

# Superintendent's Circular

School Year 2009-2010

NUMBER:  
HRS – L1

DATE:

September 1, 2009

## STATE LICENSURE AND FEDERAL NCLB HIGHLY QUALIFIED REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHERS

According to Massachusetts General Law, all teachers must hold a valid license issued by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) in the most appropriate subject and grade level corresponding to their teaching assignment(s). Teachers are not hired by BPS unless they qualify for the appropriate license or license waiver. A waiver permits the district to employ an unlicensed teacher for one school year only, and does not count as a license. Waivers are requested only by the BPS Director of Licensure in very rare circumstances where there are no licensed candidates available to fill a position.

In addition to being properly licensed, the US Department of Education No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act requires that all teachers of core academic subjects must demonstrate subject matter competency in each core area they teach in order to be designated "Highly Qualified".

This Superintendent's Circular provides guidance for meeting Massachusetts state licensure requirements and Federal Highly Qualified requirements for teachers under NCLB.

### I. Data Collection and Tracking Procedures

To collect and track data about the licensure and highly qualified status of BPS teachers and paraprofessionals, the BPS Office of Human Resources may require online reporting of critical information, including Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) results, licensure status, coursework and degree information of selected teachers. All selected teachers and their administrators must comply with these data collection procedures. Furthermore, it is every educator's professional responsibility to know their personal licensure status and take the necessary steps to maintain their license validity.

### II. Massachusetts State Licensure Requirements

#### A. Know what license is required by your teaching position

- The license required for your position should be made clear to you upon hire, but when in doubt, ask your Principal/Headmaster or HR Staffing Manager.
- The fundamental requirement is that teachers must possess the license that affords the most appropriate fit for their teaching assignment. For example while it may seem acceptable for a teacher of 6<sup>th</sup> grade math and science to work under an Elementary (1-6) license, the MA DESE does offer a Middle School Math/Science (5-8) license which is a more appropriate license for this teaching assignment.
- For more information about currently offered licenses, and specific requirements, visit [www.doe.mass.edu/licensurehelp](http://www.doe.mass.edu/licensurehelp).
- Active BPS employees can view their active MA educator licenses from the HUB ([hub.cityofboston.gov](http://hub.cityofboston.gov)) in the section "My Career Development" by clicking on "BPS Educator Licenses".
- Individual's official state licensure records and history can be accessed securely through the MA DESE's ELAR portal at [www4.doemass.org/auth/Login](http://www4.doemass.org/auth/Login). If you do not know your user name and/or password, click on "Forgot username/password" and it will walk you through some steps to retrieve the user name, and reset the password. If you still have difficulty, you can call the DESE at 781-338-6600 and they should be able to reset it for you.

- The “type” of license you hold (Preliminary, Initial, Professional, Temporary) does not affect your BPS benefits. See attachment A for guidance on which “type” of license suits your level of preparation and/or experience.

**B. Apply for the appropriate license**

- When interested in obtaining a new license, or advancing your non-Professional license, the best first step is to apply for the license you plan to pursue. Even if you have not yet met all of the requirements, this is DESE's opportunity to evaluate your standing with regard to the current requirements, and give you written instructions on what remains to be done. They leave all applications open until you are granted the license.
- Online applications can be submitted through the MA DESE's ELAR portal at [www4.doemass.org/auth/Login](http://www4.doemass.org/auth/Login), where you indicate which license you are interested in obtaining and pay the application fees. Applications cost \$100 for the first submission, and \$25 for each additional.
- Submit official transcripts (undergraduate and graduate) to the MA DESE by mail or in person. The address is:  
Office of Educator Licensure  
Mass. Dept. of Education  
75 Pleasant Street  
Malden, MA 02148
- Additional documentation, such as out-of-state teaching licenses, and letters verifying applicable teaching experience or preparation may also need to be submitted.
- Upon review of your application and transcripts, the MA DESE will notify you in writing if additional documentation or clarification is necessary, or if you still have additional requirements to complete. This is called the evaluation letter, and it will give you instructions on what your next steps are.
- Make sure your social security number appears on all documents sent to MA DESE.

**C. Take and pass all relevant MTEs**

- The test(s) you are required to take will be dictated by the DESE, based on the application that you submitted. General information about which tests are required for which license can be found online at [www.doe.mass.edu/licensurehelp](http://www.doe.mass.edu/licensurehelp). If you still aren't certain which tests you need, and you do not have time to wait for the DESE's evaluation letter, you may call Sarah Daniels at 617-635-9610.
- See Attachment B for the 2009-2010 MTEL schedule and registration information.

