coaching as needed; thus ensuring that the professional development and staffing needs of the AYP schools are addressed through available resources.

MDE evaluation specialists will conduct a review of all improvement plans (including the HQ plan component) to ensure compliance. MDE evaluation specialists will conduct a checkpoint process that includes a mid-year interview with school leadership to monitor implementation of the school improvement plans, including the HQT plan component. Progress (or lack of progress) toward meeting HQT requirements will be reported to the NCLB Area Director each spring, alerting them to support and monitor any budgetary or program modifications that may be needed for the subsequent year's NCLB Consolidated Application. This will also ensure that professional development and staffing needs are met through available NCLB funds.

Requirement 4: The revised plan must describe how the SEA will work with LEAs that fail to reach the 100 percent HQT goal by the end of the 2006-07 school year.

4.1 Does the plan indicate how the SEA will monitor LEA compliance with the LEAs HQT plans described in Requirement 2 and hold LEAs accountable for fulfilling their plans?

Title II Part A Monitoring and Accountability Requirements

Monitoring of the LEAs HQ Plan has been integrated into the functions of the NCLB monitoring process and site visit schedules. Districts that are scheduled for a monitoring visit this year will have the implementation of their HQ plan included in the process. Districts not scheduled for a monitoring visit will have their plans monitored through the NCLB Area Director. Districts will also be required to provide a copy of the letter notifying parents of instances where non-HQ teachers are teaching core academic classes in Title I settings. In addition, staff from the Division of School Improvement will include technical assistance and monitoring as part of their ongoing work with districts and schools that do not make AYP.

The NCLB Consolidated Application includes Title II Part A requirements. In this application districts are required to explain how Title II Part A funds and Title I Part A funds when appropriate will be used to meet the HQ requirements. Area Directors will ensure that districts are in compliance with the requirements under NCLB 2122(b)(3). Area Directors will review the HQ plans and the information contained in the districts NCLB Consolidated Application to see if the budgets and activities are aligned.

Data collected through the STAR system as well as data used to complete the Annual Performance Report will also be used to monitor the progress of districts towards the 100% goal. A plan for corrective action will be mandated for districts that do not fulfill their plans. In such cases, the SEA will enforce the provision under NCLB 2141(c) and, may exercise its authority under Minnesota Statute 127A.42. This statute gives the department the authority to withhold state aid if districts employ teachers that do not hold a valid teaching license.

4.2 Does the plan show how technical assistance from the SEA to help LEAs meet the 100 percent HQ goal will be targeted toward LEAs and schools that are not making AYP?

The AYP improvement process and its technical assistance are considered to be of the highest priority in the School Improvement Division. Therefore, technical assistance to schools and districts not meeting both AYP and HQ targets will be done through this Division. Effective SY 2006-07, the HQ components have been incorporated into the school improvement plans. Each school and district that is identified for AYP will receive assistance through a “cadre of educational experts” known as the AYP School

Support Team. These teams include at a minimum, an AYP improvement coordinator, district leadership, an MDE professional development specialist, and an MDE evaluation specialist.

In addition, a specialist will be assigned based on district improvement concerns and strategies (root cause/problem to be addressed), and the specialist becomes a member of the AYP School Support Team. Therefore, the School Improvement Division will ensure that the specialist assigned has the training and experience to guide the development and implementation of HQ plans for those schools that have yet to reach 100% HQ. The specialist will support the improvement plan development, implementation and reflection process. As a member of the School Support Team, they will collaborate on technical assistance decisions for professional development training, along with district leadership and the AYP Improvement Coordinator. High quality professional development and ongoing evaluation to inform continuous improvement are a part of all plans; and the implementation of plans will be monitored by evaluation specialists.

MDE has a regional intensive system of support for identified AYP schools and districts in order to build capacity the capacity of the department in providing quality assistance statewide. This regional model ensures consistency in the technical assistance provided and facilitates networking among schools and districts and between the department and schools and districts. In addition, the regional model enables the department to utilize experts throughout the state in a more efficient and effective manner thus maintaining sustainability.

Schools and districts in AYP are required to attend regional meetings and training on a monthly basis throughout the year. This opportunity to dialog around school improvement issues and research enhances the ability of the team to provide quality technical assistance. Incorporating the HQ plans into the AYP Improvement plans has ensured that schools and districts that don't meet targets under both requirements receive priority attention.

4.3 Does the plan describe how the SEA will monitor whether LEAs attain 100 percent HQT in each LEA and school:

- **In the percentage of highly qualified teachers at each LEA and school; and**
- **In the percentage of teachers who are receiving high-quality professional development to enable such teachers to become highly qualified and successful classroom teachers?**

Highly Qualified Teachers

Through the Staff Automated Reporting (STAR) System, Minnesota collects data on the status of every individual teacher teaching a core academic subject. The STAR System, a comprehensive web-based reporting system, collects data from districts each October 1. This data will be used to identify LEAs and schools that do not meet the 100% HQ teacher requirement.

Minnesota publishes a state report for every school and district annually. Every school report card includes information on the staffing in each school. In the Fall of 2006, the state report card will also include information on the percent of teachers that meet the definition of “Highly Qualified.” This information will also be reported by high-poverty and low-poverty schools; thus giving parents the ability to make comparisons and information on the qualifications of teachers in their child’s school.

Once identified, the LEA will be required to develop and submit a plan outlining how each teacher that did not meet the HQ requirements will receive support in order to be HQ. As outlined in previous sections, assistance will be provided to these LEAs.

High Quality Professional Development

The new electronic staff development reporting system will collect information to measure the performance of districts toward the goal of 100% for all teachers receiving high-quality professional development. The report will collect summary data in the following categories:

- number of high quality professional development opportunities; and
- number of teachers participating in high-quality professional development activities.

In order to categorize a professional development activity as high quality, the district will have to complete a checklist that meets the definitional requirements of NCLB and state legislation. The number of teachers will be pre-populated into the report based on the number of staff reported in MDE’s STAR system as of October 1. The data from the staff development reporting system will be available in January 2007. An annual sample selection process will be used to document and monitor all districts over a three year cycle to ensure the professional development opportunities reported truly comply with the definition of high quality professional development. This monitoring is a part of the MDE’s oversight and monitoring responsibilities for the federal ESEA consolidated programs. This includes Title IIA monitoring, and it is through these on-site monitoring visits that MDE will ensure all districts are offering professional development that meets the high quality requirements.

If a district has not achieved its 100% goal for all teachers or is not offering high quality professional development opportunities, staff members of the School Improvement Division will document and monitor the district’s developed plan and proposed strategies to correct this noncompliance by the end of the school year in which it is reported.

4.4 Consistent with ESEA Section 2141, does the plan include technical assistance or corrective action that the SEA will apply if LEAs fail to meet HQT and AYP goals?

