

**CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Hartford, Connecticut**

Series: 2007-2008
Circular Letter: C-13

TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Mark K. McQuillan, Commissioner

DATE: March 3, 2008

SUBJECT: Continuation of HOUSSE Plans for Highly Qualifying Veteran Teachers

Last month, I received a number of inquiries about a section in Circular Letter C-7 (Series 2007-08) in which the department described Connecticut's most recent efforts to discontinue the use of HOUSSE plans as a way of ensuring teachers were highly qualified. Rather than eliminating HOUSSE plans altogether, Circular Letter C-7 outlined five exceptions to the discontinuance policy urged by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE). Two of these exceptions appear within the federal law, and three were submitted by SDE and approved by USDOE in July 2007.

I write to inform you that the National Education Association (NEA) recently challenged the USDOE's effort to urge states to discontinue the use of HOUSSE for the purpose of "highly qualifying" veteran teachers. Specifically, NEA argued that the USDOE had no legal basis for discontinuing HOUSSE and that, until the law is changed, it must remain in force. The USDOE has now agreed that the NEA's interpretation is correct, and NEA has informed its state affiliates regarding this policy change.

In light of this recent information, please note that as you contemplate your staffing for the 2008-2009 school year, HOUSSE remains an acceptable means of determining which of your veteran teachers may be designated as highly qualified for reporting purposes.

Therefore, as a follow-up to this memorandum, I am hereby withdrawing Circular Letter C-7 (Series 2007-08) from the SDE's website. Any questions regarding this issue may be directed to Nancy Pugliese at (860)713-6709 or via email at nancy.pugliese@ct.gov.