Guidelines for Program Approval

Revised November 2016

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
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This document was prepared by the
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner

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Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

To: Higher Education Presidents, Chancellors, Provosts, Deans, Alternative Provider Executives, other Senior Organizational Leaders, Education Faculty, Arts & Sciences Faculty, School District Superintendents, Principals and other Administrators, Charter School Leaders, Candidates for Licenses as Administrative Leaders, Aspiring Leaders, Candidates for Licensure and Other Interested Stakeholders
From: Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D., Commissioner
Date: July 2013
Subject: Guidelines for the Approval of Educator Preparation Programs

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I am pleased to provide you with the *Guidelines for Program Approval.* The amendments to the *Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval*, 603 CMR 7.00, passed by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in June 2012 initiated the development of these *Guidelines*. With these revised regulations, ESE aims to improve instruction in the Commonwealth by supporting educators through every stage of their career. These guidelines support the rigorous, high quality standards set for teacher preparation by outlining the procedures for the approval of all educator preparation programs in Massachusetts.

Through the Board's leadership and Race to the Top funding, ESE has increased attention to educator preparedness. In addition to the Educator Evaluation Regulations approved by the Board in June 2011, the licensure and program approval regulations and these guidelines are another step towards building a comprehensive system that supports educator development across the career continuum.

Together, the revised regulations and these *Guidelines* communicate a shift in the program approval process. ESE will incorporate program outcome measures to indicate:

- Whether (or not) programs are preparing graduates who are ready to effectively teach and lead in the Commonwealth's schools.
- Whether (or not) programs are preparing educators to assume positions in high-needs placements across the Commonwealth.

As an expectation for continuous improvement, ESE will collect and report data such as educator evaluation ratings, program graduates' impact in producing growth in student

learning, employment and survey data. With the collection and analysis of these data, ESE will be able to better identify strong programs worthy of recognition and replication and weed out those programs failing to produce the types of educators required for the needs of Massachusetts' schools.

The detailed indicators for each program approval standard are outlined in these *Guidelines* and are not in regulations. This approach streamlines the regulations and enables ESE to update the indicators periodically based on research and best practices, in consultation with the field, and with state and national experts, including the Council of Chief State School Officers' State Consortium on Educator Effectiveness (SCEE) in which we participate.

I urge all stakeholders engaged in the preparation of future educators to embrace this opportunity to create experiences for educator candidates to ensure the success of all PK-12 students in the Commonwealth. These *Guidelines* are designed to enable the development of deep partnerships between educator preparation program providers and school districts and charter schools. This shared responsibility for candidate success increases the likelihood that effective, qualified, and dynamic individuals will seek educator licensure and employment as educators in Massachusetts.

In the coming months, ESE will release additional documents, referred to as *Toolkits*, to support the field in preparing for the various components of program reviews. These toolkits will be available on the Ed Prep website at www.doe.mass.edu/edprep.

Please share what you learn and discover with ESE, as you use these *Guidelines* as a roadmap for the redesign of currently approved programs or the design, development, and submission of a new educator preparation program. ESE hopes that you will continue to provide feedback on these *Guidelines*. Feedback can be provided to: EdPrep@doe.mass.edu.

Context and Purpose

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) have made educator effectiveness a priority in order to educate all students for college and career readiness and close achievement gaps. The mission of the educator preparation team is to guarantee that educator preparation results in effective educators ready to support the success of all students. To achieve this goal, ESE entrusts Sponsoring Organizations to provide this effective preparation.

In recent years there has also been a growing national spotlight on the need to improve efforts to prepare effective educators for our schools and districts. In December 2012, The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) released a set of recommendations aimed at transforming educator preparation and standards for entry into the profession. Likewise, the then newly formed national accreditation agency the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) issued updated standards for an accreditation process that demands excellence in producing educators who raise student achievement. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Education has released regulations[1] in a similar attempt to elevate accountability and measure performance of preparation providers in producing candidates that are effective.

In support of this increased emphasis on the preparation of effective educators at both the state and national level, the BESE adopted revised Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval in June 2012 as components of a comprehensive system to support educator development across the career continuum. In addition, the consensus of a broad group of stakeholders led to new educator evaluation frameworks in 2012 as well as new performance assessments for candidates in 2014.

The June 2012 revisions were the result of years of collaborative work with educator preparation programs and other stakeholders to create, pilot, and implement a continuous-improvement, evidence-based program-approval process. In addition, ESE solicited and received feedback from national organizations: the Center for American Progress, the Data Quality Campaign (DQC), Education Sector, the Education Trust, and the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ); researched practices in other states; surveyed and met with school and district administrators; and conducted forums and surveys of Sponsoring Organizations.

With the adoption of these regulations, ESE has changed the types of data collected from educator preparation programs and has shifted the program approval process to include outcome measures in addition to the review of program inputs. By analyzing data about

- [1] The US Department of Education published a final rule for the Teacher Preparation Regulations that establishes new teacher preparation accountability regulations under Title II of the Higher Education Act.

programs, including data such as school employment and educator evaluation ratings, and evaluating outcomes based on this data, ESE will be able to:

- identify high-performing programs and be able to share evidence from which others can learn;
- identify low-performing programs, be able to provide targeted technical assistance and, where necessary, close programs who fail to improve; and
- share findings and information with the public.

In addition, the 2012 Program Approval standards:

- require educator preparation programs to work in partnership with districts and schools to support the needs of the PK-12 sector and inform educator preparation program effectiveness;
- increase expectations for Sponsoring Organizations in monitoring individual program efficacy;
- ensure that educator preparation programs focus recruitment, retention, and preparation efforts on preparing educators for high-need placements in Massachusetts;
- emphasize the need for a stronger field-based experience component in preparing educators, such as:
    - ensuring preparation candidates work with effective educators by requiring that Supervising Practitioners have a summative evaluation rating of proficient or higher in order to be eligible to serve in that capacity (refer to the two-page overview of the MA Educator Evaluation Framework); and
    - increasing the minimum-hour requirements for the practicum, and requiring that field-based experiences span the full school year and that they occur in diverse settings.
- align with the national direction for educator preparation by: (1) including updated accountability measures with increased annual reporting requirements; and (2) shifting from a five-year to a seven-year approval cycle with increased interim review options.

Stakeholders
These *Guidelines* have been developed with two audiences in mind: Sponsoring Organizations and School Districts. ESE expects these key stakeholder groups to engage in deliberate and collaborative discussions when assessing the effectiveness of current programs or when developing and assessing new educator preparation programs.

Sponsoring Organizations

Educator preparation programs are approved by ESE for the primary purpose of supplying the Commonwealth of Massachusetts with educators who can meet the requirements of MA licensure to teach and lead effectively in any public school, including those with diverse student populations.

Responsibility for the delivery and effectiveness of educator preparation programs should not rest solely on one department or individual in an organization. The effectiveness and preparation of educators should be recognized as a responsibility shouldered by all who are involved in the delivery of educator preparation programs.

- For Institutions of Higher Education, faculty from arts and sciences departments, together with faculty from the education department, are expected to communicate on a regular basis, sharing best practices while creating and maintaining systems to collect and review programmatic data in support of continuous growth.
- For alternative preparation programs, ongoing communication among those that design and deliver educator preparation programs and those providing content/coursework, is essential to ensuring that programs reflect current regulatory requirements.

School Districts

With the adoption of the most recent *Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval* comes an increased commitment to and requirement that educator preparation programs work in partnership with districts and schools to support their needs. These partnerships can no longer be defined solely as placements where candidates complete their practicum, and instead must be thought of as opportunities to develop deep, symbiotic relationships that inform the effectiveness of educator preparation programs while supporting the needs of school districts.

Sponsoring Organizations are responsible for effectively managing the partnership and responding to the needs of individual schools/districts. In order to do this, they will rely on PK-12 support and engagement to ensure that candidates have a seamless experience as they transition through the pipeline from preparation to employment. The 2012 Program Approval standards and the shifts they embody provide an opportunity for districts to reinvest in educator preparation.

To better understand the extent and outcomes of a partnership between providers and PK-12 districts, ESE will seek district/school feedback on the quality of preparation provided to candidates in two ways: (1) a Partner Survey issued to district contacts for any provider currently undergoing review and (2) an annual survey to all hiring principals/superintendents to

gain a measure of individual completer performance once employed. District participation in these two evidence-collection mechanisms is crucial in ensuring that statewide and individual provider improvement efforts are aligned to district needs.

Examples of ways in which Sponsoring Organizations and Districts might partner:

- Consistently and openly sharing data, such as: number and type of district employment openings and corresponding program completers; data addressing completers' impact on PK-12 students; or PK-12 district projections of vacancies
- Seeking to align the diversity of PK-12 students in partner districts/schools with processes for recruitment and admissions; seeking together to increase the racial and ethnic and linguistic diversity of teacher and administrator candidates to better reflect the diversity of the students
- Advancing approaches that feature shared responsibility for induction between hiring districts and preparation providers. This could include setting shared goals with agreed-upon, measurable outcomes for new educators to align the processes for preparing candidates with those of onboarding, training, and developing new educators. For more information, see the Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring Programs.
- Collaboratively designing coursework, field-based experiences, and feedback aligned with candidates' performance assessments based on identified needs of PK-12 districts and schools
- Collaboratively identifying and selecting candidates for programs who meet PK-12 partner needs
- Implementing a cohort model to prepare educators for the unique needs of a partner district
- Facilitating in-depth/year-long field-based experiences
- Providing opportunities for exemplary PK-12 educators to teach in preparation programs
- Supporting opportunities for preparation-program faculty to work in schools/districts
- District/School leaders serving on advisory boards/committees, to participate in the design and program evaluation process that SO's must engage in continuously
- Establishing formal leadership opportunities and recognition for individuals who serve as Supervising Practitioners

Program Approval Standards and Review Criteria

2012 Program Approval Standards

(2) **Program Approval Standards.** Each sponsoring organization seeking approval of its preparation program(s) shall provide evidence addressing the following Program Approval Standards, in accordance with the Guidelines for Program Approval.