In cases where the LEA fails to meet HQ and AYP goals, the SEA will enforce the provisions under NCLB 2141(c). Once identified, the LEA will be required to develop

and submit a plan outlining how each teacher that did not meet the HQ requirements will receive support in order to be HQ. As outlined in previous sections, assistance will be provided to these LEAs. The process, outlined on page 20, describes how the AYP School Support Team will simultaneously monitor the goals outlined in HQ plans and AYP plans. Through the STAR system and the Gateway Accountability System (the system used to track the status of schools and districts not meeting AYP), the State can annually track the progress and status of schools not meeting goals under both requirements. The Gateway Accountability System has been tracking the status of schools and districts not meeting AYP since 2003. In the event that a school fails to meet the AYP goals for two and three consecutive years under 1111(b)(2)(B) and its HQ goals under 1119(a)(2) the state will enter into an agreement, with the LEA, on the use of their funds. That agreement will include the provisions outlined under NCLB 2141(c).

In cases where the LEA has failed to meet its goals for AYP and HQ, the State may also exercise its authority under Minnesota Statute 127A.42. This statute gives the MDE the authority to withhold state aid if districts employ teachers that do not hold a valid teaching license. MDE understands that holding a valid teaching license does not constitute being HQ. However, since the passage of NCLB, many licensure requirements have been revised to ensure that teachers new to the field have the content knowledge that enables them to meet HQ requirements.

Requirement #5: The revised plan must explain how and when the SEA will complete the HOUSSE process for teachers not new to the profession who were hired prior to the end of the 2005-2006 school year, and how the SEA will limit the use of HOUSSE procedures for teachers hired after the end of the 2005-06 school year to multi subject secondary teachers in rural schools eligible for additional flexibility, and multi subject special education who are highly qualified in language arts, mathematics, or science at the time of hire.

5.1 Does the plan describe how and when the SEA will complete the HOUSSE process for all teachers not new to the profession who were hired before the end of the 2005-06 school year?

5.2 Does the plan describe how the State will limit the use of HOUSSE after the end of the 2005-2006 school year to the following situations: Multi-subject secondary teachers in rural schools who, if HQ in one subject at the time of hire, may use HOUSSE to demonstrate competence in additional subjects within three years of date of hire; or

Multi-subject special education teachers who are new to the profession, if HQ in language arts, mathematics, or science at the time of hire, may use HOUSSE to demonstrate competence in additional subjects within two years of date of hire.

MDE completed data collection for all teachers who were not new to the profession for the 2005-2006 school year and teaching core academic subjects via the STAR and web-based “highly qualified” system on June 30, 2006. This completed the HOUSSE process for teachers not new to the profession before the end of the 2005-06 school year. MDE has revised the Minnesota State Plan For Federal “Highly Qualified” Teacher Requirements to address the limiting of HOUSSE and published the plan September 15, 2006. The document reads as follows:

In the past, the HOUSSE option was restricted to teachers not new to the profession, who possessed Minnesota licensure, but did not have a licensure endorsement in each core academic subject taught. As a result of recent federal direction and because the HOUSSE has been in place for a sufficient amount of time for teachers to meet “highly qualified” requirements, Minnesota is now moving to further restrict the use of HOUSSE. Therefore, effective July 1, 2006, any teacher hired as a new teacher in Minnesota (even though the teacher may have had prior teaching experience in another state), may no longer use the HOUSSE option unless he/she also fits one of the specified exempted groups:

(1) A teacher currently eligible for HOUSSE who was not able to be documented as HQ through HOUSSE on the basis of district records and who has not yet submitted their documentation to the district regarding meeting the HOUSSE requirements; (2) A multi-subject secondary teacher in a school district officially identified in this document as an “eligible rural district” or (3) A special education teacher who teaches multiple core subjects and has met highly qualified requirements in language arts, mathematics or science at the time of hire. These special education teachers may use HOUSSE to meet

“highly qualified” requirements in the other core academic subjects they teach to their special education students in the same manner as is required for elementary, middle, or secondary school teachers within two years of hire date.

Requirement 6: The revised plan must include a copy of the State’s written “equity plan” for ensuring that poor or minority children are not taught by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers at higher rates than are other children.

6.1 Does the revised plan include a written equity plan?

Equity Plan

The preparation of Minnesota’s equity plan required inter-action among staff members to identify strategies for addressing the inequities in some high-poverty schools. Key goals and strategies for addressing inequities are focused around these goals:

- annual measuring and reporting progress through data;
- at a minimum, annual monitoring through data and implementation of LEA plans; and
- strategies to ensure that poor or minority students are not taught by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers at higher rates than are other students.

Strategies around the eight elements created by CCSSO were used to assist in identifying current policies and strategies and/or future initiatives for the plan. Not all the elements proved to be pertinent; therefore, some were not included.

Included within this revised HQ plan is the written equity plan based on the analysis of Minnesota’s HQ data to identify inequities. The strategies for addressing inequities given in 6.4 below will be reviewed, at a minimum, annually for success and changes made, as appropriate.

Historically, Minnesota is a state with only small pockets of diverse populations or high-poverty. While it continues to be one of the least diverse states in the nation (13% vs. U.S. at 32%) the diverse population in Minnesota is currently the fastest growing. Accompanying this change has been the challenge of poverty. This change in diverse populations has impacted schools across the state and they are striving to meet the needs of diverse students and students from low income families.

- Minnesota has always prided itself on having a quality educational system. This priority remains high in Minnesota and the economic future of the state is seen as dependent upon a well-educated youth. The preparation of this equity plan has provided the Minnesota Department of Education with the opportunity to examine where action is necessary in order to enhance the educational opportunities for all students. Minnesota’s ultimate goal is for every student to have a high quality teacher. To that end, efforts will focus around ensuring that poor and minority students are not taught by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers at higher rates than are other students.

Using a variety of data collecting systems, Minnesota has the ability to annually identify and track areas where inequities exist with respect to teacher assignments. Utilizing these systems the state will focus strategies outlined under 6.4 to ensure that inequities in teacher assignments do not exist. Based on annual data and on-going monitoring of the implementation of these strategies, their success will be evaluated and changes made where appropriate.

MARSS

Minnesota has the ability to collect data on individual students through the Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS). This system is a single data collection program that annually collects student data required by more than one area of the department. Data collected via MARSS are used for a variety of purposes, including state aid and levy calculations, federal grant allocations, federal and state civil rights reporting, statewide assessments, LEP enrollment and the unduplicated child count and National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports. Data collected through this system will be used for the equity plan, specifically poverty data.

STAR

The second system that provides data critical in identifying high-poverty schools with non-HQ teachers is the Staff Automated Reporting (STAR) System. Through this system, districts are required to annually report licensed and non-licensed staff. A comprehensive collection of education related data such as, but not limited to, full-time equivalencies (FTEs), salary, number of teachers in each content field, students enrolled in courses, education levels and years of experience, is also collected.

