



# The Wiregrass Telegraph

*Promoting Educational Excellence in U. S. History!*

Hurricane Jeanne  
Edition  
SEP 27, 2004

## Teacher Professional Development

If you're a GA teacher and haven't heard the term teacher professional development, chances are very good that you soon will. This issue is devoted to providing information to help you understand the changes taking place and how they will affect you. And being good teachers, we will provide a solution to the problems we bring you. First, let's get comfortable with some terms.

## Professional Development Terminology

**Professional Development Plan** - The roadmap that each teacher will use to stay certified, become a "highly qualified teacher" and to develop your career in the education system.

**Highly Qualified Teacher** - What you must become if you want to hold on to your job.

**HOUSSE** - Administrative instructions and a rubric adopted by the GA Professional Standards Commission to advise you exactly how to achieve "highly qualified teacher" status.

**PLU - Professional Learning Unit** - There are no more SDUs - now the term is PLU.

**Re-certification Agency** - Re-certification for your teacher's certificate is no longer at the PSC; the authority to re-certify has been given to your district.

Now let's look at the terms in more detail. For more detail and references, go to the Additional Resources link on Page 3.



## Professional Development Plan

Most of you have probably gotten GTEP classes thru your district since school started this year. That's the first stab at developing your personalized professional development plan. Again, it's managed at school district level in the way your Superintendent decides to proceed, so there will be differences. But the "Plan" is YOUR plan on how you will achieve the "highly qualified teacher" status. Your administrator should counsel teachers individually and then approve the individual plans in order for you to be blessed by the district re-cert process. It is YOUR responsibility to develop your own career using the guidelines provided by the district and the state.

## Highly Qualified Teacher

The Federal *No Child Left Behind Act* requires that all teachers teaching in core academic subjects be "highly qualified" by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. There are differing qualifications for new teachers and veteran teachers. See the HOUSSE rubric and regulations.



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## **HOUSSE**

Highly Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation, effective MAR 15, 2004, available with this newsletter and at <http://www.gapsc.com/nclb/Admin/Files/HOUSSE.pdf> . Attached with this newsletter is the HOUSSE rubric and the instructions. As you will see, these are very explicit instructions that award points toward highly qualified teacher status for various professional endeavors. Note that HOUSSE is devoted almost exclusively to achievement in "content specific to the subject area." Their words, not mine. That would be courses in subject matter areas, not pedagogy-in other words re-certification is dependent on courses other than those found in Schools of Education. Put another way, a Master's degree in History counts, a degree in Admin Leadership doesn't, unless you're an administrator. More on HOUSSE later.

## **THIS DAY IN HISTORY**

### **1956**

B17 and B29 aircraft designer and manufacturer William Boeing dies of a heart attack at the age of 74 while sailing his yacht. Bet the Germans and Japanese were glad to hear that!

### **1850**

The U.S. Navy abolishes flogging as a form of punishment.

### **Professional Learning Unit (PLU)**

Replaces the term SDUs. The days are gone when a teacher could get any sort of make-do credit and use it for re-certification. It just doesn't work that way anymore. PLU rules at: <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/documents/doe/legal/services/160-3-3-.10.pdf>

### **Re-certification agency**

Is now your BOE office. How that's done is really up to them. Whether they decide to pay attention to the rules or not is also up to them, so what you're reading here may or may not apply. They may decide to do more than HOUSSE and they may decide to ignore it. But Dr. FD Toth at PSC is out of the re-certification process so direct your questions to the designated guru at your county office. I heard him use those very words.

### **FAQs**

1. **Q.** I haven't heard of any of this - should I get excited, run around in circles or go on Prozac?  
**A.** Absolutely not. The ball is in your county office's court to get this organized. Then your administrator should tell you how to develop a plan.
2. **Q.** That's easy for you to say, you don't have to get re-certified!  
**A.** Actually, SGHP has thought of this for you - in fact, several years ago. If you're in SGHP and participating in all the scheduled activities, you meet most of the HOUSSE requirements.



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3. **Q.** But I've concentrated on graduate Education courses!

A. Not to worry - Dr Johnson's graduate history courses meet the HOUSSE criteria. If you attend those when they're scheduled and do our other activities, it's a slam dunk.

4. **Q.** So what should my Professional Development Plan look like?

A. I would do my best to convince my administrator that the SGHP master activities schedule IS my professional development plan.

### Additional Resources

The PSC has final responsibility for teacher certification, so surf their site at:

<http://www.gapsc.com/> .

<http://www.gapsc.org/caps/caps.aspx> will take you to a site that lists all the approved subject specific CONTENT area courses that meet HOUSSE criteria.

All the rules for re-certification may be found at:

[http://www.gapsc.com/TeacherCertification/Documents/Cert\\_Rules\\_12\\_03/505-2-.024.pdf](http://www.gapsc.com/TeacherCertification/Documents/Cert_Rules_12_03/505-2-.024.pdf)

### Parting Shots

You'll hear more and more about HOUSSE and we'll devote an issue to it later on. But what's basically happened is that when Congress passed the NCLB in 2001, implementation of HOUSSE was given to the states. It is now

generally recognized that very few, if any, of the states have fulfilled Congress' intent to develop highly qualified teachers. What will the new Congress and a new administration in 2005 bring? There are powerful lobbies that are pushing Congress to take HOUSSE into their own hands and issue new Federal regs establishing criteria for highly qualified teacher status. We also know that the general feeling in Congress and among voters is that the primary conditions for successful students are class size and good teachers, so expect to see more of the same in Federal mandates. But there's one thing you can be sure of - membership in SGHP and participation in our professional activities will smooth most of the rough spots for you when you're dealing with re-certification and a professional development plan.



**Reg Weaver**  
NEA President

"Public opinion recognizes that after parental involvement, teacher quality and class size make the biggest difference in how much students learn. Unfortunately, policymakers too often look for the flashy, cure-all remedies when what is needed is a comprehensive approach that takes into account all of the factors that address teacher quality."