



## **Tip Sheet**

# **No Child Left Behind**

## **What Parents Need to Know About**

### **Teacher and Paraprofessional Qualifications**

*No Child Left Behind is the new education plan that was signed into law by President Bush in January of 2002. It is designed to improve student achievement, and decrease the achievement gap. The law includes a number of important opportunities for parents to be involved with the schools. These Tip Sheets from Parents Plus are designed to help parents understand their rights under the law*

#### **Teacher Qualifications**

- The law says that starting in the 2002-2003 school year all teachers who teach academic subjects and teach in Title I programs must be highly qualified. This means they must have the following:
  - A bachelor's degree
  - Be certified to teach in Wisconsin
  - Have passed a rigorous state test on their knowledge of the subjects they teach and their teaching skills (reading, writing, mathematics, etc. for elementary school teachers)
  - Middle and high school teachers must either
    - Pass a rigorous state test in the subject they teach or
    - Complete an academic major, graduate degree or coursework equivalent to an academic major.
- All current teachers must be highly qualified by the end of the 2005-2006 school year.

#### **Paraprofessional Qualifications**

- The law says that paraprofessionals also must be highly qualified. This means that any paraprofessionals who help teachers by working directly with students in academic subject areas, such as reading, writing or mathematics, must meet the following qualifications.

*Paraprofessionals in Title I schools **hired after** January 8, 2002 must have the following:*

- A high school diploma or GED and completed two years of college or community college, or
- An Associate's degree or higher, or
- Passed rigorous tests given by the state or the school district that shows their knowledge of and ability to teach reading, writing and mathematics.

*Paraprofessionals **hired before** January 8, 2002 must meet these above requirements by January 8, 2006.*

#### **Parent Notification**

- At the beginning of each school year the district must notify all parents of students in Title I schools that they may request information about their child's teachers. Parents have the right to know the following:
  - Whether the teacher meets state qualifications for the grade or subject s/he teaches.
  - Whether the teacher has been certified under an alternate or provisional (temporary) program, rather than through a regular college or university teacher certification process.

- The teacher's major in college and what degrees s/he has earned and in what subject.
- Whether paraprofessionals provide services to their child and if so, their qualifications.

■ In addition, every Title I school must notify parents if their child has been assigned or has been taught for more than **20 days** by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

The law says that schools and districts must provide parents of students in Title I schools with certain information. A school can receive Title I funds from the federal government if a certain percentage of its students are eligible to receive a free or reduced-price lunch. Ask your principal if your school receives Title I funds.

For more information about *No Child Left Behind* visit the following web sites:

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction: <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/index.html>

The U.S. Department of Education's *No Child Left Behind* web site at <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml>

Call Parents Plus toll free at 877 384-1769 or visit our web site at <http://www.parentspluswi.org/>