

Nebraska Department of Education

Nebraska Revised State Plan

Updated 2010

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NEBRASKA REVISED STATE PLAN

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Background on Nebraska School Districts:

Nebraska is a predominately rural state with a student population in 2008-2009 of 292,030 school students. This was an increase of 1,263 students from the 2007-2008 school year. In 2008-2009, there were 254 school districts, ranging in size from 74 students to the largest school district in the state with 48,006 students. Prior to 2006-2007, there were 467 school districts in Nebraska. This significant change was the result of legislative action in 2005 that required all Class I (elementary only) school districts and their staff to affiliate with K-12 districts by the start of the 2006-2007 school year. There are no longer any Class I districts in the state. There are 20 Class II districts (among the smallest districts in the state and defined as districts having 1,000 inhabitants or less that maintain both elementary and high school grades under the direction of a single school board.) 232 districts are Class III districts, and 190 of those districts qualify as REAP (Rural Education Achievement Program) districts. PK-12 enrollments in the 232 Class III districts range from 74 students in the McPherson County School in the western Sandhills to 22,146 students in the eastern Millard Public Schools. Many of these rural districts are located in sparsely populated areas of the state where it is not unusual for students to have to commute 30 miles or more to get to the nearest school. 25 districts are the only school district in a county, and 65% of all of the school districts in the state have 500 or fewer students. There is one Class IV district, Lincoln Public Schools with 34,057 students, and one Class V district, Omaha Public Schools with 48,006 students. These two districts would be considered urban schools, and are both located in the eastern part of the state, approximately fifty (50) miles apart.

Nebraska takes very seriously the goals of NCLB, and the state's educational leaders are committed to ensuring that all students, no matter what size the school, receive a quality education. Knowing how very important a highly qualified teacher is to how much a student learns, based on research studies over the past ten years, Nebraska is working diligently to make sure that all teachers are 100% NCLB qualified.

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

The Nebraska revised plan includes both NCLB Qualified Courses/Teachers and NCLB Non-Qualified Courses/Teachers as described in the following tables, and now includes special education teachers. This information is found on the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) website at www.education.ne.gov under the State of the Schools Report (SOSR) section/State or <http://reportcard.nde.state.ne.us> and includes information about NCLB Qualified Teachers, as well as NCLB Non-Qualified Teachers for two consecutive school years. The information about non-HQ teachers has been added to comply with NCLB requirements and is now included in all SOSRs. This site also provides information about individual districts and buildings for multiple years, and is available for public review. The data on the website identifies the percentage of NCLB core academic area courses that are taught by Highly Qualified Teachers and includes data about courses taught by non-Highly Qualified teachers at the building, district, and state levels. State level information concerning NCLB Qualified Teachers is reflected in Table 1 below, Nebraska NCLB Qualified Teachers, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009. State level information about NCLB Not-Qualified Teachers for the same two school years is reflected in Table 2 on page 3.

**TABLE 1.
NEBRASKA NCLB QUALIFIED TEACHERS, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009.**

NCLB Content Areas	2007 - 2008		2008 - 2009	
	Number of courses	Percent NCLB Qualified	Number of courses	Percent NCLB Qualified
CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT	1,432	99.79%	1,415	99.79%
ECONOMICS	319	97.49%	339	99.71%
ELEMENTARY	7,485	99.92%	7,672	99.90%
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	16,957	97.66%	16,650	98.64%
FOREIGN LANGUAGES	4,279	98.90%	4,358	99.13%
HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY	6,357	98.38%	6,188	99.00%
MATHEMATICS	11,092	96.85%	11,007	97.81%
NATURAL SCIENCES	8,551	98.46%	8,509	98.97%
SELF-CONTAINED	345	98.84%	317	98.11%
VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS	13,927	99.53%	14,244	99.70%
Overall Count/Average	70,744	98.42%	70,823	98.81%

**TABLE 2.
NEBRASKA NCLB NON-QUALIFIED TEACHERS, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009.**

NCLB Non-Qualified Teachers				
NCLB Content Areas	2007 - 2008		2008 - 2009	
	Number of courses	Percent NCLB Qualified	Number of courses	Percent NCLB Qualified
CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT	3	0.21%	3	0.21%
ECONOMICS	8	2.51%	1	0.29%
ELEMENTARY	6	0.08%	8	0.10%
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	396	2.34%	227	1.36%
FOREIGN LANGUAGES	47	1.10%	38	0.87%
HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY	103	1.62%	62	1.00%
MATHEMATICS	349	3.15%	241	2.19%
NATURAL SCIENCES	132	1.54%	88	1.03%
SELF-CONTAINED	4	1.16%	6	1.89%
VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS	65	0.47%	43	0.30%
Overall Count/Average	1,113	1.58%	841	1.19%

* For NCLB purposes, one elementary teacher is considered as one course.

NOTE: NCLB Qualified Teacher data presented here includes Special Education teachers.

Nebraska's emergency teaching certificate is the Provisional Commitment Certificate. In 2008-09, 1 NCLB teacher was teaching on this certificate. This represents .00567% of the 17,639 NCLB teachers in the state.

NCLB also requires states to identify the number and percentage of NCLB qualified teachers in high- and low-poverty elementary schools. To define 'high- and low-poverty' schools, all schools are ranked by the percentage of their enrollment eligible for free or reduced lunches (FRL) in the School Lunch Program. This list is then divided into quartiles. The schools in the quartile with the highest percentages of poverty are the 'high-poverty' schools. The schools in the quartile with the lowest percentages of poverty are used for the comparison.

Source: Nebraska Department of Education, 2008-2009 State of the Schools Report, October 2009

In response to NCLB requirements, the Nebraska data system and the programming that supports it underwent major revisions to enable collection and analysis of NCLB Qualified data, including Special Education teachers and courses taught online. The Nebraska Student and Staff Record System (NSSRS) was implemented beginning in 2006-2007. Additional modifications were required to incorporate these groups and the data and analyses were made available in a much improved system which can be used for state and federal reporting. (Prior to this, schools submitted a Fall Personnel Report which identified all licensed employees in a school district and their qualifications.) There is now more accurate and more detailed data available rather than just summary data through the NSSRS Staff Snapshot and NSSRS Staff Assignment Templates, which are due by September 15 every year. This system has allowed local school districts greater efficiency by being able to collect data electronically only one time rather than several times. The data is used by NDE for the many and various state and federal reports that are submitted. The data system also identifies all licensed employees of each school district, and each teacher's teaching assignment is identified by course name and number in the Personnel/Curriculum Report Reporting System, which each school district reports by the end of February. This information is then matched against the Teacher Certification system to determine the percentage of courses that each teacher is teaching for which s/he is qualified. School districts are contacted by NDE staff when there are any discrepancies.

Data provided in Table 1 on page 3, NEBRASKA NCLB QUALIFIED TEACHERS, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009, identifies the subject areas and percentage of courses taught by teachers who are highly qualified (HQ). Since the information is provided through the Personnel/Curriculum Report in the NSSRS system and linked to the Teacher Certification system, it is very accurate, as all of this data impacts the accreditation (Rule 10) of the schools in Nebraska. Nebraska has made progress in almost all subject areas over these two years, and at the same time, the number of courses available to students has increased significantly. A review of the 2006-2007 school year data as compared to 2008-2009 data shows even greater improvement in each subject area as well as in the overall total percentage of NCLB Qualified Teachers. In 2006-2007, 97.53% of all courses were taught by HQ teachers, and in 2008-2009, that percentage had increased to 98.81% an increase of 1.28%. At the same time, the number of courses offered had increased from 65,910 courses offered in 2006-2007 to 70,823 in 2008-2009, an increase of almost 5,000 courses. Nebraska continues to work on the goal of having 100% NCLB Qualified Teachers, and through the strong efforts of many, is very close to reaching that goal. The use of the HOUSSE process is used in extreme “hardship” cases, which will be described in this report.

Table 2 on page 4, NEBRASKA NCLB NON-QUALIFIED TEACHERS, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009, compares the courses taught over the two years by non-qualified teachers. Upon review of this chart, there is a significant decrease in the number of courses throughout the state being taught by non-HQ teachers. Perhaps one explanation as to why there are even any courses taught by non-HQ teachers is the difficulty smaller districts and districts in sparsely populated areas of the state have in attracting teachers, or in being able to even offer a full-time position for some of the subject areas. For example, in the smallest K-12 schools (classified as Class II schools and defined as districts having a population of 1,000 inhabitants or less that maintains both elementary and high school grades under the direction of a single school board), it is often difficult to find a social studies teacher who is qualified to teach history, geography, economics, civics, and government. Many social studies teachers might be prepared to teach history, but are not endorsed in the field endorsement of Social Sciences. There are currently 20 school districts in the Class II classification. (Table 9 includes Class II schools data compared to other classifications of school districts.) Because Nebraska is a rural state, there are a great number of small rural districts with 20 or fewer teachers. Having one course taught by a non-qualified teacher significantly impacts the districts’ NCLB Qualified Teachers percentage in these many small districts. There are also 16 teachers in the state that have Provisional Special Education endorsements for 2008-09, and these teachers are all in the process of obtaining regular certification. Again, that one teacher would have an impact on a district’s NCLB-Qualified Teacher percentage, even if s/he was only teaching one course for which h/she was not qualified to teach.

In comparing the NCLB Not-Qualified Courses data from the 2006-07 SOSR Report, when 1,639 courses were taught by non-HQ teachers to the NCLB Not-Qualified 2008-2009 data, the number of NCLB Not-Qualified Courses has decreased dramatically to 841 courses taught by non-HQ teachers. It should also be noted that the number of courses offered has increased from 65,910 courses in 2006-2007 to 70,823 courses in 2008-2009. The percentage on non-HQ courses has decreased from 2.47% in 2006-07 to 1.19% in 2008-2009, even with an over 7% increase, or 4,913 more courses offered. Overall, Nebraska school districts are showing continued progress toward the goal of having 100% NCLB Qualified Teachers.

Information about the qualifications of all teachers has been provided to all school districts for all general education teachers for many years. Nebraska Rule 10 Accreditation Reports are created by NDE and

identify the courses in a district/building that are being taught by teachers who are not endorsed to teach that subject and/or grade level. These reports are identified as the “non-endorsed reports” and are provided to the school districts at the end of the school year so that assignment changes can be made when possible, and to assist in the hiring decisions when there is an opportunity to correct the assignments. Continuing accreditation for the school district is dependent upon the district meeting the percentages required in the Nebraska Department of Education’s Rule 10, Accreditation of Schools. Rule 10—School Accreditation information is also available on the NDE website at <http://www.education.ne.gov>

The NSSRS system modifications also provided for annual reports that are mailed to all districts from NDE that address the courses that are being taught by non-HQ teachers. These NCLB Not-Qualified reports, one for general education and one for special education, are provided to the school districts in September so they can determine their district’s NCLB status relative to the goal of having a 100% NCLB Qualified Staff. This information is used by the district to correct assignments where possible, to develop the professional development plan for each teacher who is not Highly Qualified in all NCLB courses which s/he teaches, and/or complete the HOUSSE (high objective uniform State standard of evaluation) application if necessary. (In many rural districts, it is becoming increasingly difficult to offer a full-time position because of budget restrictions, so many times a teacher has to teach a course or two for which they are not endorsed. Therefore, the HOUSSE process might have to be used in some of these districts.) This Non-NCLB Qualified information, which previously had been a paper report, will now be available so school district administrators can check their district and building information at any time on the NDE website, beginning in the spring of 2010.