Web-Based

And finally, a web-based system is used to annually collect data on highly qualified status for every teacher. These data identify classes taught by highly qualified and non-highly qualified teachers by school, district, region and state. The analysis of data from these systems shows that there is evidence of inequity in high-poverty schools having less than 80% HQ and high numbers of inexperienced teachers. With these systems in place, Minnesota will be able to continue to identify, track and monitor the progress of high-poverty schools that have inexperienced, non-qualified or out-of-field teachers.

NCLB

Districts are annually required to enter the file folder numbers for each teacher hired with Title I funds. Therefore, the NCLB Program Division has a system in place that identifies any teacher hired with Title I funds to be flagged if they are teaching in an out-of-field area. Districts must request an override before they can receive funds for the teacher. Since only schools that meet certain poverty levels are eligible for Title I funds, this process will assist in ensuring that out-of-field teachers are not being placed in schools with high numbers of poor or minority students since only SEA staff can approve the override.

6.2 Does the plan identify where inequities in teacher assignment exist?

DATA

Data was analyzed in three different ways: districts not meeting the 80% target for HQ, individual schools not meeting the 80% HQ target and classes taught by non-HQ teachers

Table 8. Districts not meeting 80% HQ & Years of Experience of Teaching Staff

Dist #	District Name	Non-HQ FTE	Districts with more than 50% teachers with less than 5 years experience
208	EVANSVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	0.98	*
447	GRYGLA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	2.19	
787	BROWERVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT	14.95	
917	INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT 917	9.92	
938	MEEKER & WRIGHT SPECIAL EDUCATION	1.01	*
957	OAK LAND VOCATIONAL CENTER	11.04	
2448	MARTIN COUNTY WEST SCHOOL DISTRICT	21.82	
4004	CEDAR RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOL	1.62	*
4016	WORLD LEARNER CHARTER SCHOOL	2.97	*
4019	NEW VOYAGE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	4	
4027	HIGHER GROUND ACADEMY	5	*
4028	ECT' NOMPA WOONSPE	0.92	
4046	LAKE SUPERIOR HIGH SCHOOL	1.8	
4048	GREAT RIVER EDUCATION CENTER	0.6	*
4052	FOUR DIRECTIONS CHARTER SCHOOLS	2	*
4057	EL COLEGIO CHARTER SCHOOL	6.68	*
4062	FAMILY ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	6.31	
4064	RIVERWAY LEARNING COMMUNITY CHTR	0.93	*
4066	RIVERBEND ACADEMY	0.23	*
4067	AURORA CHARTER SCHOOL	4	*
4072	YANKTON COUNTRY CHARTER SCHOOL	2.5	
4080	PILLAGER AREA CHARTER SCHOOL	1.6	
4082	BLUESKY CHARTER SCHOOL	1	*
4087	SAGE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	3.35	*
4100	GREAT EXPECTATIONS	1.52	*
4101	MINNESOTA NORTH STAR ACADEMY	3	*
4102	MINNESOTA INTERNSHIP CENTER	1.88	*
4103	HMONG ACADEMY	3	*
4104	LIBERTY HIGH SCHOOL	3.76	
4108	GENERAL JOHN VESSEY JR LEADERSHIP	0.84	*
4111	AUGSBURG ACADEMY FOR HEALTH CAREERS	1.44	
4113	FRASER ACADEMY	0.99	*
4114	ASCENSION ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	1.6	*
4120	ST. CROIX PREPARATORY ACADEMY	2.4	*
4121	UBAH MEDICAL ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	2.2	*
4122	EAGLE RIDGE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	2.68	*
4125	WORTHINGTON AREA LANGUAGE ACADEMY	1.99	*
4129	MARY MCEVOY EARLY LITERACY ACADEMY	1	
4131	LIGHTHOUSE ACADEMY OF NATIONS	0.85	
4136	SOUL ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	0.85	*
4146	NORTHERN LIGHTS COMMUNITY SCHOOL	0.96	*
4152	TWIN CITIES GERMAN IMMERSION CHRTR	0.2	*
4154	RECOVERY SCHOOL OF SOUTHERN MN	1	*
6012	ZUMBRO EDUCATION DISTRICT	4.12	
6018	MN RIVER VALLEY EDUCATION DISTRICT	0.6	
6049	RIVER BEND EDUCATION DISTRICT	1.41	

These data from the 2005-2006 school year show that 47 districts (37 charter schools and 10 small districts) currently comprise the list of districts not currently meeting HQT requirements. The data also provides the FTEs that are not HQ and identifies those districts where more than 50% of these teachers have 0-5 years of experience. Twenty-two of these districts/charter schools have a poverty rate above 40%.

The demographics found below coupled with the student enrollment data on page 2 show some of the difficulties charter schools will have to overcome to meet the HQ requirements. However, because they are serving the type of student that NCLB is concerned about, Minnesota will prioritize the need to continue working with the various entities that support charter schools to ensure that these students are academically successful. The following information gives the reader a good understanding of the at-risk students served by charter schools in Minnesota when compared to non-charter schools.

Table 9: Charter School Demographics²

Grd	% F&R Lunch Charters	% F&L Non Charters	% Minority Charters	% Minority Non Charters	% Sp Ed Charters	% Sp Ed Non Charters	% LEP Charters	% LEP Non Charters
3	63	30	61	18	11	11	19	6
5	52	28	46	17	19	13	8	6
8	41	24	28	15	20	12	3	4
10	45	20	35	15	18	11	4	4

² Source 2001 Minnesota Education Year Book: The Status of PreK-12 Education in Mn

Table 10: Classes Taught by Non-HQ Teachers in Poverty Schools and Years of Experience

Table 10

			NON-HQ Count of Classes 2005-06			Total Classes	Percent of Total Elementary or Secondary Classes
			Experience Category				
			0-5 Years	6-10 Years	11 or more		
Elementary Schools	All Schools		257	123	253	633	
	High Poverty		107	63	135	305	
	Low Poverty		59	13	28	100	
Secondary Schools	All Schools		803	265	372	1440	
	High Poverty		269	94	159	522	
	Low Poverty		193	43	79	315	
Assignment Category							
Arts	Elementary	All Schools	10	3	10	23	3.63
		High Poverty	1	1	0	2	0.32
		Low Poverty	2	0	0	2	0.32
	Secondary	All Schools	47	4	5	56	3.89
		High Poverty	9	4	0	13	0.90
		Low Poverty	17	0	1	18	1.25
Civics & Government	Secondary	All Schools	1	0	1	2	0.14
		High Poverty	1	0	0	1	0.07
Economics	Secondary	All Schools	1	0	0	1	0.07
		Low Poverty	1	0	0	1	0.07
Elementary Education	Elementary	All Schools	82	54	99	235	37.12
		High Poverty	27	28	33	88	13.90
		Low Poverty	25	5	5	35	5.53
ESL	Elementary	All Schools	14	7	2	23	3.63
		High Poverty	13	0	2	15	2.37
		Low Poverty	1	1	0	2	0.32
	Secondary	All Schools	7	8	8	23	1.60
		High Poverty	1	6	3	10	0.69
		Low Poverty	0	2	1	3	0.21
Experimental Program	Elementary	All Schools	3	0	0	3	0.47
		High Poverty	1	0	0	1	0.16
	Secondary	All Schools	55	57	37	149	10.35
		High Poverty	22	29	3	54	3.75
		Low Poverty	18	7	11	36	2.50
Foreign Language	Elementary	All Schools	16	0	1	17	2.69
		High Poverty	5	0	0	5	0.79
		Low Poverty	0	0	1	1	0.16
	Secondary	All Schools	98	25	8	131	9.10
		High Poverty	29	1	6	36	2.50
		Low Poverty	14	10	1	25	1.74
Geography	Secondary	All Schools	5	0	2	7	0.49
		High Poverty	2	0	0	2	0.14
		Low Poverty	2	0	0	2	0.14
History	Secondary	All Schools	4	1	7	12	0.83
		High Poverty	2	0	6	8	0.56
		Low Poverty	2	1	0	3	0.21
Mathematics	Elementary	All Schools	9	2	11	22	3.48

