



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

DEC 14 2006

Dr. T. Kenneth James
Commissioner
Arkansas Department of Education
Four State Capitol Mall, Room 304 A
Little Rock, AR 72201-1071

Dear Commissioner James:

On July 6, 2006, the Arkansas Department of Education submitted its revised State highly qualified teacher (HQT) plan. The peer reviewers found deficiencies in the original plan, and the Department asked that it be revised and re-submitted. We received the revision on September 29, 2006.

A Department of Education internal peer review committee reviewed revised plan. In general, the reviewers were pleased with the plan, finding only a few remaining deficiencies. To resolve outstanding questions and concerns raised in the internal review, Department Program Officer Miriam Lund had a lengthy discussion with Beverly Williams from the Arkansas Department of Education on November 9, 2006. As a result of this conversation, the Arkansas Department of Education made additional changes to the plan and filled in places where information was missing. A revised version of the plan was submitted to the Department on November 30, 2006, and has been reviewed by Department staff.

In the judgment of the Department, the plan submitted on November 30, 2006 meets all six requirements and is now approved. I would like to congratulate you and your staff for this excellent work. We recognize the substantial challenge it has been to prepare this plan, and we are encouraged that you were able to submit a complete and comprehensive plan.

We will post the November 30, 2006 revision of the plan on the Department's Web site in place of the plan that is currently posted. We look forward to our continued work together, including routine monitoring to ensure that your State implements the activities described in the plan to meet the HQT goal in 2006-07 and beyond, for the benefit of all students in Arkansas. If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact Robert Stonehill (202-260-9737, or robert.stonehill@ed.gov), or Miriam Lund (202-401-2871, or miriam.lund@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

Henry L. Johnson

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Our mission is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the Nation.

Thank you for completing the survey. Please provide documentation for each response and include your contact information on the previous sheet. This sheet asks for information on: the number of teachers in your state that are highly qualified; the number of core academic classes that are taught by highly qualified teachers; the number of teachers who are fully licensed in the state; the number of first-year teachers; the number of first-year teachers who entered teaching through traditional and alternative preparation routes; and the number of National Board-certified teachers in the state.

1. What is the number of TEACHERS who are highly qualified in the state (school year 2006-07)? Please provide the number of teachers statewide and in each of the following categories: highly qualified teachers in high-poverty schools, highly qualified teachers in low-poverty schools, NOT highly qualified teachers in high-poverty schools, and NOT highly qualified teachers in low-poverty schools.

Definition: Please follow the "highly qualified" teachers definition established in ESEA section 9101(23), in which teachers must have at least a bachelor's degree, full state certification or licensure, and demonstrate that they know each subject they teach. Follow the school poverty designation established in ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii), which uses the top and bottom quartiles of poverty in the state.

Number of teachers 2006-07

	Statewide	In high-poverty schools	In low-poverty schools
Teachers who are highly qualified	24274	5045	7436
Teachers who are NOT highly qualified	487	187	100

Explanation and documentation for above chart

The 2006-07 APSCN Report has provided all data numbers for these responses. The scrubbed data was obtained from the Cycle 2 report on October 15, 2006, on teachers of core academic classes. With a total reported of 24659 AR teachers of core academic classes this data shows that 98% of the teachers are HQT.

2. What is the number of core academic CLASSES taught by highly qualified teachers in the state (school year 2006-07)? Please provide the NUMBER of classes statewide and in each of the following categories: classes in high-poverty schools taught by teachers who are highly qualified, classes in low-poverty schools taught by teachers who are highly qualified, classes in high-poverty schools taught by teachers who are NOT highly qualified, and classes in low-poverty schools taught by teachers who are NOT highly qualified.

Definition: Please follow the "highly qualified" teacher definition established in ESEA section 9101(23), in which teachers must have at least a bachelor's degree, full state certification or licensure, and demonstrate that they know each subject they teach. Follow the school poverty designation established in ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii), which uses the top and bottom quartiles of poverty in the state. Please also use ESEA's definition of "core academic subjects," which the law defines as English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, geography and any of the arts as determined by each individual state.