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?

Because Nebraska is a predominantly rural state, with a large number of school districts and buildings across the state, several districts are separated by many miles. In 2008-09, there were 254 school districts with 1,066 school buildings, as compared to the 467 school districts in Nebraska during the 04-05 school year.

An analysis of the data for LEAs at the building level that have not made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years is provided in the following Table 3 below and continued on page 7, and is also available on the NDE State of the Schools Report at <http://reportcard.nde.state.ne.us>

**TABLE 3.
ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS (AYP) SCHOOLS, 2008-2009.**

District/School Building ID	School Building Population	Avg. % HQT 2008-09	Building Minority %	Building Poverty %	Building Avg. Years Teaching Experience	% of Teachers in Building w/ >3 yrs. Teaching Experience
13-0056-002	373	100	4.83	23.32	13.85	89.29
15-0010-002	302	100	17.88	36.42	21.81	100.00
23-0071-002	130	93.75	3.85	43.85	17.93	85.71
29-0117-002	147	100	7.48	44.90	21.36	100.00
54-0505-002	107	100	96.26	82.24	12.08	61.54
55-0001-002	437	100	53.55	81.01	13.29	78.43

District/School Building ID	School Building Population	Avg. % HQT 2008-09	Building Minority %	Building Poverty %	Building Avg. Years Teaching Experience	% of Teachers in Building w/ >3 yrs. Teaching Experience
55-0001-005	781	100	39.44	74.90	11.47	82.35
55-0001-022	409	96.00	69.44	90.71	8.49	43.90
55-0001-034	539	100	72.17	88.68	15.52	84.00
55-0001-036	454	96.77	29.30	68.72	15.93	86.05
55-0001-039	249	100	42.17	81.53	14.07	81.48
55-0001-041	458	100	54.59	80.57	13.79	74.42
56-0001-004	192	100	23.96	62.50	14.22	92.59
59-0001-002	212	100	76.89	64.62	18.15	95.00
70-0002-002	334	100	1.50	24.55	19.33	96.15
71-0001-003	364	100	43.41	48.08	19.70	100.00
71-0001-012	502	100	30.68	43.82	15.00	82.14
79-0002-002	101	100	44.55	76.24	13.27	63.64
81-0010-015	139	97.80	29.50	53.96	13.23	86.36
87-0013-002	199	93.75	95.48	85.93	12.30	85.71
AYP School Bldg. Averages	321	98.90	41.85	62.83	15.24	83.44

Source: Nebraska Department of Education, 2008-2009 State of the Schools Report, October 2009

Table 3 clearly indicates these AYP buildings do not have significant staffing needs that are any different from other school districts/buildings. The average NCLB Qualified % for these AYP buildings is slightly higher than the Nebraska Statewide District Average of NCLB Qualified Teachers—98.90% as compared to 98.81% for all school districts statewide (Table 1)—less than .10%. 15 of the 20 school buildings have a 100% NCLB Qualified staff. Of the five that do not have 100% NCLB Qualified Teachers, those five buildings all have over 93% NCLB Qualified staff. Based on review of the data and the Nebraska averages for all districts for years of teaching experience, geographic location, and size, it does not appear that there is any significant difference in the staffing needs of the AYP school buildings as compared to the rest of Nebraska’s schools. It should be noted that of Nebraska’s 1,066 school buildings, only 1.88% are AYP buildings. These 20 AYP school buildings from 13 school districts are all included in School Improvement, since they have missed State AYP goals for two or more consecutive years and all have Title I programs. Non-Title I School Buildings that have not made AYP for two consecutive years are also listed on the NDE State of the Schools Report.

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?

Nebraska’s State of the Schools Report (SOSR) reports annually on the number of courses that are taught by Highly Qualified teachers. Data for the 2008-09 school year indicates that the largest percentages of courses being taught by non-HQ teachers are in the areas of mathematics and language arts, according to Table 2. Data for all districts and buildings is found on the Nebraska Department of Education website or at <http://reportcard.nde.state.ne.us/Main/Home.aspx> and is available for public review.

The NCLB Non-Qualified Teachers information from Table 2 (page 4), in 2008-09 shows Mathematics as the subject area with the highest percentage of courses taught by NCLB Non-Qualified Teachers—241 courses or 2.19% of all mathematics courses. In 2008-2009, 11,007 mathematics courses were offered in Nebraska schools and 97.81% are taught by NCLB Qualified Teachers, as reflected in Table 1 on page 3. Mathematics was also the area that had the highest percentage of courses taught by NCLB Non-Qualified teachers in 2007-2008. Again, one mathematics course taught by a teacher who is not appropriately endorsed in mathematics at one of the 190 smaller rural districts (REAP districts) can have a major impact on the percentage of NCLB Qualified Courses, especially in those schools that have 20 or fewer teachers. Many times, a teacher who is not appropriately endorsed has to teach one middle school mathematics course, as there is only one mathematics teacher in that small district who is assigned to teach as many mathematics courses as possible. Yet, there are still students who need a mathematics teacher for Grade 7 Math, for example. As a result, one course might be taught by a teacher who is not appropriately endorsed, and that significantly impacts the school district's NCLB Qualified Teacher status. Mathematics is also one of the shortage areas discussed in the Teacher Shortage Survey information on pages 8-9.

Governor David Heineman has recently given special attention to recruiting mathematics and science teachers in Nebraska's schools. One of the Governor's eight goals in the P-16 Initiative is to increase by five percent the number of teacher education graduates in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) within Nebraska postsecondary institutions. In addition, Nebraska's loan forgiveness programs for teachers in Nebraska gives special attention to those teachers seeking an advanced degree in a shortage area. If the teacher agrees to teach in Nebraska for a period of two years after completing that degree, the loan is completely forgiven. The Enhancing Excellence in Teacher Preparation program only went into effect in May, 2009 and had 268 current teachers receive loans to begin or finish their masters degree programs. Data will be available in the near future as to the impact this opportunity makes on Nebraska school districts and having NCLB Qualified teachers in each and every course that is being taught.

There has and continues to be a strong effort on the part of Nebraska Department of Education Special Education office staff, and others to have all Special Education teachers become 100% NCLB Qualified, as many of the 841 courses that are taught by NCLB Non-Qualified Teachers are being taught by special education teachers. NDE staff members continually provide assistance to the state's teachers, especially special education teachers, in their efforts to become NCLB Qualified. They offer professional development workshops and provide many other opportunities for teachers to become NCLB Qualified. The NDE Special Education Office provides grants to all Educational Service Units in Nebraska. These grants, "Improving Learning for Children with Disabilities" (ILCD) designate staff at the unit level who then support the school district special education programs within the unit area. One of the roles of the ILCD facilitators is to assist the district special education staff in becoming NCLB qualified. The NDE Special Education Office has also offered a pilot grant with the University of Nebraska in Omaha to support the training of non-traditional/non-endorsed individuals to become NCLB qualified.

Each year, the Nebraska Department of Education contracts for a Teacher Shortage Survey to determine which content areas are in greatest demand. The 08-09 Teacher Shortage Survey, which had a 96.5% response rate, identified special education, foreign languages, English, natural sciences, and mathematics as the areas with the greatest needs. Special education teachers have historically been the largest area of shortage, and that

was again reflected in the 08-09 survey. This independent survey also shows consistently that schools with less than 500 students report the greatest number of unfilled vacancies. (65% of Nebraska school districts have 500 or fewer students.)

The Nebraska Department of Education provides a website for applicants and schools to post their vacancies and candidate availability. This website, www.nebraskaeducationjobs.com is experiencing much higher usage, especially by smaller school districts that do not have the personnel or the budget to recruit teachers. In 2008-2009, there were 233,000 visits to the website and over 2.6 million hits. This website is currently serving approximately 1,000 customers a day, with the peak months being March-June, and there has been a huge increase in website usage since 2003-2004, the first year this website was available. (That year, there were 32,100 total visits and 200,000 hits.) Prospective teachers can search for a job and apply online and school districts can post job vacancies, all free of charge. The website is updated weekly.

Located on the NDE website is the NCLB Qualified Teacher Lookup System, at no cost to districts. Administrators or other human resources personnel can access this system to check the NCLB-Qualified Status of a Nebraska teacher when making hiring decisions.

These combined efforts, along with others, are helping to recruit and retain teachers, especially in the above-mentioned shortage areas, and in addition, helping Nebraska to achieve the goal that all of the students in Nebraska’s 254 public schools have 100% Highly Qualified teachers in all of their classrooms.

4) Does the analysis identify districts and schools around the State where significant numbers of teachers do not meet HQT standards?

Among all 254 school districts, 98.81% of teachers statewide are NCLB Qualified. This includes those teachers who have successfully completed the HOUSSSE . As stated earlier, the smaller school districts (and usually the most rural) have the greatest difficulties finding teachers who are qualified to teach multiple subjects. This accounts for the disparity in percentages of HQT teachers in the 190 REAP districts and the 20 smallest (or Class II) school districts. Table 4 below compares percentages in each of the content areas of the the Class II (smallest) districts, 190 REAP districts, and all districts in the state.

Table 4.
NCLB Qualified Teachers, 2008-2009.

NCLB Content Areas	% taught by HQ teachers in 20 smallest/Class II districts	% taught by HQ teachers in REAP districts	% taught by HQ teachers Statewide, 2008-09
Elementary	100%	100%	99.90%
English/ Language Arts	90.04%	97.56%	98.64%
Foreign Languages	100%	97.83%	99.13%
Mathematics	98.53%	97.44%	97.81%
Sciences	99.00%	98.61%	98.97%
Civics and Govt.	100%	99.89%	99.79%
Economics	100%	100%	99.71%

NCLB Content Areas	% taught by HQ teachers in 20 smallest/Class II districts	% taught by HQ teachers in REAP districts	% taught by HQ teachers Statewide, 2008-09
History and Geography	99.17%	98.35%	99.00%
Visual and Performing Arts	98.82%	99.32%	99.70%
Average/Total	98.40%	98.23%	98.81%

Source: Nebraska Department of Education, 2008-2009 State of the Schools Report, October 2009

****The cells that are bolded indicate lower percentages than the statewide percentage.***

The REAP data included in Table 4 demonstrates that there are some, but not significant differences between the statewide data, the smallest school districts (Class II), and the REAP districts. English/Language Arts and Visual and Performing Arts are the areas of greatest need for the smallest Class II districts. The problem areas for REAP districts include English/Language Arts, foreign languages, mathematics, sciences, history and geography, and visual and performing arts, even though the differences are very slight. This data also follows closely the information discovered in the Teacher Shortage Survey, which is conducted independently each year. Special education, foreign languages, English/Language Arts, natural sciences, and mathematics show up as shortage areas year after year. To further explain why the percentages are not all 100% NCLB Qualified, many times there might be one course in a content area that is taught by a teacher who is not HQ, and since there are fewer courses taught at many of these schools due to the small size of the school district, a district's HQ percentage might show up as a rather low percentage, when actually there is only one course that is not being taught by a HQ teacher. This is true in 32 of the 108 districts (almost 30%) which are not 100% NCLB Qualified, as in those schools, one teacher is teaching one course without the proper endorsement. Rural districts also hire fewer teachers and expect them to teach a wider variety of classes, simply because they do not have budgets that allow hiring more teachers, and do not have qualified people available to teach one or two classes. It would be almost impossible to attract a teacher to many areas in the state if they could not employ the teacher full-time. Therefore, one course might have to be taught by a teacher who is not HQ for that particular course. The HOUSSE is especially important to the very small, very rural districts. In 2008-2009, there were 327 teachers teaching a course (or courses) for which they were not properly endorsed. There were 24,332 teachers in Nebraska in 2008-2009, which indicates only 1.34% of teachers were teaching at least one course for which they were not properly endorsed. Teachers and others are making strong efforts to make sure the Non-NCLB Teachers percentage is soon 0%, and is getting very close.