**D. Advance or Renew your License**

- Teachers who hold a Temporary, Preliminary or Initial license are required to be working to advance towards a Professional license. See attachment A for guidance on the progression of licenses, and visit [www4.doemass.org/elar/licensurehelp/ProgramSearchPageControl.ser](http://www4.doemass.org/elar/licensurehelp/ProgramSearchPageControl.ser) to find a searchable database of licensure programs at local colleges and universities.
- Teachers who hold a Professional license must renew it every five calendar years. There is an expiration date associated with each individual's Professional license indicating when it needs to be renewed.
- Renewal of a Professional license requires the completion of 150 Professional Development Points (PDPs) within the five year renewal period. At least 90 of these points must be in the content of the license (i.e. what you teach), the next 30 points may be in either content or pedagogy (i.e. how you teach), and the remaining 30 points can be on anything.
- The activities that teachers participate in to earn PDPs should be dictated by their Individualized Professional Development Plan (IPDP), which must be reviewed and signed for approval by their Principal/Headmaster every two years. Signed copies of the approved IPDP must be maintained in the school building.
- Visit [www.doe.mass.edu/pd/ipdp.doc](http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/ipdp.doc) to view or print an IPDP template.
- Online applications for renewal can be submitted through the MA DESE's ELAR portal at [www4.doemass.org/auth/Login](http://www4.doemass.org/auth/Login), only after all of the PDP requirements have been completed.

### III. NCLB Requirements

All teachers of core academic subjects must demonstrate "subject matter competency" in each core subject they teach in order to be designated "Highly Qualified".

#### A. Core Academic Subjects

- The U.S. DOE defines core academic subjects as being: English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts (art/visual art, dance, theater, and music), history, and geography
- Generalist teachers who are licensed in a specific area, but teaching more than one core academic subject (Elementary, Middle School Generalist, ESL and Special Education teachers) must demonstrate competency in all of the core subjects that they teach when they are the children's primary instructor of that content. Teachers providing supplemental instruction do not need to meet highly qualified requirements.
- Physical education, health, business, and instructional technology are not considered to be core academic subjects. This does not mean, however, that these subjects are any less important to the academic success of students. Teachers who teach these subjects must continue to meet the state's laws and regulations related to licensure, and should continue to participate in professional development activities that strengthen their professional knowledge and skills

#### B. Subject Matter Competency

- Most BPS teachers will demonstrate subject matter competency by passing an MTEL subject test to earn licensure.
- Since some teachers may not have been required to pass the MTEL to earn their licenses, some additional options exist for demonstrating subject matter competency (identified in Attachment C) depending on the level and subject they teach.
- Teachers must meet ONE of the applicable requirements outlined in Attachment C for each core subject they teach.
- Visit the MA DESE's FAQ document at [www.doe.mass.edu/nclb/hq/hq\\_faq.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/nclb/hq/hq_faq.html) for additional details.

For more information about this circular, contact:

<b>Name:</b>	Sarah Daniels, Director of Licensure & Educator Quality
<b>Department:</b>	Office of Human Resources
<b>Mailing Address:</b>	26 Court Street, Boston MA 02108
<b>Phone:</b>	617-635-9610
<b>Fax:</b>	617-635-7956
<b>E-mail:</b>	sdaniels@boston.k12.ma.us

Superintendent Carol R. Johnson

**Attachment A**

**Massachusetts Teacher Licensure – At a Glance**

MASSACHUSETTS EDUCATOR LICENSURE

Licenses granted by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education  
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148

781-338-6600

[www.doe.mass.edu/licensurehelp](http://www.doe.mass.edu/licensurehelp)

**YOU MAY START HERE...**

**Preliminary License**

- Valid for 5 years of employment
- For people who have not completed an approved educator preparation program

Requires

- A bachelor's degree
- Passing score(s) on MTEL. [www.mtel.nesinc.com](http://www.mtel.nesinc.com)
- Additional coursework required for elementary, early childhood, moderate disabilities, severe disabilities, library, and/or instructional technology.

**Temporary License**

- Valid for 1 calendar year
- For experienced teachers from another state

Requires

- Possession of a valid educator license/certificate from another state that is comparable to at least an Initial license in Massachusetts
- 3 Years teaching under a valid out-of-state license/certificate



**...OR, YOU MAY START HERE**



**Initial License**

- Valid for 5 years of employment
- (May be extended one time for 5 additional years of employment)

Requires

- A bachelor's degree
- Passing score(s) on MTEL. [www.mtel.nesinc.com](http://www.mtel.nesinc.com)
- Completion of an approved educator preparation program. [www.doe.mass.edu/educators/directory.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators/directory.html)



**Professional License**

- Valid for 5 calendar years










Requires

- 3 Years of employment under the Initial license
- Completion of a beginning teacher induction program
- One of the capstone options for the Professional license (i.e. master's degree including or in addition to 12 grad. credits in content)
- Continuing professional development required to renew Professional licenses every 5 calendar years

**Attachment B**

**MTEL Test Dates and Registration Information**

Refer to [www.mtel.nesinc.com](http://www.mtel.nesinc.com) and/or the following table for information about registration options and deadlines for each test administration. Not all tests are available on all test dates. Two additional test dates are offered for the Communication and Literacy Skills test only. For these additional administrations, sites will be available in the Boston and Springfield areas only. There will be an additional fee for these test dates.