(a) Continuous Improvement: Conduct an annual evaluation to assess program compliance, effectiveness, and impact using an evidence-based system to ensure continuous improvement.

(b) Collaboration and Program Impact: Collaborate with school districts to ensure positive impact in meeting the needs of the districts.

(c) Capacity: Create, deliver and sustain effective preparation programs.

(d) Subject Matter Knowledge:

1. Initial License - Subject Matter Knowledge: Ensure that program completers have content mastery based on the subject matter knowledge requirements; 603 CMR 7.06, 7.07, 7.09, and 7.11, at the level of an initially licensed educator.
2. Professional License - Advanced Subject Matter Knowledge: Ensure that program completers have advanced content mastery based on the subject matter knowledge requirements; 603 CMR 7.06 and 7.07, at the level of a professionally licensed educator.

(e) Professional Standards for Teachers:

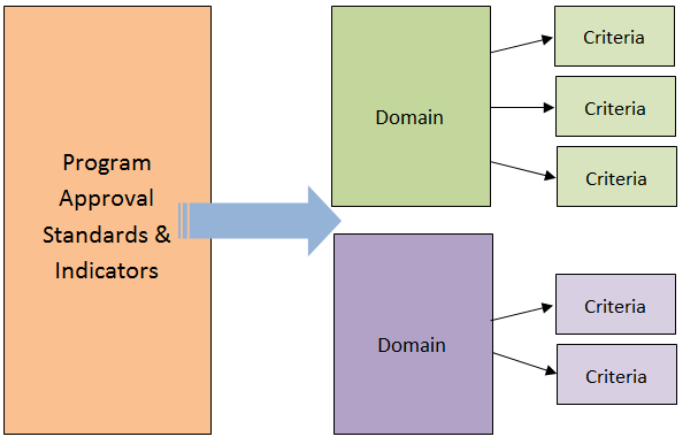
1. Initial License - Professional Standards for Teachers: Ensure that program completers have been assessed and mastered the Professional Standards for Teachers at the level of an initially licensed teacher.
2. Professional License - Advanced Professional Standards for Teachers: Ensure that program completers have been assessed and mastered the Professional Standards for Teachers at the level of a professionally licensed teacher.

(f) Professional Standards for Administrative Leadership: Ensure that program completers have been assessed and mastered the Professional Standards for Administrative Leadership at the level of an initially licensed administrator.

(g) Educator Effectiveness: Analyze and use: aggregate evaluation ratings data of program completers, employment data on program completers employed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, results of survey data, and other available data to improve program effectiveness.

One of the main purposes of these *Guidelines* is to make increasingly clear and concrete ESE's expectations relative to these standards. Accordingly, ESE has organized expectations into six thematic categories, called Domains, under which similar criteria can be grouped together. The domains are: The Organization, Partnerships, Continuous Improvement, The Candidate, Field-Based Experiences, and Instruction.

Criteria in each domain are derived directly from the Program Approval Standards and are designed to distill high-level concepts into a set of concrete, actionable criteria. By grouping these criteria into broader domains, ESE can ensure that criteria that cross-cut two or more standards (i.e. Standard A – Continuous Improvement and Standard G – Program Impact have a significant amount of overlap) are listed (and therefore evaluated) only once. This reorganization of the standards provides full coverage of the standards while also ensuring that providers prepare, are reviewed and evaluated efficiently without duplication of efforts and findings.



For a crosswalk of the standards to domains, see Appendix C. This set of criteria drive program reviews and evaluation. These criteria replace what were previously referred to as the "effectiveness indicators." Criteria were intentionally developed to be descriptive of expectations, not prescriptive of approaches or strategies. The criteria have been revised for increased clarity since the first set was released in January 2014.

Review Criteria

Domain: The Organization (ORG)

1. Organization demonstrates sufficient capacity and authority to effectively support and sustain effective educator preparation programs.
2. Systems/structures support collaboration within departments and across disciplines and improve candidate preparation.
3. Budgets support ongoing educator preparation program sustainability and allocate resources according to the Sponsoring Organization's goals.
4. All candidates, regardless of program or delivery model, have equitable and consistent access to resources.
5. Recruitment, selection, and evaluation processes result in the hiring and retention of effective faculty/instructors and staff.
6. Faculty/instructors and staff engage in professional development or work in the field that has a positive impact on the quality of preparation provided to candidates.

Domain: Partnerships (PAR)

1. Sponsoring Organization responds to the needs of PK-12 districts/schools.
2. PK-12 partners make contributions that inform Sponsoring Organization's continuous improvement efforts.
3. Partnerships improve experience for preparation candidates.
4. Partnerships positively impact the outcomes of PK-12 students.
5. Sponsoring Organization evaluates partnerships on an ongoing basis, sustains those that are effective, and takes steps to improve those that are not.

Domain: Continuous Improvement (CI)

1. Sponsoring Organization monitors individual program efficacy and ensures that candidates who complete the program are prepared to be effective in the licensure role.
2. The consistent and ongoing use of internal and external evidence, including ESE data, informs strategic decisions that impact the Sponsoring Organization, education programs, candidates, and employing schools/districts.
3. Sponsoring Organization acts on feedback solicited from internal and external stakeholders (including candidates, graduates, district and school personnel, and employers) in continuous improvement efforts.
4. Goals articulated in the State Annual Report yield improvements to the Sponsoring Organization's educator preparation programs.

Domain: The Candidate (CAN)

1. Systems to recruit and admit candidates result in the increased racial and ethnic diversity of completers in the workforce.
2. Admission criteria and processes are rigorous such that those admitted demonstrate success in the program and during employment in the licensure role.
3. Candidates receive effective advising throughout the program (including, but not limited to, being knowledgeable about licensure requirements and career development and placement services that contribute to employment upon completion).
4. Candidates at risk of not meeting standards are identified throughout the program (in pre-practicum, during coursework, and while in practicum) and receive necessary supports and guidance to improve or exit the program.
5. Waiver policy ensures that academic and professional standards of the licensure role are met.

Domain: Field-Based Experiences (FBE)

1. Practicum hours meet regulatory requirements as per 603 CMR 7.04 (4)
2. District partners are involved in the design, implementation, and assessment of field-based experiences.
3. Field-based experiences are fully embedded in program coursework such that connections between theory and practice are explicit.
4. Responsibilities in pre-practicum and practicum experiences build to candidate readiness for full responsibility in licensure role.
5. Sponsoring Organization secures and/or verifies placement(s) that meet regulatory requirements and the SO's expectations for a high-quality placement for all candidates.
6. Candidates participate in field-based experiences that cover the full academic year.
7. Field-based experiences are in settings with diverse learners (e.g., students from diverse ethnic, racial, gender, socioeconomic, and exceptional groups).
8. Supervising Practitioner qualifications meet regulatory requirements set forth in 603 CMR 7.02 and in Guidelines for Program Approval.
9. Supervising Practitioners and Program Supervisors receive training, support and development from the SO that impacts candidate effectiveness.
10. Candidates receive high-quality, targeted feedback during field-based experiences that improves their practice.
11. Sponsoring Organization ensures that Program Supervisors and Supervising Practitioners are measurably contributing to and effectively evaluating the readiness of candidates.

12. Candidate readiness for the licensure role is measured using a performance assessment (e.g. Candidate Assessment of Performance) that is implemented consistently across/within programs and rigorously such that only candidates who are ready to make a positive impact for PK-12 students in the licensure role complete the program.

Domain: Instruction (INS)

Sponsoring Organizations must monitor individual program efficacy (see CI Domain). For purposes of review, ESE will evaluate the quality of instruction with aggregated evidence for the following programs types: Initial Teacher – Baccalaureate, Initial Teacher – Post-Baccalaureate, Initial Teacher Specialist (e.g., Reading Specialist), Professional, Professional Support Personnel, and Administrative Leadership.

Outcome Criteria:

1. Completers have the content knowledge (SMK) to be effective in the licensure role. *For Professional licensure programs:* Completers have deeper content knowledge that makes them more effective in the licensure role.
2. Completers have the pedagogical skills (PST/PSAL) to be effective in the licensure role. *For Professional licensure programs:* Completers have increased pedagogical skill that makes them more effective in the licensure role.
3. Completers have a positive impact on outcomes for PK-12 students. *For Professional licensure programs:* Completers have an increasingly positive impact on outcomes for PK-12 students.