To identify districts and schools where significant numbers of teachers do not meet HQT standards, Nebraska has defined "significant" as more than 10% of total courses taught by teachers in a district. It is critically important to note that because so many districts have small numbers of teachers, many less than 20 teachers total, a minor change in a teaching assignment can significantly impact the district's HQT percentage. This is certainly true in McPherson County, for example which is one of the 32 schools where only one teacher is teaching one course in 2008-2009 for which s/he is not properly endorsed. The HQ percentage for that school district is 96.88% NCLB Qualified. In another much larger district, Millard Public Schools, there are 17 courses taught by six non-NCLB Qualified teachers, yet the overall HQ percentage is 99.49% for that district. This definitely illustrates how much smaller districts HQ percentages are affected as compared to larger districts.

Analysis of the LEA data indicates that only eight districts in the state that are below 90% HQT. These districts will be a major focus for technical assistance by NDE, teacher education institutions, the regional service centers (Education Service Units), and SAHE (State Agency for Higher Education/Nebraska Coordination Commission for Post-Secondary Education or NCCPE) project coordinators. Table 5 below provides information about the eight districts and their data for the 08-09 school year.

Table 5.
Nebraska K-12 Districts with less than 90% HQ Teachers in 08-09.

SCHOOL ID #	K-12 POPULATION	ELEMENTARY	ENGLISH/ LANGUAGE ARTS	FOREIGN LANGUAGE	MATHEMATICS	SCIENCES	CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT	ECONOMICS	HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY	VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS	MINORITY %	POVERTY (FRL) %	AVG. YRS. TOTAL EXPERIENCE	AVG. % HQT	% Of Teachers w/ >3 yrs. Experience
13-0056-000	626	100	84.38	100	71.43	94.12	100	N/A	66.67	100	4.47	22.52	12.34	85.16	85.19
23-0071-000	242	100	100	100	85.71	100	100	N/A	100	75.00	3.72	47.52	16.52	88.89	84.62
26-0001-000	440	100	71.11	100	81.82	100	100	N/A	100	88.46	8.86	22.50	14.76	85.07	97.37
34-0001-000	428	100	82.35	100	80.65	85.00	100	100	80.00	100	9.58	45.33	21.14	88.11	90.48
39-0055-000	94	100	100	N/A	72.73	60.00	100	100	100	66.67	4.25	77.66	15.06	80.85	81.25
43-0079-000	159	100	42.86	100	75.00	100	100	N/A	100	100	7.55	45.91	14.78	85.08	65.22
74-0501-000	92	100	68.75	N/A	100	100	100	N/A	25.00	87.50	4.35	47.83	19.42	82.00	82.35
87-0017-000	480	100	87.50	100	81.82	88.33	100	100	84.62	100	98.54	83.72	12.96	87.74	79.17
8 School Avg.	320	100	79.62	100	81.15	90.93	100	100	82.04	89.70	17.67	49.12	15.87	85.36	83.21
NEBRASKA AVERAGES	1150	99.90	98.64	99.13	97.81	98.97	99.79	99.71	99.00	99.70	25.34	38.35	15.19	98.81	86.69

Source: Nebraska Department of Education, 2008-2009 State of the Schools Report, October 2009

Table 5 also provides comprehensive data for 08-09 concerning HQ teachers in the eight districts whose percentage of courses taught by Highly Qualified teachers was less than 90 percent. Nebraska has no districts below 80.85% HQ. As a point of comparison, in the 06-07 school year, there were 17 districts with less than 90% percent of the courses taught by HQ teachers. The data includes not only HQ status, but the equity of distribution of experienced teachers. These eight districts vary in size from a student population of 92 to 626. The statewide 08-09 average population of the 254 PK-12 Nebraska districts is 1150, so clearly, these eight districts are representative of some of the smaller schools in the state. The total student enrollment of these eight districts is 2561, or .88% (less than 1%) of the 292,030 public school students enrolled in the state in 08-09. 100% of elementary teachers in these eight districts are 100% NCLB Qualified. However, these school districts are lower than the statewide average of NCLB Qualified teachers in English/Language Arts, mathematics, natural science, history and geography, and visual and performing arts. Again, this follows closely with the Teacher Shortage Survey information concerning shortage areas in the state. The average years of experience of the teachers in these eight districts is 15.87 years, and the statewide average is 15.19 years, indicating years of teaching experience in these eight districts is slightly higher than the statewide average. This indicates years of teaching experience is definitely not a factor. The 08-09 data for these districts will be carefully analyzed to determine progress and needed technical assistance, as all districts and buildings receive on-site monitoring by the Nebraska Department of Education staff prepared to provide technical assistance on all segments of the LEA's Consolidated Plan. The staff members involved in this process meet on a regular basis. It should be noted that 98.81% of the state's 70,823 courses were taught by NCLB Qualified teachers in 2008-2009. In 2007-2008,

there were 70,744 or 98.42% of all courses taught by NCLB Qualified teachers. It is interesting to note that the number of courses taught increased, as did the percentage of NCLB Qualified teachers. Nebraska is very close to having all districts at 100% NCLB-Qualified, but at the same time realizes there might be individual school districts that fall short of that goal due to extenuating circumstances such as sudden or unforeseen changes in staff, for example.

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

The courses that were most frequently taught by non-NCLB qualified teachers in these eight districts during 2008-09 are mathematics, history and geography, English/Language Arts, and sciences.

Professional development, additional college courses, and the HOUSSE process are options for teachers who are not NCLB-Qualified. In most cases, these schools are located in rural areas of the state, and all but one have a student population of less than 500 students. The remote, rural areas of the state many times do not have enough highly qualified teachers to teach the required school courses, and other than history and geography, the same content areas consistently show up on the annual Teacher Shortage Survey data—teacher shortages in special education, foreign languages, English, natural sciences, and mathematics are indicated year after year, as indicated in the Teacher Shortage Survey section discussed on pages 8 and 9. Very few of the students in the state of Nebraska are taught by non-NCLB teachers, but of the ones who are, these content areas show up more frequently than others. In looking at Statewide NCLB Non-Qualified Teachers in the chart on page two, mathematics, English/Language Arts, natural sciences, and history and geography appear in that order for both school years, 2007-08 and 2008-09 as having courses taught by non-NCLB qualified teachers. Again, this follows information gathered from the Teacher Shortage Survey.

The Nebraska Legislature has provided funding to strengthen the state’s distance learning network so school districts would be able to access courses being taught elsewhere in the state. This system allows existing HQ teachers to reach students in buildings or districts where there might be a lack of HQ teachers on staff. Another option currently available to schools is to utilize online courses that are taught by a HQ teacher, which some districts are doing.

Nebraska is utilizing three specific strategies to assist school districts in increasing their percentage of HQ teachers. The first strategy is the Transitional Teaching certificate program, which was developed through a federal Transition to Teaching Grant (and is Nebraska’s alternative certification route.) This fairly new alternative certification program has had a total of 92 graduates currently teaching in Nebraska schools, and has 46 current teacher candidates at various stages of completion of the program. The program is specifically designed for mid-career professionals and recent college graduates with baccalaureate degrees who wish to become Nebraska teachers.

Another strategy is the Attracting Excellence to Teaching Program (AETP), which was funded by the Nebraska State Legislature in 2006-07. To date, 446 forgivable loans totaling \$1,145,500 have been awarded to postsecondary students enrolled in a teacher preparation program seeking their initial certification. These teachers must teach in a Nebraska school system for at least two years after receiving their initial certificate for the loan to be forgiven.

The most recent strategy was a result of Nebraska State Legislature action in 2008-2009, entitled the Enhancing Excellence in Teaching Program (EETP). This is available to current Nebraska teachers who are enrolled in a graduate teacher education program at a recognized and approved Nebraska teacher preparation program and resulting in an advanced degree. It allows a teacher to receive \$175/credit hour, along with similar requirements to the Attracting Excellence to Teaching Program. (The teacher must be a Nebraska resident currently teaching in a Nebraska public or private school, and must be seeking a masters or advanced degree.) In the first months of this program, 268 teachers were awarded \$810,051. The Nebraska State Legislature has allocated \$1 million annually for the next eight years through the Excellence in Teaching Act, and divided the allocation so AETP is funded at 40% and EETP is funded at 60%. Each Nebraska Higher Education institution has been given all information concerning these programs, plus information about each program is posted on the NDE website.

Clearly, the state of Nebraska realizes the importance of having Highly Qualified teachers, and is using various strategies, as well as contributing many resources, so all teachers are adequately prepared and appropriately endorsed.

Requirement 2: The revised plan must provide information on HQT 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.

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

There were 254 LEAs in the State of Nebraska in 08-09. Of those districts, 146, or 57.48% of districts are 100% HQT and 108, or 42.52%, are not. 102 of those 108 districts are between 90% and 99% NCLB Qualified, with 54 of them being 98% or higher NCLB-Qualified. No LEA in the state is below 80.85% NCLB Qualified. 190 of those 254 districts are REAP schools (almost 75% of all schools in the state), and 60 of the 108 districts have a student enrollment of 500 students or fewer. Since Nebraska is a predominately rural state, the state faces some unique challenges as compared to states with larger urban populations. There might be only one course in an entire LEA that is taught by a non-NCLB Qualified teacher, and in a small district that has fewer than 20 teachers, one course being taught by a non-qualified teacher significantly impacts the NCLB Highly Qualified Percentage for that district. In 2008-2009, 32 of these districts had only one course taught by a non-NCLB Qualified teacher, and 33 of the districts had between two and four courses taught by a non-NCLB Qualified teacher. Almost 60% of districts have only one to four courses taught by non-NCLB qualified teachers. This indicates the state's districts are united in the effort to make sure all students have HQ teachers.

The State Plan has identified the goal of 100% of all applicable teachers meeting NCLB requirements. The Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) for each school and district that has not already attained 100% NCLB Qualified status, is to make progress to improve the percentage of teachers who are NCLB Qualified, and clearly there is evidence that this is being done, as 146 LEAs have reached the 100% NCLB Qualified Teacher Goal— 57.48% of all LEAs in the state in 2008-2009. In 2006-07, only 91 districts, or 35.83%, had a 100% NCLB Qualified

staff and 163 did not, so Nebraska is clearly showing progress toward the goal of having 100% Highly Qualified in a fairly short amount of time. Data regarding LEA progress is reviewed annually and personal contacts are made to administrators of schools not achieving AMO.

