

**New Pathways**

**HILLSIDE PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**New Possibilities**

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## **Title I- Parents' Right-to-Know**

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act is our country's most important federal education law. In 2001 this law was reauthorized and called the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB). NCLB was designed to make changes in teaching and learning that will help increase academic achievement in our schools.

The law requires that all schools receiving Title I funds must inform parents of their right to ask schools about the qualifications of their child's teachers. Our school receives Title I funding, and we are happy to share this information with you at your request.

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

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

New Jersey has some of the most qualified teachers in the country, and we are incredibly proud of the quality of the teaching staff in the Hillside Public Schools. All of our regular teachers have college degrees, and many have advanced degrees. The state of New Jersey has always required a teaching certificate/license for all teachers. In addition, every teacher continues learning through professional development activities, and our teachers are evaluated each year to ensure that their teaching skills remain at the highest possible level.

Most teachers already meet this legal definition of highly qualified.

All

teachers hired after the beginning of the 2002-2003 school year were required to meet this definition. According to NCLB, veteran teachers hired before the 2002-2003 school year, who do not yet meet the legal definition of highly qualified, had until the end of the 2005-2006 school year to do so. The state of New Jersey has requested flexibility from the United States Department of Education to extend the deadline to the end of the 2006-2007 school year.

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To ensure that every child in every classroom has a highly qualified teacher, the state of New Jersey and our school district are working together to help teachers meet the requirements of the federal law by providing several options. Teachers will soon be able to take a new test, or they can demonstrate their expertise through a combination of college coursework, professional development activities, and experience.

A highly qualified teacher knows what to teach and how to teach and thoroughly understands the subject matter. We believe that every teacher in our school is fully qualified and dedicated to teaching your child. We will do everything possible to help our teachers who may not yet meet the legal definition required by the federal government.

I encourage you to support your child's education and communicate with your child's teacher(s) regularly. For more information on NCLB and the role of Title I parents, please visit the United States Department of Education Web site at [www.ed.gov/nclb](http://www.ed.gov/nclb). By partnering, families and educators can provide your child with the best education possible.