



NORTH CAROLINA CENTER FOR
PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH INC.

News Release

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RESEARCH CENTER SAYS N.C. BEHIND REST OF U.S. IN PROHIBITING OUT-OF-FIELD TEACHING

North Carolina is one of only 15 states in the U.S. without a state policy prohibiting teachers from teaching outside their field of certification, says the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research. Thirty-five states -- including ten of the fifteen Southern states -- prohibit out-of-field teaching either by statute or in state administrative rules. "Out-of-field" teaching means a person is teaching a subject for which he or she does not hold a teaching certificate.

"The N.C. Department of Public Instruction has proposed rules to deal with the out-of-field teaching problem, and it is time for the State Board of Education to adopt those rules," said Ran Coble, the Executive Director at the Center. The Center's report endorsed the rules that were proposed to the Board by the Department exactly one year ago. The Center obtained the latest research from written surveys of the education agencies of all 50 states and then verified that information by telephone. The report contains the specific language for the statutes or rules in each state.

In August of 1981, the Center released figures on the numbers and percentages of teachers teaching outside their field of certification in eight subjects in grades 7-12 for the 1980-81 school year. The statewide results released at that time showed that about 60 percent of the persons teaching reading sometime during the day were not certified to teach reading. Over 37 percent of the math teachers were teaching out-of-field, as were more than 30 percent of the science teachers. Both the Department of Public Instruction and the Governor's Board of Science and Technology have also documented that high percentages of math and science instructors teach out of their field of certification. All three groups say there are shortages of qualified math and science teachers.

Among health teachers, 23.8 percent were found by the Center to be teaching outside their field in 1980-81; English, 22.5 percent; social studies, 16.6 percent; physical education, 15.8 percent; and foreign languages, 8.8 percent. In many of these subjects, there are surpluses of qualified teachers.

In November 1981, the Center released out-of-field statistics for all local school districts in North Carolina. These figures were attacked by many local superintendents as inaccurate. The Center defended the findings, which were based on a comparison of teacher certification records (maintained in the state Department of Public Instruction) with Professional Personnel Activity Report (PPAR) forms turned in by every local school superintendent to the state. These forms show what subjects a teacher is teaching each hour of the day.

"Though local superintendents may argue over the extent of the problem, few deny that out-of-field teaching is a problem. And it may be a problem for the very reason identified in this latest research -- that this state, unlike 35 others in the U.S., has no policy prohibiting out-of-field teaching," stated Coble.

Coble pointed to Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and West Virginia as four southern states with exemplary laws or rules prohibiting out-of-field teaching. Oklahoma law even authorizes a citizen to sue local school board members "for fraudulent expenditure of public funds" when it allows a teacher to teach grades or subject matter without a valid certificate. South Carolina rules simply state that a "school shall not have more than 10 percent of classroom instruction time taught by teachers who are not properly certified."

The Center said that if the State Board of Education does not act on the proposed rules soon, the General Assembly should consider legislation to prohibit out-of-field teaching. Draft legislation is contained in this report.

For copies of the report, send \$10.00 to the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research, P.O. Box 430, Raleigh, N.C. 27602.

For more information, call Beth Briggs at (919) 832-2839 at the Center or J. Arthur Taylor, Director of the Division of Certification in the N.C. Department of Public Instruction at (919) 733-3813.

1980-81 SCHOOL YEAR

Out-of-Field Teaching in Grades 7-12 in N.C. Schools, By Subject

<u>Subject</u>	Total Number of Teachers Teaching This Subject	<u>OOFT</u> ¹	<u>50% OOFT</u> ²
1. Reading	1701	60.1%	41.2%
2. Math	4913	37.3	25.3
3. Science	3846	30.4	17.3
4. Health	1671	23.8	11.5
5. English	6180	22.5	15.0
6. Social Studies	4193	16.6	9.4
7. Physical Education	2745	15.8	8.8
8. Foreign Languages	919	8.8	3.2

¹OOFT = any person teaching a subject without a certification in that area

²50% OOFT = persons who are teaching more than 50% of their classes in subjects in which they are not certified. This was the standard used by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (DPI) before 1968 to determine whether a teacher was excessively out-of-field. Since 1968, DPI has ceased monitoring schools to determine the rate of out-of-field teaching.

OUT-OF-FIELD TEACHING POLICIES IN THE 50 STATES

<u>Region</u>	<u>No Provisions</u>	<u>Has Both Rules and Laws Prohibiting Out-of-Field Teaching</u>	<u>Has Rules Prohibiting Out-of-Field Teaching</u>
SOUTH (15 states)	Alabama Maryland North Carolina Texas Virginia	Arkansas Louisiana Oklahoma West Virginia	Florida Georgia Kentucky Mississippi South Carolina Tennessee
NORTHEAST (10 states)	Maine New Hampshire New Jersey Rhode Island	Connecticut Massachusetts Pennsylvania	Delaware New York Vermont
NORTH CENTRAL (12 states)	Missouri	Kansas Michigan Minnesota North Dakota Ohio South Dakota Wisconsin	Illinois Indiana Iowa Nebraska
WEST (13 states)	Alaska Arizona Colorado Hawaii Utah	Idaho Nevada Oregon	California Montana New Mexico Washington Wyoming
TOTALS: (50 states)	15	17	18