Table 6 below (and through page 18), identifies the 108 districts that are not at 100% NCLB-Qualified Status, along with other specific data about each district, including the content areas in each district that have courses taught by non-NCLB Qualified teachers.

Table 6.
Nebraska Districts less than 100% HQT, 2008-09.

AGENCY ID	DISTRICT PK-12 POPULATION	% TEACHERS W/ >3 YRS. EXPERIENCE	% MINORITY	% POVERTY (FRL)	AVG. TOTAL TEACHER EXPERIENCE (YEARS)	CONTENT AREA--# COURSES/TOTAL # COURSES **	DIST. AVG. HQT COURSES ***	CLASS
01-0018-000	3368	86.89	23.11	50.34	15.63	Nat Sci—2/74	99.11	III
01-0123-000	234	84.62	8.13	38.62	17.00	FL—2/2	97.56	III
02-2001-000	505	93.33	4.36	43.17	20.08	Hist & Geog—1/18	99.62	III
04-0001-000	173	90.48	18.56	46.11	18.19	Eng/LA—1/15	98.80	III
06-0006-000	144	89.47	2.13	43.26	16.21	Math—1/17	97.26	III
07-0006-000	1707	89.66	30.31	42.09	18.34	Eng/LA—2/99; Math—1/68	99.18	III
10-0007-000	5039	93.77	14.62	37.06	19.05	Hist & Geog—1/92; Math—1/126	99.73	III
10-0009-000	347	75.86	4.55	33.24	14.90	Hist & Geog—1/5; Math—1/23	93.22	III
10-0119-000	272	65.22	2.96	24.44	11.80	Eng/LA—2/18; Math—1/17	96.91	II
11-0001-000	636	92.31	4.64	27.68	18.83	Nat Sci—1/22	99.52	III
11-0014-000	419	89.74	5.36	30.13	17.15	Nat Sci—1/17	99.26	III
12-0032-000	171	71.43	4.44	54.07	13.93	Eng/LA=2/9; Nat Sci=1/5	93.02	II
12-0502-000	317	90.00	0.00	22.22	19.87	Math=1/13	99.00	III
13-0022-000	385	87.50	4.37	24.68	15.25	Eng/LA=3/28; Math=2/25	95.97	III
13-0032-000	518	80.95	3.61	13.09	14.10	Nat Sci=1/17	99.42	III
13-0056-000	632	85.19	4.47	22.52	12.34	Eng/LA=5/32; Math=8/28; Hist & Geog=7/21; Nat Sci=1/17	85.16	III
14-0045-000	325	92.86	1.31	42.30	18.75	Hist & Geog=2/11; Math=1/18	97.35	III
14-0541-000	128	85.00	2.40	28.80	13.93	FL=1/1	90.20	III
15-0010-000	528	98.00	17.86	33.64	20.72	Eng/LA=3/43; Math=7/30; Nat Sci=3/18; Vis Arts=1/39	92.18	III
18-0002-000	413	89.19	9.41	25.50	19.16	Eng/LA=2/24; Math=2/20	97.08	III
19-0058-000	215	95.24	3.38	28.50	14.13	FL=4/14	94.51	III

AGENCY ID	DISTRICT PK-12 POPULATION	% TEACHERS W/ >3 YRS. EXPERIENCE	% MINORITY	% POVERTY (FRL)	AVG. TOTAL TEACHER EXPERIENCE (YEARS)	CONTENT AREA--# COURSES/TOTAL # COURSES **	DIST. AVG. HQT COURSES ***	CLASS
19-0059-000	194	76.19	8.42	22.11	16.35	Nat Sci=2/8	97.44	III
19-0123-000	1665	87.39	70.64	63.33	16.03	FL=12/12	96.41	III
20-0001-000	727	75.38	31.36	46.85	16.51	Eng/LA=8/64	95.73	III
20-0020-000	312	84.62	15.56	44.70	15.77	Eng/LA=1/15	97.40	III
22-0011-000	3657	74.14	67.68	58.28	11.79	Eng/LA=5/273; Hist & Geog=2/40; Math=7/109; Nat Sci=6/59; SC=1/24; Vis Arts=6/118	96.47	III
22-0031-000	398	78.79	9.90	24.11	15.82	Vis Arts=1/16	96.39	III
23-0002-000	904	80.22	18.66	33.87	14.40	Eng/LA=9/90	97.18	III
23-0071-000	263	84.62	3.72	47.52	16.52	Math=2/14; Vis Arts=4/16	88.89	III
24-0001-000	2953	76.65	80.39	75.75	13.19	FL=2/21	99.69	III
24-0004-000	301	80.77	9.15	50.17	14.96	Math=3/15	96.31	III
24-0011-000	976	94.94	20.83	40.04	19.48	Math=7/30	96.31	III
26-0001-000	442	97.37	8.86	22.50	14.76	Eng/LA=13/45; Math=4/22; Vis Arts=3/26	85.07	III
26-0024-000	162	76.19	6.21	43.48	22.29	FL=1/3	93.44	III
26-0561-000	326	80.00	9.46	36.91	18.57	FL=5/8	95.00	III
27-0594-000	575	87.50	8.95	37.71	19.60	Eng/LA=5/44; Hist & Geog=1/14; Math=1/22	94.96	III
28-0001-000	48,006	77.63	60.36	62.26	10.82	Elem=3/1417; Eng/LA=30/1718; Hist & Geog=3/886; Math=25/1108; Nat Sci=3/1077; Vis Arts=2/2163	99.08	V
28-0010-000	4614	84.00	7.79	6.97	13.25	Eng/LA=3/161; Hist & Geog=3/82; Math=1/111; Nat Sci=4/119	98.65	III
28-0015-000	667	90.00	11.87	32.88	15.15	Math=1/46	99.59	III
28-0017-000	22,027	85.37	12.01	10.85	14.56	Elem=1/508; Eng/LA=7/1290; Hist & Geog=3/703; Math=13/979; Nat Sci=3/885; Vis Arts=3/692	99.49	III
28-0054-000	3,091	77.88	28.66	41.54	13.59	Elem=1/77; Eng/LA=3/150; Math=1/89	98.93	III
30-0054-000	139	85.00	6.87	16.79	19.65	Math=1/12	98.67	III
33-0021-000	333	80.00	2.11	43.20	12.72	Math=1/13	98.96	III

AGENCY ID	DISTRICT PK-12 POPULATION	% TEACHERS W/ >3 YRS. EXPERIENCE	% MINORITY	% POVERTY (FRL)	AVG. TOTAL TEACHER EXPERIENCE (YEARS)	CONTENT AREA--# COURSES/TOTAL # COURSES **	DIST. AVG. HQT COURSES ***	CLASS
33-0540-000	490	89.36	6.81	46.69	18.89	Math=4/35	97.08	III
34-0001-000	452	90.48	9.58	45.33	21.14	Eng/LA=6/34; Hist & Geog=2/10; Math=6/31; Nat Sci=3/20	88.11	III
34-0034-000	351	93.75	0.85	14.08	15.28	Eng/LA=2/24; Math=2/19; Nat Sci=1/11	95.50	III
39-0010-000	172	77.78	6.22	54.40	17.35	FL=1/7	98.67	III
39-0055-000	92	81.25	4.26	77.66	15.06	Math=3/11; Nat Sci=2/5; Vis Arts=4/12	80.85	III
40-0002-000	8354	81.95	44.76	59.48	14.76	Civ & Govt=2/24; Eng/LA=4/336; Hist & Geog=1/128; Math=5/228; Nat Sci=3/121	98.71	III
41-0504-000	1280	92.71	4.51	26.34	18.84	FL=1/13	99.62	III
43-0079-000	159	65.22	7.55	45.91	14.78	Eng/LA=8/14; Math=2/8	85.07	III
46-0001-000	192	81.82	0.55	49.18	12.45	Hist & Geog=2/5; Math=4/15	93.18	III
47-0103-000	126	75.00	4.80	59.20	11.50	Eng/LA=2/11; Hist & Geog=1/6; Math=1/8	91.49	II
48-0300-000	377	84.38	7.35	35.78	17.87	Tri Co—SC=1/1	99.25	III
48-0303-000	202	95.24	10.20	43.88	20.45	Math=1/17	98.88	III
49-0050-000	531	92.31	19.67	36.25	17.42	Elem=1/56	98.56	III
50-0001-000	243	75.00	4.66	31.78	16.67	Eng/LA=2/27	98.20	III
50-0503-000	825	91.80	7.02	26.31	19.16	Eng/LA=1/43	99.38	III
51-0006-000	207	80.95	14.48	31.67	11.62	Math=1/10	98.48	III
53-0001-000	587	71.15	13.37	32.83	14.46	Eng/LA=4/36; Math=1/30	96.71	III
54-0096-000	384	90.00	2.11	29.47	17.63	Eng/LA=1/32	99.25	III
54-0501-000	144	85.71	55.03	71.14	15.38	Elem=1/52	99.09	III
55-0001-000	34,057	85.46	23.46	39.73	15.60	Econ=1/69; Elem=2/838; E/LA=13/2058; FL=4/435; Hist & Geog=4/904; Math=54/1472; Nat Sci=21/1128; SC=4/74; Vis Arts=6/1011	98.62	IV
55-0145-000	1733	89.43	2.83	14.59	16.28	Wav Vis Arts=1/48	99.71	III
55-0160-000	1965	90.32	5.36	8.66	17.20	FL=4/21	99.14	III