		High Poverty	2	2	9	13	2.05
		Low Poverty	1	0	0	1	0.16
	Secondary	All Schools	67	20	17	104	7.22
		High Poverty	50	9	10	69	4.79
		Low Poverty	1	1	0	2	0.14
Other Social Studies	Elementary	All Schools	2	0	2	4	0.63
		High Poverty	2	0	2	4	0.63
	Secondary	All Schools	11	2	2	15	1.04
		High Poverty	6	0	1	7	0.49
		Low Poverty	2	0	0	2	0.14
Reading/Language Arts	Elementary	All Schools	11	18	24	53	8.37
		High Poverty	5	12	15	32	5.06
		Low Poverty	1	1	0	2	0.32
	Secondary	All Schools	63	3	11	77	5.35
		High Poverty	23	0	2	25	1.74
		Low Poverty	19	0	0	19	1.32
Science	Elementary	All Schools	5	4	0	9	1.42
		High Poverty	4	2	0	6	0.95
	Secondary	All Schools	97	28	22	147	10.21
		High Poverty	31	6	10	47	3.26
		Low Poverty	30	2	3	35	2.43
Special Education	Elementary	All Schools	105	35	104	244	38.55
		High Poverty	47	18	74	139	21.96
		Low Poverty	29	6	22	57	9.00
	Secondary	All Schools	326	116	234	676	46.94
		High Poverty	78	39	103	220	15.28
		Low Poverty	86	20	62	168	11.67

Table 10 identifies the data at the teacher assignment level for every core subject taught in all Minnesota schools, regardless of their percentage of classes taught by non-highly qualified teachers. This data was used to determine where assignment inequities exist. According to the results, inequities do exist throughout Minnesota, particularly in special education where 359 out of 920 (40%) assignments taught by non-highly qualified teachers were taught in high poverty schools, while 24% were taught in low poverty schools. Of 2,073 total assignments taught by non-highly qualified teachers, 920 of the 2,073 (44%) were in special education.

The data also suggested that an inequity existed in Elementary Education where 88 out of 235 (37%) assignments taught by non-highly qualified teachers were taught in high poverty schools, while 35 out of 235 (15%) were taught in low poverty schools. However, after working with Elementary principals who identified these assignments as being taught by non-highly qualified teachers, the SEA has determined that a significant portion of these teachers have now met the federal highly qualified requirements. Data submitted for the 2006-2007 school year is expected to show a small number of elementary assignments taught by non-highly qualified teachers, with little inequity.

Table I on page five indicates that 97.65% of core academic classes in Minnesota are taught by HQ teachers. The data further indicates that 96.13% of the classes in high-poverty elementary schools are taught by HQ teachers compared to 98.62% in low-

income elementary schools. At the high school level, 94.05% of core academic classes are taught by HQ teachers compared to 98.55% in low-poverty high schools. The difference between these data is 2.49% and 4.5% respectively, showing high-poverty schools have a lower percent of HQ teachers.

A further analysis of the data revealed that there were districts that met the HQ target but schools within those districts had inequities in the assignment of teachers. Thirty four of these districts have a poverty rate of 40% or higher. Minneapolis and St. Paul are two districts that have schools with inequitable assignments. These districts have high concentrations of poverty in many of their schools and serve a total of 80,000 students. Minneapolis has thirteen schools and St. Paul has three schools that do not meet the 80% HQ requirement. Of the remaining schools, one is in a suburban district and the other schools are charter schools located predominantly in the seven county metropolitan area or in greater Minnesota.

Minneapolis and St. Paul, the Twin Cities, serve the most diverse student population and have the highest number of students enrolled. The demographics of these two districts for school year 2004-2005 are as follows:

Minneapolis:

- Ethnicity: 4% American Indian, 12% Asian, 43% Black and 14% Hispanic. While the districts American Indian population constitutes a mere 4%, Minneapolis serves the largest American Indian population in the state: 1,626 students.
- Limited English Proficient: 23%
- Special Education: 14%
- Free and Reduced Price Lunch 68% (15 schools in Minneapolis have free and reduced priced lunch of 90% or more.)
- Attendance Rate: 93%
- Graduation Rate: 55%
- Students from this district who attend school in another district: 7,505

St. Paul:

- Ethnicity: 2% American Indian, 29% Asian, 29% Black and 12% Hispanic
- Limited English Proficient: 37%
- Special Education: 17%
- Free and Reduced Price Lunch: 69% (17 schools in St. Paul have free and reduced priced lunch of 90% or more)
- Attendance Rate: 92%
- Graduation Rate: 74%

Report Card

In the aggregate, Minnesota data on classes taught by non-HQ teachers does not indicate a large difference between high-poverty and low-poverty schools. (Table 1 on page 5) However, when broken down by areas and years of experience as in table 10, the difference does become significant, particularly, in the area of special education.

In order that parents can be informed about their child's school, Minnesota publishes a report card for every school and district that includes information on the number of non-HQ teachers, and percent of poverty.³ The report card is continuously available to parents and the public on the MDE website; schools notify parents when the school does not meet AYP.

In summary, Minnesota's data indicates that the list of schools and districts across all the data analysis are consistent. When comparing the list of schools from all sets of data, the schools and classes correspond, where non-HQ teachers exists the data indicates the same districts, schools and classes also have inequitable teacher assignments.

6.3 Does the plan delineate specific strategies for addressing inequities in teacher assignment? 6.4 Does the plan provide evidence for the probable success of the strategies it includes?

Minnesota's strategies for addressing the inequities in teacher assignment are focused around two areas: 1.) assignment of inexperienced, unqualified or out-of-field teachers to schools with poor or minority students and 2.) providing parental choice. Minnesota's goal is to have all teachers meet the HQ definition, thus ensuring that schools with poor or minority students do not have teachers that are unqualified, out-of-field or inexperienced. The following strategies will be used as a means to ensure that poor or minority students are not taught by inexperienced, out-of-field, unqualified teachers.

