

# 'Highly Qualified' Teachers: Pretense or Legal Requirement?



While the No Child Left Behind Act recognizes the importance of “highly qualified teachers” to standards-based reform, there has been little effort to date by the federal government to address the issue seriously, Mr. Rebell and Ms. Hunter report. Some states, however, have begun to take the initiative.

**BY MICHAEL A. REBELL AND  
MOLLY A. HUNTER**

**W**HEN THE federal “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) Act was signed into law with great fanfare in January 2002, it offered a vision of widespread achievement gains among students and a hefty increase in federal funding to support those gains. In contrast to this optimistic rhetoric, however, implementation of the new law has been dis-

*MICHAEL A. REBELL is the executive director and counsel of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE), Inc., in New York City and an adjunct professor and lecturer at Columbia University. MOLLY A. HUNTER is CFE's director of legal research and project director of CFE's national ACCESS Project. © 2004, Campaign for Fiscal Equity, Inc.*