AGENCY ID	DISTRICT PK-12 POPULATION	% TEACHERS W/ >3 YRS. EXPERIENCE	% MINORITY	% POVERTY (FRL)	AVG. TOTAL TEACHER EXPERIENCE (YEARS)	CONTENT AREA--# COURSES/TOTAL # COURSES **	DIST. AVG. HQT COURSES ***	CLASS
56-0006-000	203	84.21	2.50	41.00	16.05	Eng/LA=5/16	91.38	II
56-0007-000	283	88.46	3.85	33.92	13.37	Hist & Geog=1/8	99.04	III
56-0055-000	392	75.76	8.78	22.61	11.52	Eng/LA=1/26	99.26	III
59-0001-000	562	87.50	64.48	51.73	16.08	Eng/LA=2/63; Math=4/45; Nat Sci=2/23	95.73	III
59-0002-000	3942	88.74	27.69	41.58	17.04	Math=2/106	99.80	III
59-0013-000	245	92.00	13.27	39.38	19.72	Eng/LA=1/28; FL=1/4; Vis Arts=1/18	96.91	III
59-0080-000	278	83.87	10.84	34.62	13.20	Eng/LA=2/27; Hist & Geog=1/9; Math=2/27; Nat Sci=1/16	95.31	III
60-0090-000	74	92.86	2.70	0.00	24.08	Eng/LA=1/6	96.88	III
62-0021-000	415	85.29	17.87	59.95	15.32	Math=1/13; Vis Arts=2/24	97.20	III
63-0030-000	524	87.50	4.78	30.40	16.13	Eng/LA=1/27	99.15	III
65-2005-000	655	91.67	3.70	42.83	20.30	Math=1/28	99.38	III
66-0111-000	1409	90.10	17.01	40.54	15.73	Eng/LA=5/152; Math=2/56; Nat Sci=2/29	97.76	III
67-0069-000	197	81.82	3.63	64.77	16.00	Eng/LA=2/20; Math=1/13	96.15	III
69-0054-000	257	100.00	4.85	29.48	19.14	Eng/LA=1/12; Math=1/10	96.49	III
70-0005-000	408	94.29	2.83	34.56	18.69	Civ & Govt=1/5	99.28	III
71-0001-000	3535	84.85	31.30	38.88	16.08	Eng/LA=4/240; Hist & Geog=1/97; Math=2/165	99.21	III
71-0005-000	812	98.41	27.91	39.81	21.02	Eng/LA=4/75; Math=2/20	97.10	III
73-0017-000	1498	93.52	7.95	32.56	18.30	Hist & Geog=3/34; Vis Arts=1/32	98.56	III
74-0056-000	873	88.89	9.57	48.56	18.18	Eng/LA=3/54; Math=2/45; Nat Sci=3/28	96.69	III
74-0070-000	387	91.89	3.07	45.78	18.81	Eng/LA=2/26; Math=2/29	96.61	III
74-0501-000	115	82.35	4.35	47.83	19.42	Eng/LA=5/16; Hist & Geog=3/4; Vis Arts=1/8	82.00	III
75-0100-000	195	89.66	3.68	39.47	18.24	Math=1/9	98.67	III
77-0001-000	9492	81.73	22.82	27.80	12.58	Eng/LA=1/112	99.87	III
77-0027-000	9297	80.21	14.37	17.28	12.92	FL=1/88; Hist & Geog=5/145; Nat Sci=2/240	99.46	III

AGENCY ID	DISTRICT PK-12 POPULATION	% TEACHERS W/ >3 YRS. EXPERIENCE	% MINORITY	% POVERTY (FRL)	AVG. TOTAL TEACHER EXPERIENCE (YEARS)	CONTENT AREA--# COURSES/TOTAL # COURSES **	DIST. AVG. HQT COURSES ***	CLASS
77-0037-000	2567	77.78	4.08	6.22	12.38	Math=1/99	99.84	III
77-0046-000	1106	76.74	3.47	16.15	12.84	Eng/LA=1/70	99.63	III
78-0107-000	239	80.00	6.17	34.80	20.00	Math=1/7	98.31	III
79-0002-000	220	68.18	42.38	71.90	14.86	Eng/LA=1/22; Math=1/11; Nat Sci=1/8	96.10	III
79-0011-000	490	75.00	22.91	55.51	14.70	Math=1/23	99.24	III
79-0032-000	2861	85.99	44.85	51.22	15.88	Eng/LA=3/306; Math=13/182	98.25	III
81-0003-000	187	70.83	23.23	50.00	12.08	Elem=1/9	98.59	III
81-0010-000	770	90.12	26.41	46.91	15.60	Eng/LA=2/60	99.05	III
82-0015-000	153	93.75	6.63	49.40	19.06	Vis Arts=4/17	91.67	II
85-0070-000	395	89.19	4.43	29.17	21.28	Eng/LA=4/43; Hist & Geog=2/11; Math=2/33	95.21	III
87-0001-000	321	74.07	8.64	39.51	16.89	Eng/LA=4/28; Math=4/22	92.79	III
87-0013-000	297	88.57	96.71	84.87	12.94	Math=1/10; Vis Arts=1/15	96.92	III
87-0017-000	468	79.17	98.54	83.72	12.96	Eng/LA=3/24; Hist & Geog=2/13; Math=4/22; Nat Sci=2/12	87.74	III
89-0003-000	597	87.80	2.71	15.06	19.37	Nat Sci=4/14	96.26	III
90-0017-000	839	91.80	10.77	25.76	16.34	Eng/LA=2/56; Hist & Geog=1/19; Math=4/44; Nat Sci=1/30	96.64	III
90-0560-000	445	87.18	38.15	47.39	14.67	Nat Sci=1/14	99.25	III
90-0595-000	256	88.00	5.63	29.00	16.52	Hist & Geog=1/5	99.08	III
93-0012-000	1293	88.54	12.74	33.93	19.46	E/LA=2/111; Nat Sci=3/38; SC=1/1	98.28	III
93-0083-000	255	84.21	5.71	39.18	11.32	E/LA=4/11; Math=1/9	91.67	II
TOTAL = 108								
AVERAGES =	1968	85.15	16.15	38.62	16.34		96.56	
NEBRASKA AVERAGES	1150	86.69	25.34	38.35	15.19		98.81	

Source: Nebraska Department of Education, 2008-2009 State of the Schools Report, October 2009

** Indicates number of courses taught in the content area by non-NCLB qualified teachers and the total number of courses offered by the school district in the content area. Content Area codes key: Civ & Govt=Civics & Government; Econ=Economics; Elem=Elementary; Eng/LA=English & Language Arts; FL=Foreign Language; Math=Mathematics; Nat Sci=Natural Sciences; SS=Social Sciences; SC=Self-Contained; Vis Arts=Visual & Performing Arts.

*** ***Bold italic numbers*** indicate districts that had lower percentages toward 100% NCLB Qualified Staff in 2008-09 as compared to the previous school year. (44 districts that became 100% NCLB-Qualified do not appear in this chart.)

Upon review of the 108 districts that do not have 100% NCLB Qualified teachers, 51 districts are 98% or higher NCLB Qualified. No districts are below 80.85% NCLB Qualified. In comparing 2008-09 data to 2007-08 data, 34 of the 108 districts did make progress toward 100% NCLB Qualified status, and 44 districts that were not 100% NCLB Qualified in 2007-2008 became 100% NCLB Qualified in 2008-2009. (These 44 districts would not appear in this data.) However, 75 districts had lower percentages than they did in 2008-09, which indicates they did not make adequate measurable progress toward 100% NCLB Qualified Teachers. If a HQ teacher leaves a district, it is many times difficult to find another HQ and properly endorsed teacher, especially in the very rural and sparsely populated areas of the state. A large majority—74 of these 108 districts (69%)—have five or fewer courses taught by non-NCLB Qualified teachers. Again, this indicates the Nebraska school districts are quite serious about making sure all teachers are HQ and have the proper endorsements for the courses they teach.

The teachers in these 108 districts have slightly more teaching experience—16.34 years as compared to the statewide average of 15.19 years. The Nebraska statewide average of High Minority Students—25.34%, is significantly higher than the 16.15% Minority in these 108 districts. There is no significant difference in the 38.35% Poverty statewide average compared to the 38.62% Poverty of these 108 districts. It appears that there are no significant differences in these 108 districts in regard to poverty or minority, as the average minority percentage of the 108 districts is significantly lower than the statewide minority percentage average, and the poverty percentage is almost the same (within .30%.) The teachers in these 108 districts have slightly more years of teaching experience (1.15 years) than the statewide average of Teacher Years of Experience, and the average HQ percentage of these 108 districts is 96.56% as compared to the statewide average of 98.81% NCLB Qualified Teachers/Courses. All of this information appears to indicate there are no significant differences between these 108 districts that do not have 100% NCLB Qualified Teachers as compared to all districts statewide for 2008-2009.

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

District superintendents are notified annually in September who the district's teachers are that are not 100% NCLB Qualified so that appropriate measures can be taken to be sure those teachers become 100% NCLB Qualified just as soon as possible. NDE technical assistance is also available to those districts and/or teachers to assist in completing the HOUSSE, if needed. Districts who have had teachers teaching out of their endorsed area(s) for two consecutive years are notified in January as to who those teachers are. Again, technical assistance is offered and available to those teachers (or district personnel) in completing HOUSSE applications and/or providing opportunities for professional development. District superintendents will soon have the information available to them much sooner, so appropriate assignments can be made prior to the beginning of a new school year. This will also allow for more professional development opportunities for teachers over the summer months, if needed.

The NCLB Consolidated Application, which is completed annually by each district, requires each district to submit a district plan that identifies the steps that will be taken to help all teachers reach HQT status as soon as possible, if not already at 100%. NDE staff members are assigned to monitor these districts, conduct onsite visits, and provide needed technical assistance and advice, since Nebraska is a local-control state.

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?

These plans are part of the NCLB Consolidated Application and are reviewed annually by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) staff members responsible for monitoring each LEA. NDE provides technical assistance to LEAs as needed. No NCLB formula grant funds are available to an LEA until their plan is approved. NDE also offers various professional development opportunities for teachers throughout every year. Many of these opportunities are in cooperation with the 18 Educational Service Units (ESUs) located throughout the state. A teacher may attend any professional development opportunity offered at any ESU in the state or at NDE throughout the year at minimal cost (if any.) There are also many professional development opportunities offered at various conferences and workshops held throughout the state.

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 the HQT plans, particularly where large groups of teachers are not highly qualified, and the resources the LEAs will use to meet their HQT goals.

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?

Depending on the definition of “large groups of teachers”, there are relatively few Nebraska districts in which this would apply. Of the 108 districts that do not have a 100% NCLB Qualified staff, almost 70% have five or fewer courses taught by a non-NCLB qualified teacher for those courses. Schools as well as districts that do not meet AYP and have less than 90% HQT are targeted for focused technical assistance from NDE, and are encouraged to use their Title II funds for the purpose of assisting their teachers in becoming Highly Qualified, including district-wide professional development. In addition, REAP district superintendents or principals are contacted via telephone concerning the NCLB Qualified status for teachers teaching out of their endorsed area for two consecutive years to discuss the situation and to develop strategies to address this concern, including strategies that might apply in each school’s or district’s situation.

The Math and Science Partnership Program (MSP) has initiated statewide professional development grants in mathematics and science, specifically targeting teachers needing to meet NCLB requirements for HQT in schools and districts that did not make AYP. This has indeed been helpful to the small percentage of math and science teachers who are assigned to teach areas for which they are not appropriately endorsed or HOUSSSE qualified. Information concerning needed professional development is also made available to the ESUs (Educational Service Units) across the state, the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, and NDE state staff. NDE’s curriculum consultants provide numerous content workshops during the summer and fall months that are designed to address K-12 content standards and teaching strategies.

The AYP districts listed in Table 5, the districts that did not show improvement toward 100% NCLB Qualified Teachers (or AMO) in Table 6, and the four Native American districts listed in Table 10 are a focus for

targeted recruitment for a variety of professional development activities, including college content courses, on-site visits from NDE curriculum staff specialists, and statewide conferences and trainings that apply.

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

NDE makes special efforts to ensure that the AYP schools and those schools with the greatest percentages of non-HQT teachers are utilizing the services of the department. Those districts in particular are advised to advertise vacant positions on the NDE website at <http://www.nebraskaeducationjobs.com/> which has been highly successful in helping schools find teachers to fill vacant positions. In addition, the NDE website has an NCLB Qualified Lookup System, so administrators or human resources personnel can check to see if prospective candidates are NCLB Qualified before they hire a new teacher. Nebraska has also taken the position that if a teacher is considered NCLB Qualified in another state, s/he is considered NCLB qualified in NE and only has to produce documentation from that state indicating HQ status.

