



Oak Park Elementary School District 97

260 Madison ▪ Oak Park ▪ Illinois ▪ 60302 ▪ ph: 708.524.3000 ▪ fax: 708.524.3019 ▪ www.op97.org

August 1, 2020

Dear Parents or Guardians:

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was passed by the U.S. Congress and signed into law on December 10, 2015. The ESSA replaces the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and is the latest reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

While ESSA continued NCLB's goal to increase students' academic achievement, the Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) provision under NCLB was eliminated from ESSA.

In Oak Park Elementary School District 97, we continue to strive to hire the best teachers to provide the finest education possible for your child. Our school district works diligently to bring qualified, fully licensed teachers into our classrooms. We are proud of our staff, confident they are dedicated to their work, and have the best interests of children in mind when they enter their classrooms to teach each day.

With this in mind, under the ESSA, all schools receiving Title I funds must inform parents of their right to request the professional qualifications of their child's teachers. For the 2020-2021 school year, our district has eight schools that receive Title I funding: Beye, Holmes, Irving, Julian, Brooks, Lincoln, Longfellow and Whittier. Based on the law, parents/guardians may request information such as the following:

- ❖ Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- ❖ Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
- ❖ The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- ❖ Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If at any time your child has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who has not met State licensing criteria, the school will notify you.

To request information about the qualifications of your child's teacher, please contact the department of Human Resources at 260 Madison Street, Oak Park, Illinois, 60302 or 708-524-3000. We will provide a written response to the information requested in a timely manner.

We look forward to working with you to make this a successful year for your child.

Sincerely,

Carol L. Kelley
Superintendent of Schools