

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BELLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Barbara M. Travaline, Principal Frank DeFamio, Counselor Pam Schreiner, Reading Specialist

September 1, 2007

RE: Highly Qualified Teacher Information

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act is our country's most important education law. In January 2002, this federal law was revised and has since been *The No Child Left Behind Act*. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was designed to make changes in teaching and learning that will improve our students' academic achievement.

The law requires that all schools must inform parents of their right to ask schools about the qualifications of their child's teachers. Our school receives federal funding and we are happy to share this information with you.

We believe that nothing is more important to your child's education than having a well-prepared and highly qualified teacher. The law requires that all teachers must meet a specific, legal definition of "highly qualified" in order to teach in schools that receive federal funding. The legal definition of a "highly qualified teacher" has three parts. It states that the teacher must have:

1. A four-year college degree;
2. A regular teaching certificate/license; and
3. Proof of their knowledge in the subject they teach.

New Jersey has some of the most qualified teachers in the country, and we are extremely proud of the quality of the teaching staff in Washington Township Public Schools. All of our teachers have college degrees and many have earned advanced degrees. The State of New Jersey has always required a teaching certificate for all teachers. In addition, every teacher continues his or her own learning through professional development activities so as to ensure quality instruction.

The overwhelming majority of our teachers already meet this legal definition of "highly qualified." In rare circumstances, however, due to the unique nature of special education programming and/or shortages of teachers in particular content areas, it may become necessary to hire a staff member, who though certified and qualified, is working toward meeting the strict federal definition of "highly qualified."

A highly qualified teacher knows what to teach, how to teach and has a full understanding of the subject matter being taught. We believe that every teacher in our school is fully qualified and dedicated to teaching your child, and we will do everything possible to help any teacher who may not yet meet the legal definition required by the federal government.

I encourage you to support your child's education and communicate with his or her teacher(s) on a regular basis. By working together, we can provide your child with the best education possible.

Sincerely,

Barbara M. Travaline
Principal