Addressing Inequities In Teacher Assignments

Teacher HQ Plans

The SEA is requiring each district that does not meet the HQ requirement or has a school identified for inequities to develop and submit a plan outlining how each teacher that did not meet the definition outlined in section 1119 (a)(3) will meet HQ and/or how the district will address the inequitable teacher assignments. In addition to responding to the steps outlined in requirement 2.2, each plan will include the following information.

- the reason the teacher(s) did not meet the highly qualified requirement;

³MS 120B.36 requires the commissioner to publish a school and district performance report card. The report card not only includes all the requirements under NCLB but also identifies high and low performing schools using objective criteria. The report card was first released in 2003.

- the specific plan of action that will be taken, e.g., classes, content exam, professional development, etc. in order for the teacher(s) to meet the definition of high qualified;
- how the district will use Title II Part A funds and/or state professional development funds towards activities that will ensure teachers meet the requirements;
- the anticipated date when the teacher(s) will meet the requirements.

This strategy will encourage quality professional development, will guarantee that districts evaluate their hiring policies and practices and encourage them to seek out opportunities that will ensure their teachers receive the type of support needed to meet the HQ requirements and ensure that poor or minority students are not taught by inexperienced, out-of-field, unqualified teachers.

In November, districts and schools that failed to meet the HQ requirements or had schools with inequitable teacher assignments in schools with high poverty and minority population received a letter from the Commissioner of Education. The letter informed them of their failure to meet the HQ requirements and/or had inequitable teacher assignments and the consequences. A sample copy of the memorandum and a copy of the individual teacher plan schools and/or districts are to submit is attached to this document. (Attachment A)

Success: Requiring each district to develop an individual plan for non-HQ teachers and/or a plan for addressing teacher assignments in high-poverty schools will ensure that resources are dedicated toward the implementation of these plans. Furthermore, this action brings to the district's attention the need to focus on teacher assignment policies and practices that would either support or prohibit the assignment of teachers so that such inequities do not exist. Minnesota will use trend data tracked over a period of time to ensure that schools are making progress towards the state's goal of ensuring that schools with poverty or minority students do not have inexperienced teachers, unqualified or out-of-field teachers assigned to them. All efforts will be made to support teachers in their quest to be HQ and to ensure that poor or minority students have HQ teachers assigned to their schools. Focused monitoring of the plan's implementation by SEA staff will support the success of this strategy.

AYP School Improvement Process

The AYP improvement process and its technical assistance are considered to be of the highest priority in the School Improvement Division. A specialist will be assigned based on school improvement concerns and strategies (root cause/problem to be addressed). Therefore, these specialists, who are also members of the AYP School Support Team, will have first hand knowledge of the issues the school needs to address. Because these specialists are responsible for working with schools that have been identified for AYP, any school that also gets identified for having inequities in teacher assignment will also work with these specialists.

The School Improvement Division will ensure that these specialists have the training and experience to guide the development and implementation of HQT plans for high poverty schools that have inequities in their teacher assignments. These specialists will ensure that the district and school review its policies and procedures with respect to hiring and teacher assignments. They will also ensure that high quality professional development and ongoing evaluation are a part of all plans since ensuring that all students have HQ teachers and that inequitable teacher assignments do not exist are the ultimate goals for Minnesota.

Success: The SEA's focus on using annual data to monitor the attainment of HQ goals will determine whether schools are attaining their targets. The data that is collected and reported on an annual basis, will inform the SEA whether schools identified in school year 2005-2006 have made progress towards addressing any inequities. Monitoring the implementation of plans and evaluating the progress and attainment of outcomes will also provide evidence of success. The AYP School Support Teams will provide the oversight for the evaluation process to determine if strategies were identified and effectively implemented. Our expected outcomes include 100% HQ teachers in the AYP schools (including high-poverty schools), along with the evidence of increased student achievement.

Portfolio

Licensure via portfolio provides an alternative pathway to a full professional Minnesota education license. The portfolio process assesses knowledge, skills and competencies of license applicants who have not completed an approved teacher preparation program in Minnesota in the licensure field being sought. This strategy provides opportunities to expand the field of teachers thereby providing district administrators greater opportunities to hire HQ teachers particularly in schools with high poverty and have been identified as having inequities in their teacher assignments. This strategy also enables out-of-field teachers to become highly qualified by providing evidence of knowledge of knowledge and skills they've acquired outside the traditional modes.

Success: Since the Fall of 2004, 125 applicants have submitted portfolios for review and 95 have been approved to receive a Minnesota professional teaching license. This strategy has increased the number of HQ teachers in Minnesota and may be a viable option for schools that have been identified as having inequities in high poverty schools. Data collected through the Teacher License Division will be reviewed annually to determine if this option was utilized by teachers in identified schools and districts.

Minnesota Teacher Recruitment Center

The Minnesota Teacher Recruitment Center was developed under the Higher Education Act, Title II, Part A Grant to assist school districts and highly qualified teacher applicants. The Minnesota Teacher Recruitment Center (MTRC) is a Website that allows Minnesota school districts to post vacancies, review teacher resumes and to interact with highly qualified teachers. The MTRC also allows teachers candidates to post resumes,

search vacancies and to interact with hiring districts. The MTRC works as a recruiting tool that provides districts with access to a large pool of qualified candidates free of charge, thus supporting the hiring of HQ teachers.

The Department will give priority access to high-need schools and districts. Technical assistance and training will be offered to these schools in developing district-wide recruitment plans and marketing strategies to ensure that minority or poor children are not taught by inexperienced, unqualified or out-of-field teachers at higher rates than other children. MTRC is available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Information on highly qualified candidates will be sent to high-need schools and districts on a daily basis.

Success: MTRC went online in December, 2004. Currently, 281 of Minnesota's 434 school districts have created accounts and posted vacancies on the MTRC. An evaluation of the number of high poverty schools and districts that access the system will be conducted on an annual basis. Schools and districts will be asked to provide information on the usefulness of the information and the rate of success in hiring HQ teachers in schools with high poverty or minority students. .

STEM Mentoring Program

In October 2005, Minnesota received a National Governor's Association grant which included an objective to develop and implement a new mentoring program in 2006-07 for secondary teachers in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). The project seeks to expand current teacher induction and mentoring programs for teachers in the STEM disciplines in order to enhance the quality of instruction and increase the delivery of rigorous content in these areas. By the end of the project, it is expected that a new statewide online induction program will have built a network of over 50 mentor-mentee relationships among the STEM areas and data will have been collected about the impact this program has made on improved teacher/student learning and teacher satisfaction and retention. Information regarding opportunities through the STEM project will be targeted to high needs schools and districts in order to retain new HQ teachers. The online delivery and the mentor support allow new HQ teachers in high need schools to receive the support needed to remain in the field of teaching and thereby reducing the number of HQ teachers that leave the profession.

