



Dear Parent/Guardian:

September 3, 2014

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act is our country's most important federal education law. In 2001, this law was reauthorized and is now 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 funding must inform parents of their right to ask schools about the qualifications of their child's teachers. Several of our schools receive 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 must meet a specific legal definition of "highly qualified" in order to teach in schools that receive Title I funding. The legal definition 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 his/her knowledge in the subject he/she teaches.

New Jersey has some of the most qualified teachers in the country, and we are extremely proud of the quality of the teaching staff in the Bellmawr School District. 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 make sure that their teaching skills remain at the highest possible level.

Most teachers already meet the legal definition of highly qualified. All teachers hired after the start of the 2002-2003 school years were required to meet this definition. According to NCLB, veteran teachers hired before the 2002-2003 school year that do not yet meet the legal definition of highly qualified had until the end of the 2005-06 school year to do so.

To ensure that every child in every classroom has a highly qualified teacher, the state of New Jersey and our school district have worked together to help teachers meet the requirements of the federal law. A highly qualified teacher knows what to teach, how to teach, and has a full understanding of the subject matter being taught. We believe that every teacher in our school is exceptionally qualified and dedicated to teaching your child.

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

Sincerely,

Annette Castiglione
Superintendent of Schools