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TEACHER CERTIFICATION

FLORIDA PTA POSITION

Florida PTA supports the certification process for public school teachers be no less stringent than exists in Florida Statute 1012.56 effective January 1, 2003. As follows: the applicant must document receipt of a bachelor's or higher degree from an accredited institution of higher learning, or a non-accredited institution of higher learning that the Department of Education has identified as having a quality program resulting in a bachelor's degree, or higher. Each applicant seeking initial certification must have attained at least a 2.5 overall grade point average on a 4.0 scale in the applicant's major field of study. Further, each applicant must:

- Be of good moral character
- Be competent and capable of performing the duties, functions, and responsibilities of an educator.
- Demonstrate a mastery of general knowledge
- Demonstrate a mastery of subject area knowledge
- Demonstrate a mastery of professional preparation and education competence

That the process for alternative teacher certification be no less rigorous than that for traditional teacher certification.

Background

The Federal No Child Left Behind Act signed into law in January 2002 requires states to comply with higher teacher certification standards. Qualifications for all public school teachers are governed by Florida Statutes. There have been proposals in the legislature to water down these standards and provide exemptions.



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Talking Points

- The Federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires all teachers teaching in core academic subjects be highly qualified by the end of the 2005-2006 school year.
- Excellence in public schools is defined by the quality of instructional programs and personnel.
- Highly qualified teachers are a key to excellence in public schools
- Research shows that students with teachers who are qualified, experienced and fully licensed achieve at higher levels.
- Every student deserves a teacher who is knowledgeable in the subject matter to be taught and how to teach it.
- As standards for student achievement are being raised everyday, we need to maintain or raise teacher qualification requirements to enable students to meet these standards.

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