Supporting (Input) Criteria:

a) Program(s) of Study is sequenced to support the increased depth of skills and knowledge acquired and applied over time.

b) Program design results in a coherent program of study such that connections among and between courses are evident.

c) Content is differentiated by subject area and level of licensure.

d) Content delivery is calibrated for consistency within programs (e.g. different instructors of same course, in satellites, online, etc.).

e) Faculty/instructors model effective pedagogical and content practices of discipline (including strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners).

f) Faculty/instructors use formative and summative assessment data to target areas of candidate need.

g) Candidates receive targeted feedback from faculty/instructors in coursework that improves their practice.

h) Faculty/instructors use formative and summative assessment data to target areas of candidate need.

i) Candidates receive targeted feedback from faculty/instructors in coursework that improves their practice.

There are several areas covered by the criteria for which ESE has additional policy. These areas are referenced specifically in 603 CMR 7.00 and point to the *Guidelines* for further explanation about ESE expectation. Those areas are outlined further in the sections that follow:

- Field-Based Experiences
- Performance Assessments
- Waivers
- Annual Reporting
- Public Reporting

Field-Based Experiences

Well-designed and thoughtfully integrated field-based experiences help prepare candidates to become effective educators. They provide candidates with opportunities to integrate and demonstrate their understanding of pedagogy and subject matter knowledge, research, and best practices. Among other criteria, field-based experiences shall cover a range of time periods within the school year and build toward candidate readiness for full responsibility in the licensure role. PK-12 partners should be involved in the design, implementation, and assessment of field-based experiences. Experiences should include working with diverse student learners, including English language learners, in a variety of settings.

It should be noted that Sponsoring Organizations are responsible for determining candidates' readiness for endorsement, and thus should set expectations accordingly. For example, the requirement for 100 hours of full responsibility in a practicum serves as a minimum; Sponsoring Organizations are encouraged to supplement minimum requirements with additional, rigorous expectations in support of more effectively preparing candidates for the role.

Field-based experiences encompass both the pre-practicum experiences and the practicum placement. Guidance pertaining to each of these is outlined in greater detail below.

Pre-Practicum Experiences

Pre-practicum experiences must begin early in candidates' preparation, include opportunities to work with diverse learners, and be integrated into the courses or seminars that address the Professional Standards for Teachers or the Professional Standards and Indicators for Administrative Leadership. Pre-practicum experiences should not occur as isolated assignments that are disconnected from programs of study. ESE strongly encourages programs to design pre-practicum experiences that require candidates to bridge theory and practice in a rigorous way. Components of pre-practicum experiences may include:

- increasing responsibility to ensure readiness for full practicum;
- targeted, high-quality feedback that leads to improved practice;
- assignments that require candidates to reflect on experiences;
- an assessment, potentially a gateway assessment, of performance of the candidate;
- experiences that require candidates to apply aspects of theory to school/classroom practices;
- opportunities in different school settings, classroom delivery models, etc.; and/or
- experiences at different grade levels within the range of the license being sought.

There are no minimum-hour requirements for candidates engaging in pre-practicum experiences. SO's should design programs and early field experiences in a way that ensures candidates are able to gain the knowledge and skill necessary to perform the full-responsibility requirement effectively in the practicum.

Practicum/Practicum Equivalent Experiences

Practicum/practicum equivalent experiences must be

- completed within a Massachusetts public school, approved private special education school, Massachusetts Department of Early Education Care-approved preschool, educational collaborative, or a school that requires Massachusetts educator licensure; and
- supervised jointly by the supervisor from the preparation program (Program Supervisor) in which the candidate is enrolled and the qualified Supervising Practitioner.

All individuals in educator preparation programs shall assume full responsibility of the classroom for a minimum of 100 hours. For classroom-based practitioners, full responsibility requires that candidates:

- assume full control of all classroom duties regularly fulfilled by the Supervising Practitioner; and
- oversee responsibilities related to the education of all students on the classroom roster.

For educators not based in a classroom (i.e. administrative leadership roles or professional support personnel), full responsibility requires that candidates:

- assume full control of all duties regularly fulfilled by the Supervising Practitioner.

The 100 hours of full responsibility does not have to be consecutive. The intent of this requirement is to mirror the experience of being a full-time educator. Sponsoring Organizations should keep this intent in mind when developing additional guidance around expectations for candidates' practicum experience.

Practicum/Practicum Equivalent requirements are as follows (603 CMR 7.04 (4)):

Early Childhood: Teacher of Students With and Without Disabilities (100 hours in PreK-K, 200 hours in 1-2; at least one setting must include children with disabilities)	300 hours
Teacher, Grades 1-6	300 hours
Teacher, Grades 5-8	300 hours
Teacher, Grades 8-12	300 hours
Teacher, Grades PreK-6 or PreK-8	300 hours
Teacher, Grades 5-12	300 hours
Teacher, All (150 hours at each of any two of the following levels: PreK-6, 5-8, 8-12)	300 hours
Teacher of Students with Moderate Disabilities (for PreK-8, 300 hours in an inclusive general education setting or 75 hours in an inclusive general education setting and 225 hours in a separate or substantially separate setting for students with moderate disabilities; for 5-12, 300 hours in an inclusive general education classroom or 150 hours in an inclusive general education classroom and 150 hours in a separate or substantially separate setting for students with moderate disabilities)*	*300 hours

Teacher of Students with Severe Disabilities (at least 75 hours in an inclusive general education classroom at any level, and at least 150 hours in a setting with students with severe disabilities; the remaining 75 hours may be in either setting)	300 hours
Specialist (unless otherwise indicated)	150 hours
Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent	500 hours
Principal/Assistant Principal	500 hours
Supervisor/Director	300 hours
Special Education Administrator	500 hours
School Business Administrator	300 hours

The practicum/practicum equivalent is supervised jointly by the supervisor from the preparation program in which the candidate is enrolled and the Supervising Practitioner. The Supervising Practitioner and the Program Supervisor will together evaluate the candidate using the Candidate Assessment of Performance. Disagreement between the Supervising Practitioner and the Program Supervisor will be resolved by the decision of a third person chosen jointly by them.

A Supervising Practitioner:

- shall be trained, supported, and evaluated by the Sponsoring Organization to ensure candidates' placement meets expectations for effective preparation
- shall have at least three full years of experience under an appropriate Initial or Professional license; and
- shall have received a rating of proficient or higher on his/her most recent summative evaluation.

Sponsoring Organizations need to identify effective placements for their candidates. This can be accomplished through the development of close partnerships with local schools and districts. Maintaining direct communication with district administrators as a part of a mutually beneficial partnership will enable Sponsoring Organizations to identify appropriate placements for their candidates more easily. Sponsoring Organizations will need to ask school or district administrators to supply the Sponsoring Organizations with a list (the "list" may contain only one name) of the names of teachers and administrators who the school or district recommends and who are both interested and qualified (worked under the appropriate Initial or Professional license for at least three years and rated proficient or higher on most recent summative evaluation) to act in the role of a Supervising Practitioner.

Performance Assessments

Initial Teacher Licenses: The Candidate Assessment of Performance

Teacher candidates are required to complete a performance assessment, the Massachusetts Candidate Assessment of Performance (CAP), successfully prior to endorsement for initial licensure. The Candidate Assessment of Performance is designed to assess the overall readiness of teacher candidates. By demonstrating readiness through CAP, Massachusetts will be able to ensure that teacher candidates enter classrooms prepared to be impactful with students on day one. CAP is the culminating assessment required for program completion in the Commonwealth and in this way creates an intentional bridge from training to practice by aligning expectations with the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework. Through CAP, Sponsoring Organizations are able to ensure that teacher candidates have the skills and knowledge necessary to be effective teachers in Massachusetts.

CAP has been built to mirror the experience of educators engaged in the MA Educator Evaluation Framework. Components of the evaluation experience have been modified so that they are appropriate for the context of preparation and focused on essential elements of practice for novice teachers.

For more information about CAP, see the Guidelines for the Candidate Assessment of Performance.

Specialist Teacher Licenses

CAP does not apply to the following specialist licenses: Academically Advanced, Reading, and Speech, Language, and Hearing Disorders teachers. SO's are expected to assess candidates during their practicum/practicum equivalent experience, and are expected to develop and implement a performance assessment appropriate for the license.

Initial Principal/Asst. Principal Licenses: The Performance Assessment for Leaders

The Massachusetts Performance Assessment for Leaders (PAL) is designed to evaluate the readiness of school leadership candidates for initial Principal/Assistant Principal licensure in the Commonwealth.

The PAL enables principal/assistant principal candidates to demonstrate their leadership knowledge and skills based on actual experiences within their schools and to meet licensure requirements. This assessment comprises four performance-based tasks that measure a candidate's practice as it aligns to the Professional Standards for Administrative Leadership.

For more information on the PAL, see the PAL information page.

Other Administrator Licenses

PAL does not apply to the following administrator licenses: Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent, Supervisor/Director, Special Education Administrator and School Business Administrator. SO's are expected to assess candidates during their practicum/practicum equivalent experience, and are expected to develop and implement a performance assessment appropriate for the license.