Success: Upon the grant's conclusion in May 2007, a summative evaluation of the pilot will be provided. This will inform MDE regarding the success of this program in increasing content knowledge and supporting teachers to remain in the field of education. Particular attention will be paid to the number of teachers from high needs schools and districts that seek the opportunities provided through this program.

Quality Compensation for Teachers (Q Comp)

Q Comp was proposed by Governor Tim Pawlenty and was enacted by the legislature in July, 2005. The Q Comp program has five components: Career ladders for teachers, job-

embedded professional development, instructional observations and standards-based assessments, measures to determine student growth and alternative teacher compensation or performance pay.

Participation in this program will provide teachers the opportunity to gain the skills necessary to be effective teachers through high-quality professional development and provide support for HQ teachers to remain in the teaching profession. Therefore, Q Comp also supports the retention of HQ teachers in high-poverty schools. The Department has made the dissemination of information and implementation of this program a priority. MDE staff will continue to promote the program as a way of retaining quality teachers and providing all teachers with quality training opportunities.

Because of the diverse and complex needs of students in high-poverty schools, teachers tend to request transfers to low-poverty schools. Therefore, upon request, priority for information and technical assistance will be given to high-poverty schools or districts that have been identified as having inequitable teacher assignments and are interested in the Q Comp program.

Success: In 2003 Minnesota received a Higher Education Act Title II, Part A, Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant. A component of the grant was to pilot the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) in two Minnesota school districts. This research-based program included ongoing, embedded professional development and teacher compensation based on increased student achievement and improved instructional skills. The key components of the Minnesota Q-Comp program are based on the TAP model and its research base, which shows increases in student achievement and improved instruction. Annual evaluations of Q Comp will be done by evaluation specialist from MDE. This information will be used to determine the effectiveness of the various opportunities in retaining teachers in high-poverty schools.

Board of Teaching

The Minnesota Department of Education has begun discussions with the Board of Teaching around the use of waivers. Monthly meeting will be held with the board to discuss the implications of their action. A list of school districts and schools where inequities exist will be updated and provided monthly to the Board of Teaching for review prior to approving any waiver request. The department is also contemplating proposing legislation around this issue. Eliminating the possibility of granting waivers or enforcing stronger criteria around waivers will help support the goal of 100% HQT.

Success: Success of the monthly meetings will be measured annually by the data used to identify schools and districts where inequities exist. It is expected that identified schools and districts will meet established targets towards ensuring that 100% of their teachers are HQ and that inequities in teacher assignments are eliminated. Success of changing the waiver granting policy will be evidenced through the department's work with the Board of Teaching and/or passage of legislation that limits the granting of waivers.

Teacher Union

In Minnesota, teacher assignments are dictated by the local district teacher union contract. In most contracts, the district is able to make teacher assignments within prescribed timelines and procedures. However, there are contracts where the district does not have the authority to assign teachers. Should the district have schools where inequities in the number of non-HQ teachers in high poverty schools exist, department will work with district administrators and union representatives to identify ways of ensuring that poor or minority students are not taught by inexperienced, unqualified or out-of-field teachers at higher rates than other students.

Success: The success of this continuing discussion will be evidenced by changes in the practice of those districts where there is inequity in HQ teacher assignments between high-poverty and low-poverty schools. Ultimately the data reported annually will be used to determine progress and success.

Loan Forgiveness

In addition to the strategies listed above, Minnesota participates in the Perkins Loan Forgiveness Program. Teachers in high-poverty schools or in fields that have been deemed as areas of shortage by the department, who have worked full-time for a period of five years in a public or non-profit elementary or secondary school system, can qualify for up to 100% cancellation of their Federal Perkins Loan. This program encourages qualified teachers to teach in high-poverty schools. High-poverty schools typically have students with diverse needs. Many teachers choose to transfer out of high-poverty schools; thus making it difficult for the district to retain HQ teachers.

The dissemination of information about this program will be targeted to teachers in high-poverty schools. Information posted on the Department's website and the U.S. Department of Education's website list staff in the NCLB Program as the state's contact person. NCLB and School Improvement staff working with identified schools will review and monitor individual teacher plans to see if teachers are taking advantage of this program. It is our experience that many teachers are not aware of this opportunity.

Parental Choice

In an effort to provide parents with choices about schools their children attend, the Minnesota legislature has enacted a number of programs, some of which have been in place since the mid 1980's, and some of which are more recently established. Giving parents opportunities to enroll their child in schools that have HQ teachers may encourage districts to implement hiring policies and practices that promote the hiring of HQ teachers and support HQ teachers with on-going embedded professional development for retention.

Report Card

Minnesota has led the nation in implementing programs that offer choice to parents. The publication of the school/district report card has provided parents with information that was not easily accessible to them in the past. Each year the updated report card is released at the same time as the Minnesota State Fair which offers an opportunity to increase awareness of the report cards. The Minnesota Department of Education's booth has computers available for parents to view their child's school and district report. Staff from the department are available to assist parents navigate through the web system and to answer any questions on the data contained in the report card.⁴ Thousands of parents take advantage of the opportunity to view information about their child's school and to ask questions of the commissioner, her cabinet and other department staff members.

Success: The success of the report card as a way to inform parents about HQ, AYP and other information about their children's schools is evidenced by the thousands of parents who make their way to the department's state fair booth each year and by the number of Minnesotans that use the report card information from the MDE website. Information contained in the report card is maintained on an annual basis and is accurate.

Data on HQ teachers was included in school and district state report cards for the first time this fall. This strategy empowers parents to make informed decisions about the Minnesota choice programs available to them.

Minnesota Statute 124D.03 Open Enrollment

This law, passed in 1986, allows all Minnesota's public school students the opportunity to apply to attend school outside of the school district where they live. More than 30,000 Minnesota students took advantage of this opportunity during the 2004-2005 school year. Students must apply to the school district of their choice by January 15 in order to have the best chance of being admitted the following fall. No tuition is charged. The strategy gives parents whose child attends a school with non-HQ teachers the opportunity to enroll in a school that is staffed by HQ teachers.

Success: The success of this program is measured by the number of parents who take advantage of this opportunity. Of the 30,000 Minnesota students who take advantage of open enrollment, two thirds are in K-8 settings and one third are in grades 9-12. Studies about the reasons for choice showed that in the metropolitan area most students choose schools perceived to have a better curriculum. While a better curriculum does not necessarily equate to HQ teachers, the ability to successfully teach the curriculum to diverse students with complex needs does translate into a "good school" in the minds of parents. Information on the percent of HQ teachers appeared for the first time on individual school and district report cards this fall. The Department will evaluate the success of this strategy in two ways:

- Open enrollment data will be analyzed to identify the schools where students are moving from and schools they are moving to; and

⁴ MS 120B.36 requires the commissioner to publish a school and district performance report card. The report card not only includes all the requirements under NCLB but also identifies high and low performing schools using objective criteria. The report was first released in 2003.