Test Date	Regular Registration Deadline  	Late Registration Deadline (additional fee applies)  	Emergency Registration Deadline (additional fee applies)  	Score Report Date (unofficial scores available at 5:00 p.m.)
September 26, 2009	August 14, 2009	September 4, 2009	September 18, 2009	October 30, 2009*
November 21, 2009	October 9, 2009	October 30, 2009	November 13, 2009	December 28, 2009
March 6, 2010	January 22, 2010	February 12, 2010	February 26, 2010	April 9, 2010**
May 8, 2010	March 26, 2010	April 16, 2010	April 30, 2010	June 11, 2010
July 10, 2010	May 28, 2010	June 18, 2010	July 2, 2010	August 13, 2010
<b>ADDITIONAL TEST DATES FOR COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS TEST ONLY</b>				
October 31, 2009	September 18, 2009	October 9, 2009	October 23, 2009	December 4, 2009
January 23, 2010	December 11, 2009	January 4, 2010	January 15, 2010	February 26, 2010
<p><b>You may make a request for alternative testing arrangements when you register for the MTEL during the regular, late, or emergency registration period. To ensure that there is adequate time to process your request, you are strongly encouraged to register and submit all required information as early as possible, preferably by the regular registration deadline.</b></p>				
<p> <b>Internet Registration</b>  <i>All registration periods.</i> To register on the Internet, your registration must be completed by 5:00 p.m. eastern time on the registration deadline for the period.</p>				
<p> <b>U.S. Mail Registration</b>  <i>Regular and late registration periods only.</i> To register by mail during the regular registration period, your registration materials must be <b>postmarked</b> by the regular registration deadline. During the late registration period, your registration materials must be <b>received</b> by 5:00 p.m. eastern time on the late registration deadline.</p>				
<p> <b>Telephone Registration</b>  <i>Emergency registration period only.</i> To register by telephone, call (413) 256-2892 or (866) 565-4894, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. eastern time, Monday–Friday, excluding the September 7, 2009, holiday. Emergency registration ends at 5:00 p.m. eastern time on the last day of the emergency registration period.</p>				

**Attachment C**

**Options (by grade level) for Subject Matter Competency**

**Options for Demonstrating Subject Matter Competency in Massachusetts**

*In Massachusetts, highly qualified, as defined by NCLB, means that a teacher is licensed **AND** has demonstrated subject matter competency in the appropriate subjects. The options for demonstrating subject matter competency in Massachusetts are listed below.*

	<b>Means of Demonstrating Subject Matter Competency</b> (Teachers listed on the left have to meet only <u>one</u> of the checked options that correspond to their cohort):					
	Successful completion of the MTEL in the appropriate subject(s) <sup>2</sup>	Possession of a Graduate Degree in the appropriate subject(s)	Possession of an Academic Major in the appropriate subject(s)	Successful completion of coursework equivalent to an undergraduate major in the appropriate subject(s)	Nationally Board Certified	The Massachusetts High Objective Uniform Standard of Evaluation in the appropriate subject(s) (MA HOUSSSE) <sup>3</sup> [Title IX, Section 9101]
<b>Elementary School Teachers (including Kindergarten Teachers)</b>	X					X (this option is currently only available to SPED and ESL/SEI teachers who are already HQ in math, science and/or language arts)
<b>Middle and Secondary School Teachers</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X (this option is currently only available to SPED and ESL/SEI teachers who are already HQ in math, science and/or language arts)

<sup>1</sup> The appropriate subject(s) are the core academic subject(s) (English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography) in which the teacher teaches. Generalist teachers licensed in a specific area, but are teaching more than one core academic subject (Elementary, Middle School Generalist, ESL and Special Education teachers must demonstrate competency in all of the subjects that they teach.

<sup>2</sup> Elementary school teachers would have to successfully complete the MTEL in General Curriculum, while Kindergarten teachers would have the option of successfully completing either the MTEL in Early Childhood or General Curriculum.

<sup>3</sup> The MA HOUSSSE includes the successful approval of an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP). Please see the ESE's MA HOUSSSE policy document for additional details.