Nebraska also mails out information about a district's non-NCLB qualified teachers each year so those school superintendents are aware of which teachers have professional development needs or might need to submit HOUSSE applications. If a school has not made AYP for two consecutive years, those building principals are called via telephone by NDE staff with recommendations as to what those teachers should do to become NCLB-Qualified. After curriculum information is submitted by districts in February, districts are notified before the end of the school year as to which teachers are teaching out of their endorsed area, so teaching assignments can be modified or changed, or appropriately endorsed teachers can be hired if the opportunity arises. This information will soon be available electronically through the NSSRS system, so all districts have up-to-date information and can make needed changes in assignments or arrange for professional development, rather than waiting to have the information mailed to them several months later.

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?

- NDE was instrumental in creating the Transition to Teaching program and the Transitional Teaching Certificate, which has significantly reduced the number of teachers who are teaching out of their endorsed area(s).
- Travel by the NDE World Language consultant to Spain, Germany, and China to recruit teachers to Nebraska for a period of three years as a means of lessening the severe shortage of foreign/world language teachers in the state. This is a continual and ongoing process.
- NDE management of state and federal loan forgiveness programs for individuals teaching in content shortage areas or teaching in high poverty districts.
- Continual emphasis by the State Board's advisory committee on teacher education (Nebraska Council on Teacher Education) and teacher certification to address the recruitment, retention, and renewal issues surrounding the teaching profession and supporting legislative proposals that address these issues.
- The development and increasing usage of the Teach in Nebraska website by Nebraska and out-of-state teachers and administrators was spearheaded by NDE.

- NDE and statewide use of the Teacher Shortage Survey information to promote teaching as a profession, especially in the shortage areas.
- NDE task force work to develop a process for licensure/certificate renewal on the basis of professional growth in a manner that is consistent with the expectations of NCLB and HQT is ongoing.
- NDE staff members continually give presentations in a variety of settings to assist school administrators, teacher educators, and teachers in understanding the HQT requirements and strategies for meeting those requirements.
- Teacher education programs are encouraged to recruit diverse candidates to increase the pool of teachers who can work effectively in the most diverse schools. NDE staff assistance is provided to those programs that have funding available to recruit diverse candidates and provide support services to assure program success.
- Career academies for secondary students interested in teaching as a profession are being implemented through the ESUs across the state, and a number of school districts are sponsoring Future Educator Clubs. Efforts are underway to develop a statewide conference for the local organizations as a way to enhance the recruitment of quality candidates to the teaching profession.
- Teacher education programs are recruiting individuals with baccalaureate degrees into teacher preparation programs as a method of increasing the availability of HQ teachers. Fast-track programs and alternative certification programs to assist existing teachers in becoming HQ special education teachers are being offered in a number of Nebraska teacher education programs.
- Nebraska is presently implementing a dual-teaching certificate which allows mid-career professionals to teach dual-credit courses to high school and/or college students.
- The statewide distance learning system is used often to allow equal opportunities for all students to obtain college credit for courses that might not be offered in a traditional classroom setting.

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

The subgroups of teachers identified in Requirement 1 (*English/Language Arts*, history and geography, economics, *and mathematics*) will be suggested as priorities for the SAHE (State Agency for Higher Education/Nebraska Coordination Commission for Post-Secondary Education or NCCPE) when the next round of Title IIA proposals are received. A representative of NDE sits on the review panel when the proposals are evaluated and provides support for the funding of those projects which best address the HQT needs of schools.

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?

In addition to all of the activities identified in #3, Title II-A funds are being used to support high quality professional development, such as the annual Hispanic/Latino Conference. The Math and Science Partnership funds are supporting statewide professional development for hundreds of math and science teachers. SAHE monies are supporting projects for math teachers, social science teachers, teachers working on Spanish endorsements, and reading/writing professional development for elementary teachers.

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?

NDE believes that HQT and AYP are equal priorities for all available funds. As a result, the projects and activities that are funded are designed to serve both audiences and all of the schools in either category. For example, priority is given to math and science teachers who are not HQ and are employed in schools that have not made AYP when the Math and Science Partnership grantees provide professional development opportunities for teachers.

Requirement 4: The revised plan must describe how the SEA will work with LEAs that fail to reach the 100 percent HQT by the end of the 2006-2007 school year.

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?

Each school district must submit a plan for meeting HQT goals as part of their NCLB Consolidated Application each year. The NCLB Consolidated Application includes Titles I-A, II-A, II-D, III-LEP, III-IA, IV-A, V, and Migrant. Monitoring of the NCLB Consolidated Application and all eight programs includes a required on-site visit at least once every three years. NCLB's HQT requirements and the HQT plans are reviewed during these on-site visits.

Nebraska annually monitors and distributes to schools the Staff Assignment, Curriculum, and "Not-NCLB Qualified" reports to determine if teachers of NCLB's core academic areas, including Special Education teachers, are meeting the HQ requirements. This has been an ongoing process for many years. These reports are also matched to the data contained in the Teacher Certification system.

There are now 190 districts eligible for the REAP program as compared to the 184 districts that were eligible in 2007-2008. NDE staff works with these schools so they can implement effective measures for their districts so all teachers are highly qualified. In many cases, teachers seek additional endorsements in the assigned teaching area at the request of the district, or districts provide needed professional development.

In 2006-2007, NDE developed a tracking mechanism for analyzing all buildings' progress and tracking their AYP and HQT data over time. Once the data information is public, analysis occurs to determine progress or non-progress on their annual measurable objectives for HQT and the information is reviewed with NDE staff members designated as monitors for these buildings. Any building that does not make progress for two consecutive years receives technical assistance from NDE staff, and are notified they are subject to the provisions of Section 2141 of the ESEA if their non-NCLB qualified staff members are not NCLB-qualified within the year. Fewer than ten districts needed to be notified of this in 2007-08. NDE staff members then contact the districts and work with them to assist in the plans to make sure all teachers become NCLB Qualified. Obviously, this extra time and effort is yielding results, as in 2008-09, only one school had to be notified they were out of

compliance for 2008-2009. Nebraska school districts clearly are making excellent progress toward 100% NCLB Qualified Teachers.

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

All Title I schools and districts not making AYP receive an on-site visit from the NDE Title I office to determine areas of need and the technical assistance needed in each area. These needs are then reviewed with NDE staff to provide a support team to work with the schools. NDE staff provides assistance in targeting professional development opportunities and other school improvement activities as part of that technical assistance.

NDE utilizes a variety of methods to provide information to LEAs regarding HQT and AYP. The Administrator of Federal Programs broadcasts a bi-monthly update to all schools on NCLB and regular e-mail bulletins are sent to school administrators as well. Staff members provide technical assistance in person, by telephone, mail, and e-mail as needed. Each LEA is assigned an NDE staff person who acts as the liaison between NDE and the LEA. State staff members with responsibilities for NCLB meet twice monthly to assure that regulations are being addressed and problems are being resolved.

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?**

Both of these issues are addressed in the NCLB Consolidated Application that the LEA must submit electronically at the beginning of the year in order to receive funds. The LEA plan must show how the district will support and help non-HQ teachers gain content knowledge, including the following:

- Provide professional development opportunities
- Use of Title I and Title II-A funds
- Provide funds for college courses, if appropriate.

In order to be accredited in Nebraska, all LEAs must have a professional development plan on file for every teacher employed by the district. The state statute governing this requirement stipulates that all teachers who are not probationary teachers must complete at least six hours of approved coursework every six years or participate in an equivalent amount of approved professional development. It is the responsibility of the district to approve the work, maintain the records, and assure that the statute is being met. The information is kept at the local level and is reviewed during an on-site monitoring visit. This requirement and the related documentation will be an avenue to insure that HQT is a primary consideration in the professional development planning.

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

The SEA has required all districts to include a plan for reaching the goal of 100% HQ in the annual NCLB Consolidated Application, which districts submit every year. Because of considerable district consolidation in 2005-2006 as a result of legislative action when all elementary-only districts had to affiliate with a K-12 district, Nebraska established new baseline data in 2006-2007. This has allowed valid comparison of data from consecutive years. This plan must address how each district that is not 100% HQ will provide professional development and support to non-HQ teachers so they become 100% HQ as quickly as possible.

When an LEA fails to make progress toward meeting the objective of 100% HQT and AYP goals for three consecutive years, the SEA and LEA will enter into an agreement as required in Section 2141. NDE notifies districts that the district needs to pay strict attention to the matter if they have not made progress toward 100% HQT and have not met AYP for two consecutive years. NDE provides technical assistance to the few districts in this category. Should a LEA have to enter into a Section 2141 agreement, NDE provides technical assistance to the LEA in the development of the plan, provides information on strategies that can be used to implement the plan and meet the objectives, and monitors the progress.

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 discontinue the use of HOUSSE procedures for teachers hired after the end of the 2005-2006 school year (except for the situations described below).

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 2005-2006 school year?

Nebraska continues to monitor all Districts relative to their progress (or achievement) of 100% NCLB Qualified staff. There has been little need to use the HOUSSE process for teachers hired before the end of 2005-2006. However, the option continues to be available on a case-by-case basis, and is generally restricted to:

- Special education teachers with teaching assignments in content areas for which they are not specifically endorsed;
- Teachers of core academic subjects who are assigned to courses for which they are not endorsed (e.g. in very remote, small, rural districts or because of sudden, unexpected changes in teaching staff); and
- Teachers in REAP schools who are qualified in one core academic area and have two additional years to become qualified in other areas.

All new-to-the-profession elementary teachers must take the EECIA (Elementary Education: Curriculum and Instruction Assessment) to be considered NCLB-Qualified.

2) Does the plan describe how the State will discontinue the use of HOUSSE after the end of the 2005-2006 school year, except in 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 the 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 the date of hire.**

Nebraska has 190 rural school districts (REAP Schools) that are eligible to use the HOUSSE to demonstrate competence of teachers who teach in multiple subject areas, as long as they are already NCLB-qualified in one core academic subject area. A specific data analysis process has been implemented to identify which teachers are eligible for this flexibility and technical assistance is provided to the LEAs to assure that this requirement can be met as needed. The same process is utilized to identify multi-subject special education teachers who can benefit from the HOUSSE provisions, as long as they are already HQ in one of the core academic areas.

Nebraska makes every effort to limit the use of the HOUSSE to the following circumstances:

- when a teacher returns to the profession,
- when certified teachers are assigned out of their endorsed area due to local needs (small schools, sudden or unexpected staffing changes),
- when a teacher comes from another state and needs the HOUSSE to be approved in Nebraska,
- when certified special education teachers are assigned to teach content and assign grades to students with disabilities in content areas for which they are not specifically endorsed, or
- for teachers in REAP schools who are NCLB qualified in one core academic area, but are teaching in multiple subject areas.

Nebraska is a predominately rural state, and as a result, quality professional development and college coursework are not as easily accessible to teachers in the state's many rural schools. The state is developing and utilizing a new distance learning infrastructure that is beginning to alleviate some of the teacher shortage issues, and some of the state's postsecondary institutions are offering more on-line courses. Nebraska also carefully monitors which courses are approved for re-certification.

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 other children.

1) Does the revised plan include a written equity plan?

The Nebraska Equity Plan begins on page 28 of this document.