- Data from schools and districts identified as having inequities of non-HQ teachers in high poverty schools will be cross checked to see if parents are moving to schools with high rates of HQ teachers.

This evaluation will be done on an annual basis.

Charter Schools

Charter schools are independent public schools of choice for parents and students. The first charter school in the nation opened in Minnesota in 1992, and charter schools continue to be a popular choice for students seeking an alternative to traditional public schools. Teachers, parents and others work to establish charter schools when they see an educational need and want to design a school to meet it. Only the number of students that the charter school can serve limits admission to a charter school. Since charter schools tend to be smaller schools, many of the schools have waiting lists each year. Currently there are 125 charter schools in operation serving 19,000 students.

Charter schools are required to follow all state and federal laws. They function as an independent district. The fact that many charter schools have not met the HQ requirement means that more extensive evaluations of proposals to establish new charter schools must be made as well as greater efforts to ensure existing charter schools meet HQ requirements.

While parents are not choosing to enroll their child in a charter school because of HQ reasons, the state cannot ignore the fact that many of the students that enroll in charter schools have high needs, have not been successful in a “traditional” school and the enrollment of students in charter schools continues to increase.

To ensure that charter schools do not have inequities in the number of unqualified, inexperienced or out-of-field teacher assignments, the department will work with the Board of Teaching with respect to the granting of waivers for charter schools to reduce the number of waivers that are granted. MDE will also work with the Minnesota Association of Charter School (MAC) to target training to existing charter schools in reviewing hiring procedures and policies and to assist them in their recruitment efforts.

Many charter schools hire individuals with content expertise who don't have teaching credentials. Consequently they request waivers from the Board of Teaching; this results in identification for having out-of-field, inexperienced or unqualified teachers. MDE in collaboration with MAC will also provide information on the licensure via portfolio alternative pathway as a strategy for obtaining HQ status. As stated previously, the Minnesota Teacher Recruitment Center will give priority to schools and districts that have been identified as having inequities in teacher assignments. Training and information on how to use the Center will be targeted to charter schools. And finally, MDE will review the criteria it uses to approve charter school proposals to ensure that hiring policies and procedures result in equitable teacher assignments.

Success: Charter schools offer a unique opportunity for many students and they have been very successful at serving some of our most at-risk students. The Department cannot overlook the fact that 19,000 students are attending charter schools. This number is indicative of the important role charter schools play in Minnesota's educational system. Using data collected through the various systems outlined previously, the department will annually measure the results of the various strategies included above to determine whether fewer waivers are being requested and granted, whether charter schools are hiring more HQ teachers, and whether charter schools are using the various strategies that would assist them in ensuring that poor or minority students are not being taught by out-of-field, inexperienced or unqualified teachers.

Integration Program

In 1987, the legislature provided funding to assist the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Duluth School Districts with their integration efforts. In 1997, the Legislature created the Integration Revenue Program which expended integration funding and established eligibility criteria for school districts statewide. In 2005, eighty districts received approximately \$79 Million for integration activities. The ultimate goal of the program is for districts to use the revenue to integrate their students and alleviate the racial imbalance within a district or across school districts. Use of the funds varies, however, examples of initiatives that give parents choices include:

- magnet Schools
- collaboration of school districts to create and operate two inter-district magnet schools. West Metro Education Program (WMEP) serves student from 11 member districts and East Metro Integration District (EMID) draws students from 10 member districts. WMEP was created as a result of the Choice is Yours program. See below. The creation and operation of EMID was possible through the Integration Revenue.

Choice Is Yours

In 2000, the settlement of an educational adequacy lawsuit filed against the State of Minnesota by the Minneapolis branch of the NAACP and Minneapolis parents resulted in an inter-intra-district voluntary desegregation initiative know as *The Choice Is Yours* program. In 2003, Minnesota received a 5-year federal grant through the Voluntary Public School Choice (VPSC) program to further enhance educational opportunities for urban and suburban families in the Minneapolis area by expanding upon *The Choice is Yours* program. Through this grant, MDE worked with Minneapolis and the Minneapolis branch of the NAACP to create the West Metro Education Program to support parents in choosing the best school for their child and to support student success in school. Ongoing support through the integration revenue as well as other resources has allowed the program to continue.

Success: Success is evidenced in an evaluation of the *Choice Is Yours* program conducted by Aspen Associates. The findings include:

- Comparisons of a sub-group of low-performing students revealed that they outperformed a matched sample of students who were eligible for the program but did not participate.
- Since the suburban choice program began, more African American students are choosing open enrollment transfers out of Minneapolis into suburban schools.
- Total enrollment of Minneapolis students choosing to enroll in a suburban school has increased from 472 the first year to 1,435 the fourth year.

The Minnesota Department of Education contracted with ASPEN Associates for an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of, The Choice is Yours Program, a school choice program it started. The program provides low-income students who reside in areas of concentrated poverty more comprehensive school choice options. These options are more accessible because of free transportation that is not otherwise provided. The Choice is Yours allows families who reside in the city of Minneapolis and who qualify for free or reduced lunches priority options to enroll in city magnet schools and suburban schools with free transportation provided.

In comparisons of annual growth in student achievement in reading and mathematics, suburban choice students in grades 3 through 7 significantly outperformed a matched sample of students who were eligible for the program but chose not to participate. On average, the gains made by suburban choice students were an average of 23 percentile points higher in reading and 25 percentile points higher in mathematics than the gains made by eligible non-participants. Subgroup comparisons of low-performing students (i.e., students with baseline scores at or below the 50th percentile) revealed similar findings: the gains made by suburban choice students were an average of 18 percentile points higher in reading and 19 percentile points higher in mathematics.

Using the data gathered through the program evaluation and data collected through the various systems being used to determine HQ, the department will annually analyze the data to determine if the schools that parents are choosing to leave are schools not making AYP, not meeting HQ and/or have inequities in teacher assignments. This same criteria will applied to the schools that students are choosing to attend to see if this strategies ensures that poor or minority students are not being taught by inexperienced, out-of-field, or unqualified teachers. This analysis has not been done in past years.

AYP Choice

While choice in Minnesota was not new when NCLB was enacted, the opportunity for parents to enroll their child in any school in the district that is making AYP adds to the options parents have in selecting a school that has HQ teachers. The majority of schools in AYP are located in the Minneapolis District. Long before AYP these students and their parents had choice as an option. The AYP Choice consequence has opened the door to other parents and students to select a school within their district rather than open enrollment which allows movement across districts.

Success: In accordance with the NCLB Comprehensive State Performance Report, MDE gathers data annually to report the number of students who have used the “Choice” option under NCLB. This data coupled with the publication of HQ teachers in the State Report Card for districts and schools will be reviewed annually by the department to determine if schools making AYP schools that don’t have equities in teacher assignments.