Number of core academic classes 2006-07

	Statewide	In high-poverty schools	In low-poverty schools
Core academic classes taught by teachers who are highly qualified	142526	30144	44102
Core academic classes taught by teachers who are NOT highly qualified	3200	1164	585

Explanation and documentation for above chart

AR data revealed a total of 145,726 core academic classes. Of those 97.8 are taught by HQT. Again this data was obtained from APSCN and the Cycle 2 report.

3. What is the number of TEACHERS who are fully licensed in the state (school year 2006-07)? Please provide the number of teachers statewide and in each of the following categories: fully licensed teachers in high-poverty schools, fully licensed teachers in low-poverty schools, NOT fully licensed teachers in high-poverty schools, and NOT fully licensed teachers in low-poverty schools.

Definition: Please follow the school poverty designation established in ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii), which uses the top and bottom quartiles of poverty in the state, and follow your own state's definition for "fully licensed." "Fully licensed" does not include teachers on emergency or provisional licenses or permits.

Number of teachers 2006-07

	Statewide	In high-poverty schools	In low-poverty schools
Teachers who are fully licensed	36507	7556	11302
Teachers who are NOT fully licensed	312	64	91

Explanation and documentation for above chart

99.2% of all AR teachers teaching in Arkansas's public schools are fully licensed. (There are approximately 60,000 licensed teachers in AR, but only 36,507 are teaching in AR public schools. Other licensed teachers may be retired, teaching in private schools, teaching in colleges/universities or working in another profession during this time period.) Data was obtained from the APSCN Cycle 2 report.

4. What is the number of first-year TEACHERS in the state (school year 2006-07)? Please provide the number of teachers statewide and in each of the following categories: first-year teachers in high-poverty schools, first-year teachers in low-poverty schools, teachers in high-poverty schools who are NOT in their first year of teaching, and teachers in low-poverty schools who are NOT in their first year of teaching.

Definition: New teachers are brand new to teaching or individuals who first taught at any grade level in school year 2006-07. Follow the school poverty designation established in ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii), which uses the top and bottom quartiles of poverty in the state.

Number of teachers 2006-07

	Statewide	In high-poverty schools	In low-poverty schools
First-year teachers	1940	557	502
Teachers NOT in their first year of teaching	34879	7063	10891

Explanation and documentation for above chart

Only 5.3% of teachers in AR public schools are first-year teachers, while 94.7% of AR teachers are NOT in their first year of teaching. This data was obtained from the APSCN Cycle 2 report.

5. What is the number of first-year TEACHERS in the most recent school year (2006-07) statewide and who entered teaching through traditional preparation routes and through alternative preparation routes?

Definition: Traditional teacher preparation programs are the regular college teacher education program routes for entering teaching. Alternative preparation routes vary tremendously, but most are designed for people who already have at least a B.A., who have passed a rigorous screening process, and who are paired with mentors as they complete their field-based program and required coursework before and while teaching.

Number of teachers 2006-07

Statewide	Through traditional teaching preparation programs	Through alternative preparation routes
1940	1454	486

Explanation and documentation for above chart

Data on the 486 teachers identified as being first year teachers who entered teaching through the non-traditional/alternative route was obtained from the Office of Teacher Quality, Non-Traditional Licensure program data files. (First-year teachers from the Teach for America Program or who are in a college/ university Masters in the Arts of Teaching (MAT) program are not included in this count.) Arkansas is working to identify this data for future reports.

6. What is the number of TEACHERS in the state who are National Board-certified (school year 2006-07)? Please provide the number of teachers statewide and the number teaching in high-poverty and teaching in low-poverty schools.

Definition: Please follow the school poverty designation established in ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii), which uses the top and bottom quartiles of poverty in the state.

Number of teachers 2006-07

Statewide	In high-poverty schools	In low-poverty schools
571	90	245

Explanation and documentation for above chart

Data on the 571 NBPTS teachers was obtained from the Office of Teacher Quality, NBPTS program data files.