2) Does the plan identify where inequities in teacher assignment exist?

Inequities in teacher assignments are addressed beginning on page 30.

3) Does the plan delineate specific strategies for addressing inequities in teacher assignment?

Specific strategies are addressed beginning on page 33.

4) Does the plan provide evidence for the probable success of the strategies it includes?

Evidence for the probable success of the strategies is addressed beginning on page 34.

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?

Plans for monitoring equitable teacher assignment are addressed beginning on page 35.

NEBRASKA'S EQUITY PLAN

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) has had a comprehensive curriculum and personnel data system for more than ten years. This system provides data on all personnel employed by each district who work in a professional capacity. Beginning in 2006-2007, the new Nebraska Staff and Student Reporting System (NSSRS) was implemented for use by every school district, after being piloted in 15 school districts of varying sizes and geographic locations across the state in 2005-2006. This system provides for data entry by the individual school districts through a portal. Following entry, data is reviewed for accuracy and districts have an opportunity to correct data errors. NSSRS and the previous system both provide the following:

- Unique identifiers of teachers and all other professional employees of the districts. The previous system was based on Social Security numbers. The NSSRS system provides unique identification numbers that mask Social Security numbers.
- Data about the professionals such as the highest degree earned and course assignments for those who are identified as teachers, including special education teachers.
- Years of experience, both in the profession and in the school district.

Data from NSSRS is linked to the Teacher Certification system by the unique identifier numbers of the employees so that reports can be generated by district and building that describe the following:

- Certification status, including types of certificates held, previous certificates, content preparation, and expiration dates of all current certificates,
- Employment experience in Nebraska schools,
- Highest degree earned, when earned, and from what institution,
- The courses being taught by each teacher and if the teacher is appropriately endorsed to teach each course, and
- Scores on Praxis tests, if required.

The NSSRS system provides comprehensive student information that was not previously available, such as gender, race/ethnicity, Special Education, ELL (English Language Learner), Free/Reduced Lunch (Poverty), and Migrant information. The student data system now allows for tracking of students from building to building, district to district, to postsecondary education, and will ultimately track to employment.

An addition to the Teacher Certification system has been made which allows administrators and even the public to “look up” teachers who have been deemed HQ through completion of the statewide assessment or Praxis II/Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment test for “new to the profession” elementary teachers, and those teachers who have successfully completed the HOUSS process for content area assignments.

1) Inequities in teacher assignment

The Nebraska Department of Education Rule 10, Accreditation of Public Schools, has for many, many years required each school district, regardless of student demographics, to meet the following requirements in terms of teacher assignments:

- 95% of **ALL** courses taught to elementary students must be taught by appropriately endorsed teachers;
- 90% of **ALL** courses taught to middle school students must be taught by appropriately endorsed teachers; and
- 80% of **ALL** courses taught to students in grades 9-12 must be taught by appropriately endorsed teachers.

This requirement is broader than the core academic areas identified in NCLB. As a result, school districts are very careful in their assignment of teachers to match courses appropriately.

A report is provided to each school district identifying the courses that are not taught by appropriately endorsed teachers. This report is calculated by comparing the courses identified on the Curriculum Report completed by each teacher each year and the endorsements on that teacher's certificate based on the Teacher Certification data base. This report is now provided to all school districts during the spring semester so that every effort can be made to assign courses appropriately or to arrange for professional development for any teacher teaching out of the endorsed area to assist him/her in gaining the necessary knowledge and skills to teach the course(s) inappropriately assigned.

The Approval and Accreditation Team of the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) reviews each school district's data annually to assure that the Rule 10 requirements are being met. If they are not, corrections must be made or the district will be recommended for probationary status the following year. It is very seldom that a school district is not able to make the corrections for the following year, as maintaining an accredited school is very important to Nebraska's citizens, regardless of the size of the school district.

The same process is completed for NCLB core academic areas, although the focus for these courses and teachers is the goal of 100% HQT. The data report for HQT is now provided to each school district on an annual basis. This report assists the administrators with teacher assignments, planning for professional development in the needed content area(s), or completion of the HOUSS as appropriate. This information is also placed on the State of the Schools Report (SOSR) and is available for each public school district and building. Special education teacher information is now included, beginning with the 2006-2007 school year.

NDE has developed a system to query school district information, including student characteristics (minority population, low-income population, ELL population, and special education population) so that it is relatively easy to identify districts and building that are not distributing experienced teachers appropriately. This data is available on the State of the Schools Report (SOSR) on the NDE website. The SOSR is released each year at the beginning of the school year with much media attention. Not only does NDE take the education of our school students very seriously, but the general public is very interested in the SOSR data, as it is information that affects the whole state. Information concerning each school district is provided annually to NDE staff members who are responsible for monitoring the LEAs and approving the NCLB Consolidated Application.

2) Inequities in assignments currently exist in the following settings:

Data from the NSSRS Report system facilitates an analysis of potential inequities in assignments of teachers in a variety of settings. A comprehensive data set of school district information provides summary information concerning district demographics and personnel assignments without identifying specific students.

The data system contains comprehensive data on every public school building in the state. Data elements include: student demographics, minority percentage, poverty percentage, percentage of HQ courses by content area, and percentage of teachers with more than three years teaching experience in each building. The NDE Data Center combines all of the data elements (which can be found on the Nebraska Department of Education website under State of the Schools Report) into an Excel file which is utilized by the Federal Programs section and the Teacher Quality sections to determine which schools are not meeting expectations.

Data provided in this plan is generated by the data system. That information is examined by NDE staff and technical assistance is provided by the staff members that are monitoring those buildings. Inequities that are identified by the analyses are addressed in a variety of ways that have been described in other parts of this plan.

Table 7 below shows a comparison between the Class II (smallest) districts, the 190 REAP districts, the 37 High Poverty districts, and the 10 High Minority districts as well as the statewide averages for Nebraska.

**Table 7.
District Data 2008-2009.**

Type of District	# of Districts	Avg. % of HQ Courses	Avg. % Minority Students	Avg. % Poverty Students	Avg. Years Teaching Experience	Avg. % of Teachers w/ >3 yrs. Experience
*All Districts	254	98.81[^]	25.34	38.35	15.19	86.69
*Class II	20	97.81	8.88	41.44	15.19	81.97
*High Poverty	37	97.64	32.28	61.51	15.17	83.61
*High Minority	10	97.11	79.04	70.74	13.48	81.67
REAP Dist.	190	98.23	9.38	38.06	17.05	86.88

Source: Nebraska Department of Education, 2008-2009 State of the Schools Report, October 2009

[^] Of the 254 districts, 146 districts (57.48%) are 100% HQ for the 2008-2009 school year.

*All districts represents all of the 254 public school districts in Nebraska.

*Class II Districts represent areas having a population of 1,000 inhabitants or less and maintaining both elementary and secondary grades under the direction of a single school board. These are among the smallest districts in the state.

*High Poverty Districts are those with more than 50% of the student population eligible for Free or Reduced Lunches.

*High Minority Districts are those with a student population that is more than 50% non-Caucasian.

Rural schools

A review of the HQT data from the 190 school districts that are eligible for the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) illustrate the difficulties that the schools have in assigning NCLB qualified teachers in all subjects and in all courses. There are 190 REAP districts that contain both elementary and secondary education programs, and 113 of them were able to achieve 100% HQT in their elementary and secondary schools. 69 REAP districts have between 90-99% of their courses taught by 100% NCLB qualified teachers. Only eight of the REAP schools in the state had less than 90% of their courses taught by NCLB qualified teachers, and no REAP schools have less than 80% of their courses taught by HQ teachers. The total student population of these eight districts that had less than 90% NCLB Qualified Teachers is 2,561 which is .87% of students who had a course taught by a non-NCLB Qualified teacher (less than 1%.) Districts with the smallest enrollments have the greatest difficulty because they cannot afford to hire enough teachers or attract those teachers with the broadest or highest qualifications. Generally, those districts are in rather remote geographic areas. The rural districts rely heavily on the HOUSSE process because many of them are in sparsely populated areas where there are fewer professional development opportunities. Most of the time, these teachers have to teach a wider variety of courses as districts cannot afford to have several part-time teachers, even if there were teachers available. None of the REAP districts has more than three non-NCLB Qualified teachers, and in almost all cases, no more than three non-NCLB Qualified courses are being taught in any one school.

Table 8 below shows a comparison of HQ teachers at the elementary and secondary levels for the REAP districts, the Class II districts, and all 254 districts.

Table 8.
Comparison of the percentages of courses taught by HQ teachers in the 190 REAP districts, 20 Class II Districts, and 254 Total Nebraska Districts (ALL) during 2008-2009.

	Elem.	English/ Language Arts	Foreign Language	Math	Natural Sciences	Civics & Govt.	Econ.	History & Geography	Vis. & Perform. Arts
REAP	100	<i>97.56</i>	<i>97.83</i>	<i>97.44</i>	<i>98.61</i>	99.89	100	<i>98.35</i>	<i>99.32</i>
Class II	100	<i>90.04</i>	100	98.53	99.00	100	100	99.17	98.82
ALL	99.90	98.64	99.13	97.81	98.97	99.79	99.71	99.00	99.70

Source: Nebraska Department of Education, 2008-2009 State of the Schools Report, October 2009

Italics represent those percentages that are below the statewide average.

The Class II Districts have the greatest difficulty in meeting HQ requirements because of the small populations they serve, and most are located in very sparsely populated geographic areas of the state. Students might have to ride 30-50 miles on a school bus to get to school (or be driven to school.) HOUSSE is critical for many of the REAP districts, and is especially important for the Class II districts. These Class II districts have a total school enrollment (K-12) ranging from 92 to 270, with the average PK-12 enrollment for these 20 smallest districts being 152. With very few exceptions, the REAP and Class II districts only have from one to three courses taught by non-NCLB Qualified teachers. The percentages in the table above indicate this is true.

Urban schools

Nebraska's two largest school districts are Omaha with a PK-12 student enrollment of 48,006, and Lincoln with a PK-12 student enrollment of 34,057, and are considered to be urban schools. Nationally, urban schools are usually considered as ones with multiple problems of inequity across the district. Nebraska's two urban schools, according to the data, have very few inequities in assignments because there are more opportunities for teachers to teach in the content areas for which they are prepared. Nebraska's school districts do not have problems with high teacher turn-over, and this is also true for the two largest districts. All Nebraska districts have an average of 15.19 years of teaching experience, with the Omaha Public School teachers having an average of 10.82 years of teaching experience and the Lincoln Public School teachers having an average of 15.60 years of teaching experience. This is true in all buildings, regardless of the poverty level of the building or the numbers of minority students. Table 9 below illustrates the level of experience of teachers that are employed in the urban buildings with the highest percentages of minority and poverty students (defined as more than 50% in each of the two categories.) Lincoln has only seven buildings out of 53 total with high levels of both minority and poverty. Six of these buildings have 100% of courses taught by HQ teachers, and one building has 96% of courses taught by HQ teachers. The Omaha Public School district includes 83 buildings, of which 50 have high levels of both minority and poverty. None of those 50 buildings has less than 94% of the courses being taught by HQ teachers, and only 15 of the 50 buildings has less than 100% of courses taught by HQ teachers.

