



**STATE OF VERMONT**  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
120 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

June 12, 2007

Kerri L. Briggs, Assistant Secretary  
United States Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-6200

Dear Assistant Secretary Briggs:

This letter is submitted as an Addendum to Vermont's state plan for meeting the Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) goal. It provides the analysis of HQT data and discussion of equity implications promised in our February 23, 2007 approved state plan. An addendum with supporting data is enclosed.

**ANALYSIS OF HQT DATA**

The SEA compared the percentage of HQ teachers in high poverty versus low poverty schools, high minority versus low minority schools, and schools not meeting AYP goals versus schools meeting AYP goals. Based upon these results, the SEA determined that in 2005-2006, there was no "unreasonable" (i.e., 5 percent or greater) discrepancy in the distribution of HQ teachers with regards to these three measures in regular education classrooms in Vermont. (Please see addendum.)

The SEA compared the percentage of experienced teachers in high poverty versus low poverty schools, high minority versus low minority schools, and schools not meeting AYP goals versus schools meeting AYP goals (see Notes below for how the SEA determined experience). Based upon these results, the SEA determined that in 2005-2006, there was no "unreasonable" (i.e., 5 percent or greater) discrepancy in the distribution of HQ teachers with regards to high minority versus low minority schools, and schools not meeting AYP goals versus schools meeting AYP goals.

There was a meaningful gap in experience with regards to experienced teachers in high poverty versus low poverty schools. (Please see addendum.) However, the SEA does not believe that this discrepancy constitutes a problem at this time because there is no relationship between teacher experience and student performance (as measured by AYP). In fact, LEAs not meeting AYP have a slightly higher percentage of experienced teachers than other LEAs. There was also no pattern to the distribution of experienced teachers

statewide. While rural districts were more likely to have a higher than average percentage of inexperienced teachers than urban, many rural districts met or exceeded the statewide average for years of experience. Overall, the Vermont teacher workforce is very experienced (83 percent experienced). Please also note that because of the very small numbers of classes and teachers in many of Vermont's schools, HQT percentages and experience percentages often vary widely from year to year or school to school within the same region or district due to the effects of a single teacher's status.

The SEA also reviewed the HQT percentage data over three years for each school and LEA in the state to determine progress toward Annual Measurable Objectives. (Please see addendum.) The SEA found that with the exception of Winooski Middle School, Essex Middle School, Barre City Elementary/Middle School, and the Riverside School and the Springfield High School in the Springfield School District, all schools and LEAs made progress between 2003-2004 and 2005-2006 toward having 100 percent of their teachers meet HQT requirements. In the case of the two middle schools, their relatively low percentages reflected the 6-8 grade configurations of the schools where most of their teachers were licensed for 7-12 content areas. The SEA worked with the administrations of those two schools to ensure that all of their 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers are appropriately licensed for their assignments and expect their percentages to increase significantly in 2006-2007. In the case of Barre City, the SEA worked with the district and school administrators to clarify how to complete the Educator Census (Vermont's electronic teacher assignment data collection tool) correctly and have identified for them each instance where an educator was not HQT for a particular assignment. They have made progress in rectifying these situations, and the SEA expects their percentages to increase significantly in 2006-2007. Finally, in the case of the two Springfield schools, the SEA scheduled them for a Title I review next year and will be paying close attention to their HQT information as part of that review. Because Springfield also has not made AYP in the past two years, Educator Quality Team staff notified the School Support Coordinator responsible for working with the Springfield High School. She will be paying careful attention to HQT issues in her work with the school henceforth.

## **EQUITY PLAN**

Given that there is no negative impact of relative educator inexperience on student achievement as measured by AYP status, the SEA does not believe an equity plan directed at educator experience is required at this time. The SEA will continue to analyze the data elements identified above to determine whether any other discrepancies arise.

### ***Notes:***

An educator's experience was determined by the type of license the educator held. If an educator held a Level II or Retired Educator license (would have needed to hold a Level II license to be eligible for Retired Educator license) then that educator was considered experienced. Otherwise the educator was considered inexperienced.

In recognition of the drawbacks to using license type as a proxy for experience a similar analysis was conducted using an educator's employment start date in the district as a measure of experience. Although there was a difference in the total percent of educators in each group, there was the same pattern/distribution of experienced educators across groups.

If any further information or clarification is required, please contact Marta Cambra, Director of the Educator Quality Team, at (802) 828-6543 or at [marta.cambra@state.vt.us](mailto:marta.cambra@state.vt.us).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard H. Cate". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" and last name "Cate" being the most prominent parts.

Richard H. Cate  
Commissioner of Education

## 2006 Vermont Teacher Data

### **Percentage of “core area” regular education classes being taught by a teacher who is HQT for that assignment by School level/ poverty, minority, and AYP (school and district)**

<b>High poverty elementary schools</b>	89.94%
<b>Low poverty elementary schools</b>	94.23%
<b>High poverty secondary schools</b>	90.48%
<b>Low poverty secondary schools</b>	94.17%
<b>High minority schools</b>	93.12%
<b>Low minority schools</b>	89.99%
<b>Schools not meeting AYP</b>	91.08%
<b>Schools meeting AYP</b>	91.95%
<b>Districts not meeting AYP</b>	91.47%
<b>Districts meeting AYP</b>	91.81%

### **Percentage of experienced teachers by School level/ poverty, minority, and AYP (school and district)**

<b>High poverty elementary schools</b>	81.67%
<b>Low poverty elementary schools</b>	88.15%
<b>High poverty secondary schools</b>	78.08%
<b>Low poverty secondary schools</b>	85.24%
<b>High minority schools</b>	84.64%
<b>Low minority schools</b>	80.81%
<b>Schools not meeting AYP</b>	83.16%
<b>Schools meeting AYP</b>	82.92%
<b>Districts not meeting AYP</b>	84.03%
<b>Districts meeting AYP</b>	82.05%

Poverty measure: Free/ Reduced meals were used a measure for poverty. High/low poverty defined by upper and lower quartiles.  
Minority measure: Percentage of students reported as being white was used as a measure for minority. High/low minority defined by upper and lower quartiles.  
Experience measure: Experience was measured based on level of licensure (holding a Level II license (or equivalent) constitutes being experienced).