Implementation of Waivers in Approved Programs

Based on the Regulations Governing Program Approval (603 CMR 7.03 (1) (b)), any time a candidate's participation in a state-approved educator preparation program deviates from the design and/or requirements of the program submitted to and approved by ESE, documentation of a waiver is required. Waivers are designed to exempt individual candidates from certain requirements based extenuating circumstances; they are not a mechanism for reducing the expectations required to complete an approved program. As a result, Sponsoring Organizations may not design or build a program dependent upon a waiver. In each decision to issue a waiver, SO's must weigh the benefits of waiving requirements against the value of those requirements in relation to ensuring that candidates are ready to make impact in the Massachusetts public schools.

Sponsoring Organizations with approved preparation programs have the authority to review prior course work and work experience of their candidates and waive otherwise required course work, including the first half of the practicum or practicum equivalent, when designing individualized plans for candidates' preparation. Granting such waivers is the official responsibility of the Sponsoring Organization. Records of candidates for whom coursework or other program requirements have been waived, including the rationale/justification that warrants the waiver, must be available for review by ESE.

All state-approved educator preparation-programs have the authority to extend the following types of waivers, when appropriate for a specific candidate, based on program needs and a specific candidate's experiences:

- Course Waivers
- Pre-Practicum Waivers
- Up to ½ Practicum/Practicum Equivalent Waivers
- Practicum Setting requirements with the exception of:
    - The use of the MA Curriculum Frameworks

All Sponsoring Organizations must have a clearly articulated written waiver policy. Waiver policies should not allow broadly issued waivers; programs should limit waivers to exceptional cases. A Sponsoring Organization may choose to institute a no-waiver policy as its policy. Waiver policies must also be available for review by ESE.

Annual Reporting

All Sponsoring Organizations with approved educator preparation programs are required to complete an annual submission of the State Annual Report (SAR) (603 CMR 7.03). The period for each annual report is identical with the federal reporting year under Title II of the Higher Education Act: September 1 through August 31 of the year preceding the report (Example: SAR/Title II reporting year 2016 = program year 2014-15).

In addition, Sponsoring Organizations who offer educator preparation programs that lead to a candidate's first Initial teaching license are required to submit data for Title II HEA federal reporting requirements. Title II Reporting Requirements, technical assistance information, and previously submitted State Reports can be found on the Title II Higher Education Act website

Reporting requirements may change as required by state and federal regulations.

ESE copies data for SAR/Title II reporting and for public Profiles directly from the Early ID system. Therefore, ESE will report Sponsoring Organizations' data for the SAR/Title II and in Preparation Program Profiles exactly as they are entered by Sponsoring Organizations. For this reason it is important that organizations enter data accurately.

In addition to candidate enrollment and completion data, the State Annual Report Sponsoring Organizations are required to submit includes the following information:

Data Category	Specific Data Collected
Substantial Changes to Program	Substantial Changes to: courses or seminars, field based experiences requirements, personnel, or any other significant changes in the substance of the program.
Candidate Data	a) Number and list of candidates enrolled b) Number and list of candidates completing all coursework, except the practicum/practicum equivalent c) Number and list of program completers d) Demographics: a. Race b. Ethnicity c. Gender
Faculty Data	a) Number of full-time equivalent b) Number of part-time equivalent c) Demographics: a. Race b. Ethnicity c. Gender
Annual Goals and Attainment	Prior year goals, progress on prior year goals and current year goals
Program with Zero	a) Reasons for zero program completers

Completers	b) Plans for increasing enrollment and number of program completers
Types of District Partnerships and Collaborations	List of partner districts and description of the partnership
Update on Review Findings	Provide a brief summary of progress made in relation to the findings issued as a result of the last formal/interim review.

Public Reporting
As part of our efforts to strengthen educator preparation programs in Massachusetts and to make data more transparent, ESE publicly reports data in Preparation Program Profiles on ESE's website.

All data collected through the State Annual Report is published online. Additionally, ESE links data provided by providers to employment and performance data associated with completers who are employed in a Massachusetts public school. In this way, many reporting requirements focus on the impact of preparation programs. Such data include:

- Assessment data including MTEL pass rates
- Employment and retention rates
- Educator evaluation data
- Surveys of stakeholders such as recent completers, recent completers after one year of employment, Supervising Practitioners, and PK-12 principals as to whether the program provided completers with the necessary skills for success in the licensure role

Data are reported in the aggregate. All data are reported when the threshold of six or more has been met, and this includes data at both the program and organizational level. Sponsoring Organizations have access to the data prior to publication via the Edwin Analytics reports. Outcome measures published on the Profiles are considered one source of evidence in the evaluation of programs in formal, informal, and interim reviews.

In order to provide the public with information on preparation in the Commonwealth, ESE publishes on its website data including, but not limited to, the following information for each Sponsoring Organization and approved educator preparation program:

Regulations	Online Profiles Elements	Source of Data
Sponsoring organization general information	• Mission/vision statement • Contact information • Organization Type	Provided by SO in DA (ongoing updates)
Candidate data (program level)	• Total enrollment • Number of non-practicum completers • Number of program completers • Enrollment by gender • Enrollment by race/ethnicity	Provided by SO in ELAR (ongoing collection)
Faculty and staff data (org level)	• Full-time and part-time faculty • Faculty gender • Faculty by race/ethnicity	Provided by SO in ELAR (annually collected in SAR data collection)

Regulations	Online Profiles Elements	Source of Data
District partnerships and collaborations (org level)	• List of partner districts • Types of partnerships • Description of partnership	Provided by SO in DA (ongoing updates)
Annual goals and attainment (org level)	• Prior year goals • Progress on goals • Current year goals	Provided by SO in ELAR (annually collected via SAR)
List of approved programs	• Programs offered • Approval Determination	ESE
Admission requirements for approved programs	• Admissions requirements	Provided by SO in DA (ongoing updates)
Manner of exit from the approved program and persistence rates	• Percent transferring within X years of enrollment • Percent leaving without a degree in X years of enrollment • Percent completing within X years of enrollment	Calculations by ESE based on data provided by SO in ELAR (ongoing collection
MTEL: Single assessment and aggregate pass rates	• All candidates pass rate • Pass rate by assessment	Calculations by MTEL Vendor based on data provided by SO
MTEL: Summary pass rates at the point of: enrollment, non-practicum completion, program completion	• Pass rate at enrollment – all assessments • Pass rate at non-practicum completion – all assessments • Pass rate at program completion – all assessments	Calculations by MTEL Vendor based on data provided by SO

State administered survey data	• Response rate and responses by question for stakeholder groups such as:
	  • Recent completers
	  • First year employed completers
	  • PK-12 hiring employers
	  • Supervising Practitioners
		ESE

Aggregate employment data	• Percent employed in a MA public school within 1, 2, or 3 years • Percent remaining employed for at least 2years	Calculations by ESE based on data provided by SO in ELAR and districts in EPIMS

Regulations	Online Profiles Elements	Source of Data
Aggregate evaluation ratings	• Percent by summative rating • Percent earning PTS	Calculations by ESE based on data provided by SO in ELAR and districts in EPIMS
Student impact data	• Percent by Impact ratings	Calculations by ESE based on data provided by SO in ELAR and districts in EPIMS

Program Approval

Programs must be approved by ESE in order to endorse candidates for licensure. Candidates may qualify for licensure through successful completion of an approved preparation program leading to the license sought, provided they meet all other licensure requirements. Individuals who complete approved preparation programs may be eligible for licensure reciprocity with other states that are parties to the NASDTEC Interstate Agreement.

According to 603 CMR 7.03 (1)(d):

The regulatory language states: *"A Sponsoring Organization seeking approval for its preparation program(s) shall invite ESE to review them. The Sponsoring Organization shall provide written evidence in accordance with these Guidelines, demonstrating that it satisfies the requirements set forth in 603 CMR 7.03 (1) through (4). ESE shall review the written information for each proposed program along with outcome measures and verify them through an onsite review of the Sponsoring Organization."*

A Sponsoring Organization *must* receive approval from ESE *before* enrolling candidates into any educator preparation program.

There are three types of program approval reviews: Informal, Formal, and Interim. An overview of each review is outlined in the chart below; specifics are provided in the sections that follow.

	Type of Review		
	Informal Review	**Formal Review**	**Interim Review**
Overview (see The Review Process for details)	For SO's proposing new programs outside of the seven-year cycle or entities seeking to become a Sponsoring Organization	For currently approved SO's seeking continuing approval at the end of current approval window	For currently approved SO's within the current approval window
Term of Approval	1 year	Varies by Approval Determination, Typically a 7-year approval	As needed
Form of Review	Offsite document review	Offsite document review and onsite visit	As needed
Licensing Authority	Massachusetts Reciprocity through NASDTEC not guaranteed	Massachusetts and Reciprocity through NASDTEC	ESE determined
Initiated by	Sponsoring Organization	ESE	ESE

ESE's Role in Review

As Sponsoring Organizations undergo formal review, ESE will provide technical assistance that supports the organization through the review process. The Department will support Sponsoring Organizations by providing clear expectations and requirements for the review process, and will provide templates of required documents and information resources to clarify and explain requirements and options for organizations under review. ESE further supports organizations under review through information sessions, phone calls, and timely responses to emailed questions and concerns. In order to uphold the integrity of the process and ensure consistency and fairness across reviews, ESE does not provide feedback or advice about the content of submissions.