Table 9.
Data on Urban buildings with >50% Minority and Poverty.
2008-2009

District	PK-12 Population	# of Buildings/Total Buildings in District	Avg. % of HQ Courses	Avg. % of Minority	Avg. % of Poverty (FRL)	Avg. Years of Teaching Experience	Avg. % of Teachers w/ +3 yrs. Experience
Lincoln	34,057	7/53	99.43	61.50	86.20	12.51	75.16
Omaha	48,006	50/83	99.54	53.36	76.18	10.42	77.22

Source: Nebraska Department of Education, 2008-2009 State of the Schools Report, October 2009

Native Schools

There are four districts in northeast Nebraska where the students are primarily Native-American. One of the district HQT percentages is lower than the average for the state. All four schools have a poverty level (FRL) that is significantly higher than the state average. NDE has two full-time staff members who work directly with these schools to improve student achievement. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln has a federal grant (Indigenous Roots Teacher Education Program) to prepare Native teachers so they can improve their HQT percentages. This program was preceded by another federal grant (the Native American Career Ladder Program) which prepared 20 Native students for teaching careers. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln has also developed a course for future teachers, focused on understanding Native students and their culture so that the instructional processes will be successful when working with Native students. Significant efforts are being made at the state and local levels to improve the educational experiences for Native students and families in these districts. These districts will continue to be a focus for NDE and HQT. Data concerning these four districts is illustrated in Table 10.

Table 10.
Native American School District Data.
Nebraska, 2008-2009

District	PK-12 Population	# of Buildings	Avg. % of HQ Courses	Avg. % of Minority	Avg. % of Poverty (FRL)	Avg. years Teaching Experience	Avg. % of Teachers w/ +3 yrs. Experience
Santee	162	2	100	97.53	80.25	11.27	72.73
Walthill	304	2	96.92	96.71	84.87	12.94	88.57
Umo N Ho N	434	3	100	99.08	76.04	14.37	87.02
Winnebago	480	2	87.74	98.54	83.72	12.96	79.17

Source: Nebraska Department of Education, 2008-2009 State of the Schools Report, October 2009

High Poverty Schools

There are eight districts in Nebraska where *both poverty and minority population exceed 50%*. Analysis of these districts was performed to determine the level of poverty, minority population, and HQT. This analysis resulted in identification of one school district where the HQT was below 90% (87.74%) and the minority and poverty percentages were 50% or higher. The other seven districts HQT status was between 95.73% and 100%.

The district is one of the Native districts and is represented in the Native American School District Data found in Table 10 above. For this analysis, high poverty was defined as 50% or higher, high minority was defined as 50% or more of the school population, and low HQT was defined 90% or less of the courses taught by a Highly Qualified Teacher.

It is apparent from this analysis that inequitable distribution of HQ teachers in the districts is not based solely on poverty, minority population, or lack of NCLB qualified teachers.

3) Specific strategies that will be used to address inequities in assignments include:

The following strategies will be utilized specifically to assist the rural schools:

- Professional development opportunities will be identified and advertised to school districts in the area where the need appears to be the greatest. Teacher education programs will be encouraged to share this information with teacher education candidates so that new graduates can help to alleviate the shortages faced in many of the content areas.
- Promoting the Attracting Excellence to Teaching program, which is designed to attract candidates to teaching shortage areas and then provide loan forgiveness for teaching in sparsely populated areas. This program began in 2006-2007, and to date has supported 446 teacher education graduates that have received \$1,145,500.
- Technical assistance will be provided to schools in completing the HOUSSE when necessary.

Strategies that will assist all districts in the state include:

- Increasing the availability of quality professional development for teachers throughout the state through the Education Service Units (ESUs) in collaboration with the state's higher education institutions who have nationally accredited and approved teacher preparation programs.
- Encouraging public schools to support college courses for teachers being able to move on the salary schedule, regardless of whether the courses are undergraduate or graduate courses. This will make it feasible for experienced teachers to add additional endorsements in the areas in which they are teaching, but not endorsed.
- Encouraging teacher education programs to offer summer programs in special education for already certified content teachers and content courses for already certified special education teachers.
- Replicate programs like the University of Nebraska at Omaha that provides an opportunity for mid-career changers to complete a teacher education program that includes an NCLB content area and a special education endorsement in an 18-month time frame, with significant involvement in the public schools as a part of the program.
- Work will continue by the Professional Development Task Force to create a change in the renewal requirements for certification as an educator. The changes will require professional development or college credit in order to renew a certificate. (Nebraska's renewal standards currently allow renewal on the basis of experience, without a requirement for any professional development.)
- Introduction of a legislative proposal that would require schools to have a mentoring/induction program and would fund the development of quality mentoring in all school districts.
- Promote the use of the look-up system for identification of HQ teachers on the Teacher Certification website so employers can confirm the HQ status of applicants before hiring and assigning classes. This system is very easy to use and has been well received by district and building administrators.

4) Evidence for the probable success of these strategies include:

All of these strategies have the potential to be successful. Many of them are already underway. The strategy that will be the most difficult to implement is the mentoring/induction program. The Legislature supported the development of a mentoring program several years ago, using the state's lottery money. However, funds were transferred to the general fund when a budget crisis occurred. Presently, all state budgets have been cut for the next two years due to another budget crisis situation. A quality mentoring program requires financial resources and commitment by the entire population of educators and policy makers. NDE and Nebraska schools are committed to providing quality teachers for all students and NDE hopes to prepare legislative proposals that would provide resources to assist schools in their efforts to provide HQ teachers for all students. However, an evaluation of Nebraska's previous mentoring/induction program did not provide substantive data that the programs increased retention of teachers, improved their quality, or increased student achievement. It is very difficult to convince the Legislature and the Governor to support increased expenditures for anything, and education is no exception. NDE is beginning discussions regarding a statewide mentoring program, but without funding, this will take a much longer time frame to implement.

The State of the Schools report (SOSR) already provides evidence of student achievement for each building. The trend data is used by schools and NDE to identify problems and solutions. Teacher data also exists

on the SOSR and includes trend data on teacher count, teacher race/ethnicity, master’s degrees, experience, teacher qualifications, and salaries. HQ status is reflected for each content area for each building. The trend data is analyzed annually and used to identify the success of the strategies that are in place and to develop new strategies where it is apparent that the existing ones are not successful.

5) NDE will examine the issue of equitable teacher assignment when it monitors LEAs in the following ways:

Nebraska’s data system includes information about the years of experience of teachers in all of the public school districts and buildings. This information has been added to the system queries used to prepare Title IIA HQ reports. The experience of teachers is reported on the State of the Schools Report (SOSR) by building and at the district level. Table 11 below provides an overview of the percentages of courses being taught by HQ teachers in various kinds of districts as well as the average number of years of experience of all of the teachers in the districts and the percentage of teachers with more than three years of experience in the district. Monitoring visits to districts and buildings will include a review of the teacher assignment and HQ information.

Table 11.
An Overview of the Equity of Teacher Assignments in Nebraska School Districts, 2008-2009.

District Type	Number of Districts	% of HQ Elem.	% of HQ English/LA	% of HQ Foreign Lang.	% of HQ Math	% of HQ Science	% of HQ Civics & Govt.	% of HQ Econ.	% of HQ Hist. & Geog.	% of HQ Visual & Perf. Arts	Te. w/ >3 yrs. Exp.
All	254	99.90	98.64	99.13	97.81	98.97	99.79	99.71	99.00	99.70	86.69
Class II	20	100	90.04	100	98.53	99.00	100	100	99.17	98.82	81.97
REAP	190	100	97.56	97.83	97.44	98.61	99.89	100	98.35	99.32	86.88
Minority	10	99.98	98.08	87.83	95.43	96.42	100	100	97.93	98.82	81.67
Poverty	37	99.99	97.94	99.65	96.12	96.93	99.77	100	98.97	98.55	83.11
Lincoln	1	99.76	99.37	99.08	96.33	98.14	100	98.55	99.56	99.41	85.46
Omaha	1	99.79	98.25	100	97.74	99.72	100	100	99.66	99.91	77.63

Source: Nebraska Department of Education, 2008-2009 State of the Schools Report, October 2009

Shaded cells in Table 11 represent averages that are lower than the statewide averages for HQ.

- All** = All public school districts in Nebraska. This includes all classes of districts from Class II through Class V.
- Class II** = Class II school districts serve an area with a population of 1,000 inhabitants or less but maintain a school district with both elementary and secondary grades under the direction of a single school board.
- REAP** = Districts that are considered rural and are eligible for funds from the Small Rural School Achievement Program.
- Minority** = Districts with a minority student population that equals 50% or more.
- Poverty** = Districts with a Free or Reduced Lunch percentage of the population that exceeds 50% or more.
- Lincoln** = The second largest school district in the state with a student population of 34,057 in 2008-2009. Lincoln is the only Class IV district in the state and has 53 school buildings.
- Omaha** = The largest and most urban school district in the state with a student population of 48,006 in 2008-2009. Omaha is the only Class V district in the state and has 83 school buildings.

The last column in Table 11 describes the average percentage of teachers in each category who have more than three years teaching experience and, as a result, are considered experienced teachers. This data is available on the Nebraska State of the Schools Report by district and by building. Summary data for the entire state is provided in Table 11 on page 35.

It is clear from the data that the majority of teachers in the state and in the various settings have at least ten (10) years experience. Both Lincoln and Omaha have strong relationships with the teacher preparation programs in their communities, which creates opportunities for teacher education candidates to work in urban settings with experienced and highly qualified cooperating teachers. As a result, the average years of experience in those two districts will be lower because they hire new teachers to work in the settings with which they are already familiar. Both districts also have quality mentoring programs for their new teachers.

Ongoing review of the NSSRS Staff Assignment and Curriculum reports from all districts will occur. The non-endorsed reports, which are distributed to the LEAs are analyzed to see which schools need the most HQT assistance. NCLB Consolidated Application (HQT Plan) and on-site monitoring occur on a regular basis. NDE staff who are responsible for monitoring schools have copies of the non-endorsed reports to use during their monitoring visits. During the monitoring visits, staff review and document the progress made on the activities identified in the LEA plan.

In addition to these regular review processes, NDE staff members are in constant communication with school administrators and teachers in a variety of settings as well as electronically. Technical assistance is requested and provided on a regular basis.

The data that have been presented in this plan indicate that Nebraska, as a whole, has no significant differences in Highly Qualified Teacher distribution in high poverty and high minority settings. However, monitoring processes are in place to allow NDE to monitor all settings for adverse changes and employ interventions as necessary.

A review of student achievement data on the NDE State of the Schools Report will be utilized to evaluate the progress of students in high poverty and high minority buildings to further identify the impact of teacher distribution. Student achievement data is also found on the State of the Schools Report and is available for each building in the state.

The NDE monitors' responsibilities include a review of the data for their buildings and technical assistance in the areas of concern. NDE has developed a toolkit on the Continuous Improvement Process that is required of all districts. The toolkit and personal assistance from the monitors is intended to assist all districts in their efforts to improve the quality of instruction and the achievement of their students. The Nebraska Department of Education has, for many years, held student achievement as the highest priority, and having highly qualified teachers in each and every classroom will continue to be one of the state's top goals.