



Parent's Right to Know Qualifications of Child's Teachers

Note: Congress has reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the statute formerly known as No Child Left Behind. The new statute, **Every Student Succeeds Act**, was signed into law by President Obama on December 10, 2015.

Did you know you have a right to know the qualifications of your child's teachers and paraprofessionals? Did you know that your school district must notify you of your right to request information about the qualifications of your child's teachers and paraprofessionals?

At the beginning of the school year, the school district must notify parents of all children who attend Title I schools of their right to request information about the qualifications of your child's teachers and paraprofessionals, including:

- (1) Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- (2) Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
- (3) The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- (4) Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

Qualifications of Substitute Teachers

Is your child being taught by a substitute teacher? If your child has been taught by a teacher who is not highly qualified for 4 consecutive weeks, your school district must notify you of this fact. This requirement applies to substitute teachers, many of whom do not meet "highly qualified" requirements. [Source: NCLB, Title I, Section 1111(h)(6)]

If you want to learn the qualifications of your child's teachers and paraprofessionals, you need to write a letter to request this information from the school.

Since people often lack confidence in their ability to write letters, we wrote a sample letter that you can use as a template. Just change the identifying information - your name, address and phone number, your child's name, school, and principal, etc.

The letter to request teacher qualifications is in two formats:

In pdf: <https://www.wrightslaw.com/info/nclb.ltr.teacher.qual.pdf>

In Word: <https://www.wrightslaw.com/info/nclb.ltr.teacher.qual.doc>

You may want to print a copy of the article, Teacher Quality: Frequently Asked Questions from the U. S. Department of Education, and include this with your letter. [no longer available]

Learn how to write effective letters - and why you need to learn this skill.

If you have our book, *Wrightslaw: From Emotions to Advocacy*, look at the two chapters about writing letters. These chapters include more than a dozen letters to the school that you can tailor to your circumstances.