National Accreditation and State Approval

National accreditation is not required in Massachusetts. Sponsoring Organizations that seek or wish to seek national accreditation may do so under the terms of the Massachusetts/CAEP Partnership agreement. The current MA partnership is reflective of ongoing transitions and implementation work associated with new CAEP standards and processes. ESE, along with a group of invested stakeholders, will continue to monitor the efficacy and rigor of CAEP accreditation in order to inform future agreements.

More information about CAEP policies as well as a copy of the current partnership agreement can be found on the CAEP website at http://www.caepnet.org/.

The Review Process

For all types of review, ESE has developed intentional processes that seek to build an evidence base on which decisions can be made. This evidence-based model values the professional judgment of carefully selected and trained reviewers and relies on the triangulation of information from multiple sources. The evaluations take into consideration plans for improvement and organizational inputs but weights evidence of impact most heavily. The Review Evaluation Tool embodies this approach and is the centerpiece of the review system. Detailed explanations and the tools themselves can be found at http://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/evaltool/ .

In the following three sections, ESE has outlined the basic process associated with each type of review. Sponsoring Organizations are always encouraged to communicate with ESE prior to initiating work associated with a review to ensure that the organization has the most up-to-date information for the specific context of the program area or review year. ESE seeks to improve continuously and, as a result, components of the system may undergo change, although the basic processes outlined below are adhered to unless otherwise noted.

Informal Review

The informal review process allows Sponsoring Organizations to develop and put forth for approval new programs and to undergo review outside of the formal, typical approval cycle. It also provides a mechanism for those entities seeking approval as a new Sponsoring Organization. ESE will accept requests for informal reviews beginning February 1 through May 31 annually. ESE will not accept requests for informal review of programs within a two-year window leading up to or after the formal approval cycle. Sponsoring Organizations designated as Approved with Distinction may put forward new programs at any time inside the informal review window; the two-year moratorium does not apply to organizations with this designation.

The submission and approval of a new program is a multi-step process.

1. **Intent**. A Sponsoring Organization wishing to offer one or more new educator preparation programs must inform ESE of their intention to be reviewed. Requests to offer one or more new educator preparation programs can be sent to: edprep@doe.mass.edu. The purpose of providing advance notification of intent is so that ESE can offer guidance and plan for a timely review.

2. **Needs Assessment**. Needs assessments ensure that ESE and Sponsoring Organizations only engage in a review, outside of the formal review process, in areas of demonstrated need. As programs seek to demonstrate need, ESE will consider multiple sources of evidence, including evidence that links to the following categories of need: programs addressing a Massachusetts-specific need for educators in a specific subject area,

district need for the proposed program, candidate interest in the proposed program, and/or demonstrated impact/ effectiveness of completers in similar programs. If the completed needs assessment supports the need for the proposed educator preparation program as determined by ESE, the Sponsoring Organization may put forth the program for informal review. If need is not confirmed, organizations may wish to reconsider the program and submit additional evidence of need in the next cycle. For more information, please see the Needs Assessment Advisory.

3. **Informal Submission**. If need is confirmed, ESE will provide each organization with a list of documents that are required for the informal submission. Submission requirements vary depending on the context of the review. Typically, ESE requires SO's to submit responses to tailored worksheet prompts, programs of study, and associated standard matrices. Sponsoring Organizations should refer to the Educator Preparation Review Toolkit for specifics associated with each informal review cycle.

> Individuals who complete informally approved programs will be eligible to receive licensure in Massachusetts, but may not enjoy full reciprocity benefits for licensure in other states that have signed the NASDTEC Interstate Agreement with Massachusetts. Full reciprocity benefits are available after formal program approval has been granted.

4. **Notification of Approval Determination.** As a result of the review, ESE will notify the Sponsoring Organization of its approval determination. Sponsoring Organizations will be notified about approval decisions within three to six months from the close of the informal review window.

For new Sponsoring Organizations (those putting forth programs for the first time), formal approval will be granted only after the successful completion of a formal review. For Sponsoring Organizations with currently approved programs, formal approval is granted after the successful completion of one year of operation.

After the first year of operation and each subsequent year, the Sponsoring Organization must submit an annual report to ESE in accordance with 603 CMR 7.03 (4).

For more information, templates, and submission worksheets, see the Informal Review Toolkit.

Formal Review

Periodic program review ensures continued growth, improvement, and educator preparation program effectiveness beyond the initial approval. Sponsoring Organizations with currently approved educator preparation programs who are nearing the end of the seven-year approval window and would like to continue operating programs are required to have those programs reviewed. Currently approved educator preparation programs in formal review may continue operating, even beyond the seven-year approval window, until ESE has conducted the formal review process, unless the Sponsoring Organization does not submit required materials for review. If an SO fails to meet one or more deadlines associated with review, program(s) will expire on the established expiration date of approval.

In designing the review process, ESE's goal is to implement an effective, efficient, and consistent review process that provides a solid evidence base for decision-making. The formal review of currently approved programs is a multi-step process, and the timeline for this process is centered on the formal, onsite review.

The table below describes the steps in the general framework for review which is characterized by four main phases: initiation, offsite, onsite and determination. Supporting resources for each of the phases can be found at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/toolkit/.

Time Relative to Onsite Visit	**Stage/Step**	**Description of Activities**
12 months prior	**Initiation: Launch**	Sponsoring Organizations whose programs are nearing the end of their approval period will be contacted by ESE and notified of the need for an onsite formal approval visit. This notification will occur at the beginning of the sixth year of approval. ESE will host all SO's under review at an in-person launch meeting to outline the details of the process specific to upcoming review.
10 months Prior	**Initiation: Needs Assessment**	At the point of formal review, ESE requires that SO's assess the breadth and depth of their program offerings. Specifically, ESE will identify programs that have had zero completers or low-completion rates in the last three years. The threshold for low enrollment is determined by ESE annually and takes into account state-level completer data. In the case of low-enrollment programs, SO's must demonstrate state-specific need for the program as well as the ability to meet the demand or choose to expire the program. In the case of zero-completer programs over the past three years, with the exception of STEM programs because of the ongoing shortage of teachers in this area (these programs will be eligible to continue to

Time Relative to Onsite Visit	Stage/Step	Description of Activities
		operate with an affidavit), ESE will expire these programs. Sponsoring Organizations may put forward new programs during this phase. Only programs for which need is demonstrated will be considered as part of the formal review.
6 months prior	**Offsite: Initial Submission**	The Sponsoring Organization prepares documents demonstrating how the program meets the formal review criteria (See Appendix B: Formal Review Criteria). Required documents must be submitted to ESE electronically.
5 months prior	**Offsite: Completeness Check**	An initial completeness check of the submitted documentation is conducted by ESE to ensure required materials are submitted. ESE does not evaluate the quality of the content included in the submission. The completeness check simply serves to ensure that reviewers receive a complete package of materials consistent with the way they were trained. If the documentation is insufficient, the Sponsoring Organization will be asked to address the insufficiencies. If the documentation is complete, no further action is required but the SO may choose to revise the submission and resubmit until the final due date.
4 months prior	**Offsite: Final Submission & Offsite Review**	The Sponsoring Organization prepares documents incorporating changes based on feedback from the Initial Review. All required documents are submitted to ESE and then shared with reviewers who conduct an offsite review. Additionally, ESE will survey PK-12 partners regarding their experience with the SO.
2 months prior	**Onsite: Pre-Visit Call**	A pre-visit call will occur approximately two months prior to the formal onsite visit. ESE will use this call to coordinate with the Sponsoring Organization the logistics and expectations for the formal onsite visit.

Time Relative to Onsite Visit	Stage/Step	Description of Activities
Onsite: Site Visit		The formal onsite visit typically lasts three days. The state team consists of a minimum of one ESE staff member and a team of external reviewers. It is the responsibility of the Sponsoring Organization to pay the cost of travel, lodging, and meal expenses for reviewers. At the end of the formal onsite visit, an exit meeting is held and next steps are discussed. Final decisions are not shared with the SO in this exit meeting.
90 days post-onsite	**Determination: Factual Accuracy Report**	ESE will issue a report summarizing commendations, findings, and a recommended approval determination within 90 days of the onsite visit.
10 business days from receipt of report	**Determination: Factual Accuracy Response**	Upon receiving the final report, Sponsoring Organizations will review the document for factual accuracy. During factual accuracy, the SO should communicate with ESE regarding factual errors or omissions in the report. Given the substantive nature of the review and calibration checkpoints built into the process, SO's may submit corrections relevant to mistakes in the report but should not refute conclusions or judgments made by the review team. An organization will be asked to take corrective action to address the findings outlined in the report after the factual accuracy window. The Sponsoring Organization will return the report within 10 business days. ESE will review the response to Factual Accuracy carefully and amend the report as deemed appropriate.
4 months following onsite visit	**Determination: Notification of Approval Determination**	As a result of the review, ESE will notify the Sponsoring Organization of its approval determination. The Sponsoring Organization will work with ESE to determine timelines and next steps in response to findings requiring action. The Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education will notify Sponsoring Organizations of approval status in writing.
30 days from receipt of Final Report & Approval Determination	**Determination: Rejoinder Response and Hearing Requests**	Any SO with an approval determination of Approved With Conditions, Probationary Approval, or Not Approved may contest judgments or decisions reflected in the report by submitting a rejoinder response within 30 days of receipt of the final report and approval letter. The rejoinder response must be submitted using the ESE

Time Relative to Onsite Visit	Stage/Step	Description of Activities
		provided template. ESE will review the rejoinder response and the Commissioner may modify the report and determinations solely at his/her discretion. Upon receiving a notice of an approval determination of Not Approved, the SO shall have all rights of review required by G.L. c. 30A,s. 13 and 801 CMR 1.00. All requests for hearings, where hearings are provided by statute, shall be in writing, addressed to the Commissioner, and must be received within 30 days of receipt by the Sponsoring Organization of the notice of approval determination. At such hearing, the SO shall bear the burden of proof and present its case first.
August 31	**Determination: Approval Determinations updated on Profiles**	ESE will publish the approval determinations for each Sponsoring Organization on the Public Profiles.

