

# ESSA Quick Reference Brief: Teacher Requirements under Title I-A

## What the Law Says

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) eliminated the highly qualified teacher requirement and addresses teacher qualifications three ways:

- **Teacher licensure:** Teachers employed in Title I-A schools must meet state certification requirements.<sup>1</sup>
- **Notifying families:** Districts that receive Title I-A funds are required to notify families that they can request specific information about a teacher's qualifications.<sup>2</sup> Districts must also notify families when an “out-of-field” teacher has been teaching their child for four or more consecutive weeks.<sup>3</sup>
- **Equitable Distribution of Teachers:** ESSA requires districts receiving Title I-A funds to address disparities by ensuring that students experiencing poverty and historically underserved students to are not disproportionately taught by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers compared to their peers.<sup>4</sup>



## What it Means

Districts must assure that teachers working in Title I-A schools meet the qualifications laid out in Oregon statute and rule and have information available on the qualifications of those educators to share with families. They must also assure that all students have equitable access to qualified teachers.

## Requirements

### *Teacher Certification*

An Oregon teaching license is required for employment as a teacher. All licenses in Oregon are authorized in grades PreK-12, but are limited to teaching the content identified by their endorsements, under the [Course to Endorsement Catalogue](#). However, teachers licensed in Oregon can be assigned to work up to 10 hours per week in one subject-matter area without the appropriate endorsement and still be considered as meeting state certification and licensure requirements.<sup>5</sup> This is commonly referred to as the “10-hour rule.” It is important to note that this provision **does not apply to teaching assignments in ODE-approved CTE programs**.

### *Notification of families*

Districts are required to inform families that federal law gives them the **right to request specific information about the professional qualifications of their children's classroom teachers** including:

- Whether the teacher has met state certification criteria for the grade levels and subject matter taught;

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<sup>1</sup> ESEA Section 1111(g)(2)(J); 34 C.F.R. § 200.58

<sup>2</sup> ESEA Section 1112(e)(1)(A)

<sup>3</sup> ESEA Section 1112(e)(1)(B)(ii)

<sup>4</sup> ESEA Section 1111(g)(1)(B)

<sup>5</sup> OAR 584-210-0160

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- Whether the state has waived its qualification and licensing criteria to permit the teacher to teach on an emergency or other provisional basis; and
- Whether the teacher is teaching coursework in the field or discipline of their certification.

ESSA also requires that districts notify each family whenever their child in a Title I school has been assigned or has been **taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet state certification or licensing requirements** at the grade level or subject in which they are assigned.

## *Equitable Distribution of Teachers*

ESSA requires districts accepting Title I-A funds to develop plans to assure that students experiencing poverty and historically underserved students are not taught at disproportionate rates by out-of-field, inexperienced, or ineffective teachers, as compared to their peers.<sup>6</sup> Currently, information regarding these three indicators is captured through the [Staff Assignment](#), [Staff Position](#) and [Principal and Teacher Evaluation](#) data collections. The table below includes Oregon’s definitions of these terms as described in the [ESSA State Plan](#).

Indicator	Definition
<b>Inexperienced</b>	Any teacher with less than 3 years of experience
<b>Out-of-Field</b>	Any teacher teaching a subject area (course) in which they have neither a regular license and the proper endorsement <b>nor</b> a License for Conditional Assignment.
<b>Ineffective</b>	Any teacher who receives the lowest rating (Level 1) in the district’s evaluation system as reported in the Principal and Teacher Evaluation Data Collection.

## Recommendations for Practice

- *Conduct an annual review.* Having a system to review the licensure status of staff allows the district to develop an “inventory” of staff licensure, informing where additional endorsements may be needed. This practice can also help prevent accidental lapses in certification requirements.
- *Invest in educator induction.* New teachers are more likely to be assigned to schools that have high turnover, so developing a strong educator induction program can improve classroom instruction and increase the retention of new educators.
- *Leverage the power of Title II-A funds.* Educators are the only individuals that can benefit from Title II-A funds. As a result, it is an excellent resource to support efforts to ensure equitable access to educators. Strategies such as **mentoring** of first and second year teachers, **tuition reimbursement** (for endorsements or licensure in areas identified as high need in the district), and implementation of meaningful **educator evaluation systems** are all ways to decrease disparities in access.

## Questions for Reflection

1. How does the district ensure all families are aware of their rights regarding notification of teacher qualifications?

<sup>6</sup> Districts with no more than one school per grade span are exempt from this analysis.

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2. What is the district's system for promoting communication between Human Resources and Title program staff regarding licensure and requirements under Title I-A?
3. What changes in the district's collective bargaining agreement might be needed in order to meet equitable distribution requirements?

## Resources

- [Teacher Standards and Practices Commission Licensure webpage](#)
- [Course to Endorsement Catalogue](#)
- [OAR 584-210-0160](#)
- [Transitioning to the Every Student Succeeds Act: FAQs](#)
- [Powered by Title II-A](#)