6.5 Does the plan indicate that the SEA will examine the issue of equitable teacher assignment when it monitors LEAs, and how this will be done?

Minnesota will use a three-step process to monitor the equitable teacher assignment in LEAs that have shown a high proportion of non-HQ teachers working in high-poverty schools.

1. **Data:** Minnesota has a data collection system in place that annually collects information on individual students, teachers and schools/districts. Monitoring will be done on an annual basis to identify high need schools that have been identified for having inexperienced, out-of-field, unqualified teachers at a greater rate than low poverty schools. These data are reported to the public through the department's Website. Districts will be notified by the department when they have schools with poverty higher than 40% and less than 80% of their teachers meet the HQ definition and when schools are identified for having inequitable teacher assignments in schools with high poverty and minority students. While the goal will be to reach 100%, the department expects to see no less than an annual 20% reduction in the number of non-HQ teachers assigned to high-poverty schools. These data will also be reviewed to identify schools where experienced teachers have been assigned to high need schools.

The department will continue to review its data collection process, timelines and expectations on an annual basis to determine:

- whether changes that would enhance the ability to collect data and information more efficiently and in a timely manner are needed;
 - whether identified schools are meeting the expected targets;
 - whether the public reporting of HQ data has had a positive affect; and
 - where high need schools are being staffed by experienced teachers.
2. Each LEA that is identified will be required to develop a plan on how it will work towards the goal of ensuring that high need schools in the district are not staffed with more inexperienced, out-of-field, or unqualified teachers than low-poverty schools. The plans must address the following components:
 - Why the school has a greater number of non-HQ teachers than other schools with low-poverty student enrollment;
 - What action the district will take to ensure that poor or minority students aren't being taught by inexperienced, out-of-field, or unqualified teachers;
 - What resources the district will use to implement its plan and support teachers;
 - The expected annual goal for the district.

A copy of the notice informing districts that have been identified is attached to this plan. Also attached is a copy of the template districts are using to develop individual teacher plans. (Attachment B)

3. The SEA will monitor the development, implementation and progress of each plan through various methods.
- Districts that have agreed to participate in Q Comp will have their plans and progress monitored by the Division of School Improvement on an ongoing basis throughout the school year. Staff will be responsible for reviewing the plans for strategies that are appropriate, ensuring that resources have been dedicated to the strategies and that appropriate timelines are set. Each school participating in the Q Comp program will have an MDE evaluation specialist assigned. This specialist will also evaluate the effectiveness of the plan and the schools ability/capacity to ensure that poor or minority students are not being taught by inexperienced, out-of-field, or unqualified teachers.
 - AYP districts and schools will also be monitored by staff from the Division of School Improvement. Staff from the Division will be assigned to work with each district as well as a specialist with expertise in the areas that have caused the school or district to be identified. The school improvement process will include periodic monitoring of the implementation of the HQ plan by MDE staff and the School Support Team.
 - All other districts will be monitored annually through the NCLB monitoring cycle or by the individual staff member assigned to work with the district through the NCLB Consolidated Application.
 - Each district is required to annually submit a NCLB Consolidated Application. Each application and budget is reviewed and approved by MDE staff. Staff will review applications and budgets to ensure they are aligned with HQ Plans. They will also monitor the budgets to ensure that funds from Title II Part A are dedicated to the HQ Plan.



2006-2007 Intent to Comply with Highly Qualified Requirements

GENERAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS: The information on this highly qualified plan is a requirement of Public Law 107-110, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Please complete this plan for every teacher that did not meet the federal highly qualified requirements in schools and/or districts that have less than 80% of core classes taught by non highly qualified teachers. This plan must be submitted electronically to the Department of Education (see memo contact information) by 4:30 p.m. on **December 1, 2006** and mailed with original signatures to: NCLB/HQ Requirements, 1500 Highway 36 West, Roseville, MN 55113.

SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION

School Name			School Number	
Address		City	State	Zip Code
School Principal Name				
Telephone Number () -	Fax Number () -		E-Mail Address	

DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION

District Name			District Number	
Address		City	State	Zip Code
LEA Representative Name			Title	
Telephone Number () -	Fax Number () -		E-Mail Address	

ACCORD WITH HIGHLY QUALIFIED REQUIREMENTS

I hereby agree to the plan as developed and verify that all parties agree to the plan in order to ensure that all teachers of core academic subjects are highly qualified.

Signature – Teacher

Date

Signature – Principal

Date

Signature – LEA Representation

Date

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION APPROVALS

Signature – MDE Staff Member

Date

Signature – Director of NCLB

Date



2006-2007 Intent to Comply with Highly Qualified Requirements

REQUIREMENTS TO ENSURE HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS

- I. Please explain the reason the teacher(s) did not meet the federal "highly qualified" requirements.
- II. Please identify the specific plan of action that will be taken, e.g., classes, content exam, professional development, etc. in order for the teacher(s) to meet the federal "highly qualified" requirements.
- III. Please explain how the district will use Title II Part A funds and/or state professional development funds toward activities that will ensure teachers meet the requirements.
- Check box if you will need to amend your budget
- IV. Please identify the expected date when the teacher(s) will meet the requirements.



2006-2007 Intent to Comply with Highly Qualified Requirements for Schools with Unequitable Teacher Assignments

GENERAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS: The information on this highly qualified plan is a requirement of Public Law 107-110, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Please complete this plan for every school that did not meet the federal highly qualified requirements in schools for ensuring that poor or minority children are not taught by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers at higher rates than are other children. This plan must be submitted electronically to the Department of Education (see memo contact information) by 4:30 p.m. on **December 15, 2006** and mailed with original signatures to: NCLB/HQ Requirements, 1500 Highway 36 West, Roseville, MN 55113.

SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION

School Name		School Number	
Address	City	State	Zip Code
School Principal Name			
Telephone Number () -	Fax Number () -	E-Mail Address	

DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION

District Name		District Number	
Address	City	State	Zip Code
LEA Representative Name		Title	
Telephone Number () -	Fax Number () -	E-Mail Address	

ACCORD WITH HIGHLY QUALIFIED REQUIREMENTS

I hereby agree to the plan as developed and verify that all parties agree to the plan in order to ensure that all teachers of core academic subjects are highly qualified.

Signature – Principal

Date

Signature – LEA Representation

Date

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION APPROVALS

Signature – MDE Staff Member

Date

Signature – Director

Date



2006-2007 Intent to Comply with Highly Qualified Requirements for Schools with Unequitable Teacher Assignments

REQUIREMENTS TO ENSURE EQUITABLE TEACHER ASSIGNMENTS

I. Please explain why the school has a greater number of non-HQ teachers than other schools with low-poverty student enrollment.

II. Please explain what action the district will take to ensure that poor or minority students are not being taught by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers

III. Please identify what resources the district will use to implement its plan and support teachers

IV. Please explain the expected annual goal for the district.