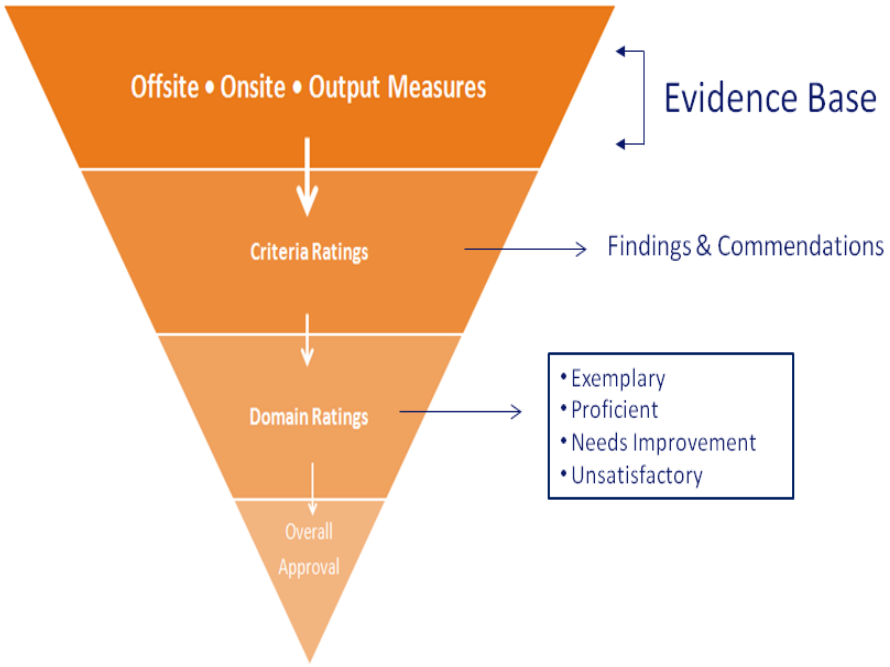
Interim Review of Approved Programs

Program approval will be for a period of seven years, unless the program ceases to meet the requirements set forth in 603 CMR 7.03 (2) through (4) or be in accordance with these Guidelines. In the event that a program ceases to meet requirements, or is designated low performing, or that ESE finds insufficient evidence of meeting criteria, ESE may conduct an interim review of an approved preparation program on an as-needed basis to corroborate and augment the information provided by this program pursuant to 603 CMR 7.03 (4), or at any interval during the seven-year cycle review.

Decision-Making

For each of the reviews, there are various levels of decision-making that occur. In all cases, ESE works with a team of reviewers to triangulate all available evidence carefully and to make judgments that are calibrated within the team and across various reviews. While there are not numeric benchmarks or a formula for dictating decisions, ESE has developed a process that weights evidence of impact to a greater extent than descriptions or plans for inputs.

The graphic below represents the different types of judgments that are made and that culminate in a holistic, overall approval determination.



Criteria Ratings

During the review, an individual reviewer's summative criteria ratings are challenged and corroborated by the entire review team. The review team, under the guidance of the ESE Ed Prep Specialist, must work towards agreement for each finding and/or commendation cited in the report. ESE reserves the right to change a criterion rating based on an in-depth understanding of regulatory requirements or in order to maintain consistency across reviews. Criteria recommendations result in:

- *Commendation*: Commendations are reserved for truly exceptional, innovative, or outstanding practices.
- *Criteria Met:* evidence sufficiently demonstrates that a criterion is being met as expected.
- *Finding*: Findings are areas of concern that require action or additional evidence to substantiate that the criterion is being met.

In addition, the review team may append Professional Suggestions to any criterion, independent of the rating awarded. Professional suggestions serve as recommendations for continuous improvement. They do not require a mandatory response/action.

ESE will work with individual Sponsoring Organizations to address findings outlined as a result of the formal review. The timeline and associated actions are determined on a case-by-case basis. It is important to ESE that agreements on the timeline both expedite improvements and ensure the delivery of high-quality preparation. ESE considers several factors when determining the required actions, including the context of the review and the significance of the findings on overall program quality. ESE may differentiate findings into one of two categories: conditional findings and non-conditional findings. Although all findings require action, ESE may determine that there are some findings, above others, that require immediate and significant action as they are directly related to major concerns identified through the review. More specifically:

- **Conditional findings**: Conditional findings correspond to criteria that have the potential to be high-leverage in the context of individual organizations. Essentially, by addressing concerns outlined in conditional findings ESE will have the necessary assurances needed to grant full approval as the changes are likely to have positive ramifications in key areas. Conditional findings may exist at the organization level and/or for individual programs.

- **Non-Conditional findings**: Non-conditional findings are still crucial for effective preparation, but, within the context of the review, are smaller in scale and scope and are not having a significant negative impact on the quality of preparation or the experience of candidates.

Domain Recommendations

Once the review team has rated all criteria in a domain, the team will make an overall recommendation weighing the cumulative impact and significance of the findings and commendations within that domain. Domain recommendations result in one of the following descriptions:

- *Exemplary*: The Exemplary level represents the highest level of performance. It exceeds the already high standard of Proficient. A rating of Exemplary is reserved for performance on a domain that is of such a high level that it could serve as a model for other providers in the organization, state, or nation.
- *Proficient*: Proficient is the expected, rigorous level of performance for SO's. It is a demanding but attainable level of performance for most.
- *Needs Improvement*: SO's whose performance on a domain is rated as Needs Improvement may demonstrate inconsistencies in implementation or weaknesses in a few key areas. They may not yet have fully developed systems to provide preparation in an effective way.
- *Unsatisfactory*: SO's whose performance on a domain is rated as Unsatisfactory are significantly underperforming as compared to the expectations.

Approval Determinations

Each review results in an approval determination. Overall determinations reflect the cumulative impact of all other judgments made throughout the review. Approval determinations are meant to signal to Sponsoring Organizations and external stakeholders the overall results of the evidence-based review and the general status of preparation within an organization. Each determination has specific implications pertaining to the conditions of approval being granted. Approval determinations are granted at both the organizational as well as the program level. A Sponsoring Organization's approval determination is closely associated with the various program-level determinations but may differ (e.g., the organization may be "approved" and the math 5-8 program may be "approved with distinction").

Regardless of the approval determination, ESE will continue to monitor individual program and provider efficacy and reserves the right to revisit conditions or engage in an interim review.

There are five potential approval determinations associated with the outcomes of a review. ESE has expanded the levels of approval in order to differentiate performance appropriately within the Commonwealth following a robust, comprehensive evaluation. The approval determinations are:

- Approved with Distinction
- Approved
- Approved with Conditions
- Probationary Approval
- Not Approved

Details of each are outlined below.

Determination	Definition	Indicators	Implications
Approved with Distinction	Approval with Distinction is the highest level of approval. A Sponsoring Organization or program granted approval with distinction has exceeded the already high bar for approval, demonstrating exemplary performance. The Sponsoring Organization or program is operating at such a high level that it could serve as a model for other providers in the state or nation.	• Domain/ Criteria Ratings, which could include specifically the depth and substance of commendations resulting from formal review • Compelling nature of evidence of impact provided in support of criteria being met	• Program is authorized to endorse candidates for licensure with full reciprocity benefits • 7-year term of approval, unless program ceases to meet requirements or ESE finds insufficient evidence of meeting standards • SO is granted additional autonomy in making substantial program changes • Should opportunities arise, SO's that are approved with distinction will be afforded preference in ESE-funded initiatives • ESE will waive the Needs Assessment requirement if SO is interested in putting forth new programs • Possible Status Designation as High performing
Approved	A Sponsoring Organization or program that has been granted full approval is recognized by the state to have met all standards for preparing effective educators in Massachusetts. An approved determination signals that candidates are well-served by this organization or program and receive a high-quality preparation experience.	• Meeting formal review criteria • Findings in a report, if any, do not significantly impact candidate preparation	• Program is authorized to endorse candidates for licensure with full reciprocity benefits • 7-year term of approval, unless program ceases to meet requirements or ESE finds insufficient evidence of meeting standards

