

## **Frequently Asked Questions about the Elementary Teacher Certification**

**1. What grades will I be able to teach with an elementary license?**

With an elementary license you are eligible to teach grades K-8. In grades K-5, teachers teach all subject areas. In the middle school grades (6-8), teachers teach 1 (or sometimes more) content area classes (ie. English or math). However, teachers must be “highly qualified” to teach core subject areas in middle school on an elementary license.

**2. How do I know if I am “highly qualified?”**

To be “highly qualified” teachers must pass a middle-level NMTA content test in the content area, or have 24 credits in the content area, with 12 of those credits being upper division level on a college transcript.

**3. What is the field experience/student teaching course like?**

During the Field Experience course, to be taken during your final semester, candidates must spend a minimum of 150 hours in a classroom working with students: individually, in small groups, and leading whole class lessons. This does require flexibility in scheduling or a leave of absence from a day-time job.

**4. Can I get a job before I finish the SFCC Teacher Academy coursework?**

Yes. Candidates in the Teacher Academy are eligible to apply for an intern license with the NMPED (NM Public Education Department). Once you receive an intern license you have 3 years to complete all licensure requirements (including coursework and NMTA testing) and apply for a Level 1 license. If you are hired to teach on an intern license, you will be the lead teacher of a class and will receive standard entry-level pay.