Determination	Definition	Indicators	Implications
Approved with Conditions	A Sponsoring Organization or program that is approved with conditions has demonstrated overall program readiness for impact and a commitment to improvement, despite findings in a report. Conditional approval signals that there are significant areas that must be addressed in order for the SO/program to be found to meet state standards. Findings indicate that areas of concern impact candidates. Candidates are not, however, at risk.	• Domain/ Criteria Ratings, including specifically the depth and substance of findings resulting from formal review • Sufficiency of evidence that speaks to candidate/ completer efficacy	• Program is authorized to endorse candidates for licensure • Candidates may not enjoy full reciprocity benefits outside of Massachusetts • 7-year term of approval, unless program ceases to meet requirements or ESE finds insufficient evidence of meeting standards • ESE will impose conditions specific to the organization and will describe the timeline to meet those conditions
Probationary Approval	A Sponsoring Organization or program that is granted probationary approval has insufficiently met state standards. Probationary approval signals that there are significant areas that must be addressed and candidate efficacy and/or experience in the program is not consistently assured to be high quality.	• Domain/ Criteria Ratings, including specifically the depth and substance of findings resulting from formal review • Insufficient nature of evidence of impact provided in support of criteria being met	• Program is authorized to endorse candidates for licensure; enrollment may be restricted • Candidates may not enjoy full reciprocity benefits outside of Massachusetts • ESE will impose conditions specific to the organization and will describe the timeline to meet those conditions • 3-year term of approval, unless program ceases to meet requirements or ESE finds insufficient evidence of meeting standards • Possible status designation as At-Risk or Low Performing

Determination	Definition	Indicators	Implications
Not Approved	A Sponsoring Organization or program that is determined to be not approved has demonstrated significant deficiencies relative to state standards and is not effectively preparing candidates for the licensure role. ESE has concerns that PK-12 students taught by program completers will be at risk due to ineffective preparation.	• Domain/ Criteria Ratings, including specifically the depth and substance of findings • Compelling nature of evidence of impact provided in support of findings.	• Programs are not allowed to recruit, prepare, or endorse candidates for licensure • ESE will work with individual SO's to develop a teach-out plan for affected program areas and hold candidates harmless to the extent possible • Programs denied approval have the option, within a timeframe determined by ESE, to resubmit the program(s) for a new review • Status designation of low performing

Status Designations

As required by Title II of the Higher Education Act (HEA), each state must determine the criteria for assessing educator preparation programs and identifying educator preparation programs that are Low Performing or At-Risk. These performance designations are linked to, yet separate from, the approval determinations that result from formal review. ESE has extended these status designations to include a "high performing" designation in addition to the low performing and at-risk statuses required by the U.S. Department of Education. Status designations may be triggered by a specific approval determination but also may take into account additional outcome data accumulated and considered by the state on an annual basis. Criteria for being designated high performing, at-risk, or low performing may include one or more of the following data points:

- overall approval determination following a review
- program completion rate
- assessment data including MTEL, PAL, and CAP
- persistence rate
- state-administered survey results
- adherence to state reporting requirements
- meeting state or district needs, including preparation in high-need subject areas and diversifying the workforce
- employment data, and/or
- student-impact data, including educator evaluation data, student growth percentiles, and impact ratings.

Low Performing and At-Risk Designations

If following a formal or interim review an approved Sponsoring Organization fails to meet the requirements and benchmarks set forth in the Program Approval Standards it shall receive a designation of at-risk or low performing. Following such a designation, the Sponsoring Organization shall submit an improvement plan to the Department for any of its programs that receive the designation of low performing. The Department will monitor progress in meeting the goals of the improvement plan. If, after one year under review, a program has not made satisfactory progress, its approval may be revoked, in accordance with G.L. c. 30A,s. 13 . The burden of improvement rests solely with the Sponsoring Organization.

Any SO with a status designation of at-risk or low performing may contest the designation by submitting a rejoinder response within 15 days of notification of the status designation. The rejoinder response must be submitted using the ESE-provided template. ESE will review the rejoinder response and the Commissioner may modify the status designation solely at his/her discretion.

Given the heightened stakes around a low performing designation, there are several considerations to be aware of in terms of communicating the designation as well as its potential impact on candidates.

Communication Concerning a Low Performing Designation with Stakeholders

Sponsoring Organization Communication

The provider must communicate the low performing designation with all stakeholders, including current or prospective candidates. Several points to consider in communicating the low performing designation:

- Notification must occur within 10 business days of the conferred status. This includes:
  - Written documentation to all currently enrolled candidates
  - Updated website/marketing materials available to prospective candidates
  - Written documentation to all faculty/instructors
- SO must provide ESE with copies of communications sent to stakeholders as well as verification that the website and all other associated informational materials have been updated accordingly. Evidence of communication should be submitted with the Improvement Plan, if not before.
- SO may use language from the Approval letter, Final Report, these Guidelines, and/or regulations in order to communicate the designation status.
  - The term "low performing" must be present in the communication.
  - The communication must make clear that the SO's authority to endorse candidates for licensure beyond the current approval date is in jeopardy.
- SO should indicate that ESE will engage in ongoing monitoring during the upcoming academic year and that candidates, faculty, and supervisors may be subject to participation in the Department's efforts to assess progress.
- SO should communicate the low performing designation to any other stakeholder or entity potentially affected by the status. For example, SO should not enter into a formal partnership agreement with a school/district without fully disclosing the designation.

Note: Should a challenge of the low performing designation extend beyond the current date of expiration for programs, the SO must publicly post and communicate with candidates (current and prospective) that approval of programs leading to licensure are pending re-approval by ESE.

ESE Communication

ESE will communicate the low performing designation as required by state and federal requirements. Several points to consider in ESE's communication of the designation:

- ESE will publicly post the low performing designation on an SO's public profile three days after notifying the SO of the status.
- ESE does not publicly post the Formal Review Report provided to the SO; it is, however, considered a public document and thus subject to release in accordance with the Public Records Law to interested parties upon request. ESE will notify the SO if we receive such requests.
- ESE will share the designation and accompanying documents with the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, colleagues in the Department of Higher Education, and the Executive Office of Education as deemed appropriate.

- The designation will be shared, along with the outcomes of other Formal Reviews, in the annual Formal Review Summary report.
- ESE reserves the right, as deemed necessary, to communicate directly with districts and schools significantly impacted by the provider's low performing designation.
- As required under Title II of the Higher Education Act, ESE will report the low performing designation in the state's annual report due October 30th of each year. State reports typically post to the federal Title II website: https://title2.ed.gov/Public/Home.aspx around December or January.
- If contacted by individual candidates, prospective candidates, faculty, or partners of the SO, ESE will use language from the Approval letter, these Guidelines and/or regulations in order to communicate the designation status.

Impact on Current & Future Candidates

The low performing designation indicates that there are serious and significant concerns about the quality of preparation being provided to candidates within an organization. The mission of educator preparation is to produce educators who are increasingly well prepared to have immediate impact in the lives of students in the Commonwealth; providers with deficiencies that warrant the low performing designation threaten to undermine the quality of instruction and leadership in our schools and therefore put student learning at risk. It is because of this that we require deliberate and swift action to be taken in cases where the low performing designation is conferred.

Second, an SO's low performing status is a reflection on the quality of preparation provided by the organization, not necessarily the skills and abilities of individual educators enrolled in or previously endorsed through the program.

Ultimately, ESE hopes the most significant impact of the low performing designation on current or future candidates will be the dramatically improved quality of preparation provided by the SO.

The low performing designation does not interfere with a provider's ability to enroll or endorse candidates for licensure programs. Additionally, there are no current state or federal regulatory implications for the funding or certification of candidates enrolled in the program. Under the federal Higher Education Act[2], Section 207 and 208, funding eligibility for an SO is only impacted if the state revokes approval:

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[2] Title II of the Higher Education Act is currently pending revision by USED. Draft guidelines were released in November 2014 for a period of public comment. Proposed regulations did outline additional consequences for low performing designations. ESE's analysis of the regulations and public comment can be found at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/Comment-ProposedRegulations.pdf

(b) TERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY – Any institution of higher education that offers a program of teacher preparation in which the State has withdrawn the State's approval or terminated the State's financial support due to the low performance of the institution's teacher preparation program based upon the State assessment described in subsection (a)—

(1) shall be ineligible for any funding for professional development activities awarded by the Department of Education; and

(2) shall not be permitted to accept or enroll any student that receives aid under title IV of this Act in the institution's teacher preparation program. [3]

In the event that an SO's approval is ultimately revoked, ESE will work with the SO on closure procedures that, to the extent possible, hold candidates harmless. In previous situations, where concerns about the quality of preparation were minimal or the quantity of affected candidates small, ESE has afforded providers the opportunity to "teach-out" the remaining cohort of candidates. Teach-out plans rarely extend beyond one year from the date of expiration. Provisions of closure for individual SO, if approval is revoked, will be determined at that point in time. Given this, an SO cannot assure candidate endorsement beyond the current approval date.

If candidates wish to transfer to other providers in the state, the extent to which other providers choose to waive or accept credits/coursework from the low performing programs is at the sole discretion of individual Sponsoring Organizations.

[3] Regulations can be accessed at: http://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/leg/hea98/sec201.html

Glossary of Terms

Approval Determination: The type of approval a Sponsoring Organization receives from formal review (Approved with Distinction, Approved, Approved with Conditions, Probationary Approval, or Not Approved). Formerly called Approval Status.

Candidate*:* A person who is currently enrolled in an Ed Prep Program; *students*.

Commendation: Criteria rating in Formal Review reserved for truly exceptional, innovative, or outstanding practices. Commendations impact an SO's overall approval determination.

Completer*:* A person who has successfully completed an educator preparation program; *alumnus, graduate*.

Diverse Student Learners: Students from diverse ethnic, racial, gender, socioeconomic, and exceptional groups (e.g., students with special education and/or English Language Learner designations).

Enrollment: The point at which an individual has met all the Sponsoring Organization's requirements in order to be formally admitted into the educator preparation program. Each Sponsoring Organization may define enrollment differently.

Field-Based Experiences: Experiences such as observation of a variety of classrooms, pre-practicum, practicum/practicum equivalent, internship, or apprenticeship that are integral components of any program for the preparation of educators.

Finding: Criteria rating in Formal Review for areas of concern requiring corrective action. Findings impact an SO's overall approval determination.

Input Measures: Sources of evidence used to demonstrate actions and systems Sponsoring Organizations have in place to meet Formal Review criteria. These measures recognize that overall outcomes are influenced by programmatic inputs.

Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks: The Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks comprise the following subject areas: Arts, English Language Arts, Foreign Language, Comprehensive Health, Mathematics, History and Social Science, Science Technology and Engineering, English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes, and Vocational Technical Education.

Public PK-12 classrooms in Massachusetts transitioned to the most recent ELA/Literacy and Mathematics standards (based on the Common Core State Standards adopted by 45 states) during the 2012-2013 school year. These standards are designed to prepare students for college and careers after high school. The 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics documents incorporate the Common Core State Standards and include the additional Massachusetts standards for pre-kindergarten and selected topics in other grades.

NASDTEC Interstate Agreement: The agreement sponsored by the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) concerning reciprocal licensing of educational personnel among participating jurisdictions.

Output Measures: Sources of evidence that link criteria with quantifiable data on program results.

Partnership: Deliberate collaboration between Sponsoring Organizations and PK-12 districts/ schools to ensure effective preparation that meets the needs of the PK-12 partner. For more information, see Stakeholders section.

Persistence Rate: The percentage of candidates who are enrolled in a program in relation to the number of program completers. This data will be collected through ELAR and included in the public Profiles.

Professional Suggestions: Professional Suggestions serve as recommendations for continuous improvement. They do not require a mandatory response or action.

Program Approval: State authorization of an educator preparation program or its Sponsoring Organization to endorse program completers prepared in Massachusetts for educator licensure in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Also, the process through which a program or Sponsoring Organization may receive state approval.

Program Supervisor: A member of the SO staff, the Program Supervisor serves as the liaison between the SO and the practicum placement. She/he is responsible for overseeing the student teaching experience, observing and providing feedback to the candidate and coordinating the assessment for program completion.

Reviewer: Person identified by ESE as someone with the knowledge and experience required to evaluate evidence of how programs meet review criteria. Reviewers are chosen based on their qualifications and screened for bias or potential conflicts of interest. Reviewers also receive extensive training and calibration to implement the review process.

Sponsoring Organization: Institution of higher education or alternative preparation organization that provides, or seeks to provide, approved preparation programs.

Status Designation: An assessment of a Sponsoring Organization's performance as required by Title II of the Higher Education Act (high performing, at-risk, or low performing).

Student: PK-12 child.

Supervising Practitioner: A PK-12 educator who oversees a candidate's field-based experience; cooperating teacher, mentor teacher. A Supervising Practitioner shall be supported and evaluated by the Sponsoring Organization, have at least three full years of experience under an appropriate Initial or Professional license, and have received a rating of proficient or higher on his/her most recent summative evaluation.

Triggering Data: Any data that indicate an interim review of a Sponsoring Organization may be warranted. Data submitted annually to ESE by Sponsoring Organizations or collected by ESE from other stakeholders may trigger an interim review. Other triggering data may include: a high rate of staff or faculty turnover; annual checks on candidate files that reveal issues; zero program completers for multiple years; offering of large numbers of programs potentially compromising quality for quantity; and watered down general curriculum attempting to appease all potential candidates (large numbers of waivers).

Waiver Policy: Regulations state (603 CMR 7.03 (1) (b)): Sponsoring Organizations with approved preparation programs have the authority to review prior course work and work experience of their candidates and waive otherwise required course work, including the first half of the practicum or practicum equivalent, when designing programs of study for them. Granting such waivers is the official responsibility of the Sponsoring Organization. Records of candidates for whom coursework or other program requirements have been waived must be available during onsite review. For more information, see Implementation of Waivers in Approved Programs section.

Overview of Appendices:

- Appendix A: Program Approval Regulations
- Appendix B: Formal Review Criteria
- Appendix C: Program Approval Standards & Domain Crosswalk
- Appendix D: Continuous Improvement
- Appendix E: Delivery Models

To support the Program Approval process, a full suite of resources can be found at www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/pr.html

Appendix A: Regulations Governing Program Approval

http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr7.html?section=03

603 CMR 7.00
Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval
Most Recently Amended by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education: June 26, 2012

7.03: Educator Preparation Program Approval

(1) **Program Approval**. The Department shall issue Guidelines for Program Approval to be used in reviewing programs seeking state approval. The Guidelines for Program Approval will include detailed effectiveness indicators for each program approval standard set forth in 603 CMR 7.03 (2).

(a) Candidates may qualify for licensure through successful completion of an approved preparation program leading to the license sought, providing they meet all other requirements. Individuals who complete approved preparation programs may be eligible for licensure reciprocity with other states that are parties to the NASDTEC Interstate Agreement.

(b) Sponsoring organizations with approved preparation programs have the authority to review prior course work and work experience of their candidates and waive otherwise required course work, including the first half of the practicum or practicum equivalent, when designing programs of study for them. Granting such waivers is the official responsibility of the Sponsoring Organization. Records of candidates for whom coursework or other program requirements have been waived must be available during onsite review.

(c) A Sponsoring Organization that has received approval of one or more of its preparation programs shall endorse candidates who complete the approved preparation program.

(d) A Sponsoring Organization seeking approval of its preparation program(s) shall invite the Department to review them. The Sponsoring Organization shall provide written evidence in accordance with the Guidelines for Program Approval, demonstrating that it satisfies the requirements set forth in 603 CMR 7.03 (1) through (4) for each program for which approval is sought. The Department shall review the written information for each proposed program and verify it through an onsite review at the Sponsoring Organization. The Department shall use the same standards in reviewing all programs and Sponsoring Organizations for approval.

(e) Program approval will be for a period of seven years, unless the program ceases to meet the requirements set forth in 603 CMR 7.03 (2) through (4) and in accordance with the Guidelines for Program Approval.

(f) During the seven-year approval period a Sponsoring Organization that seeks approval of a new program may ask the Department for an informal review of that program. Sponsoring organizations seeking approval for the first time may also request an informal review. If the review is favorable, individual candidates who complete the program will be deemed to have met the requirements for licensure in Massachusetts, providing they meet all other requirements. Approval of the program will be considered at the time of the next seven-year program review.

(2) **Program Approval Standards.** Each Sponsoring Organization seeking approval of its preparation program(s) shall provide evidence addressing the following Program Approval Standards, in accordance with the Guidelines for Program Approval.

(a) Continuous Improvement: Conduct an annual evaluation to assess program compliance, effectiveness, and impact using an evidence-based system to ensure continuous improvement.

(b) Collaboration and Program Impact: Collaborate with school districts to ensure positive impact in meeting the needs of the districts.

(c) Capacity: Create, deliver and sustain effective preparation programs.

(d) Subject Matter Knowledge:

1. Initial License - Subject Matter Knowledge: Ensure that program completers have content mastery based on the subject matter knowledge requirements; 603 CMR 7.06, 7.07, 7.09, and 7.11, at the level of an initially licensed educator.
2. Professional License - Advanced Subject Matter Knowledge: Ensure that program completers have advanced content mastery based on the subject matter knowledge requirements; 603 CMR 7.06 and 7.07, at the level of a professionally licensed educator.

(e) Professional Standards for Teachers:

1. Initial License - Professional Standards for Teachers: Ensure that program completers have been assessed and mastered the Professional Standards for Teachers at the level of an initially licensed teacher.
2. Professional License - Advanced Professional Standards for Teachers: Ensure

that program completers have been assessed and mastered the Professional Standards for Teachers at the level of a professionally licensed teacher.

(f) Professional Standards for Administrative Leadership: Ensure that program completers have been assessed and mastered the Professional Standards for Administrative Leadership at the level of an initially licensed administrator.

(g) Educator Effectiveness: Analyze and use: aggregate evaluation ratings data of program completers, employment data on program completers employed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, results of survey data, and other available data to improve program effectiveness.

(3) **Preparation.**

(a) **Initial License**. All Sponsoring Organizations with approved programs leading to the Initial license shall provide preparation that addresses subject matter knowledge requirements for the license. See 603 CMR 7.06, 7.07, 7.09, and 7.11. The following additional requirements apply to baccalaureate teacher preparation programs:

1. For elementary, teacher of students with moderate disabilities, teacher of students with severe disabilities, teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing, and teacher of the visually impaired licenses: not less than 36 semester hours in upper and lower level arts and sciences coursework addressing the relevant subject knowledge topics for those licenses set forth in 603 CMR 7.06. Some of this coursework might also count toward the required arts or sciences major or general education requirements.
2. For middle school licenses: 36 semester hours in a mathematics/science or English/history program of studies. This does not exclude the possibility of obtaining a single subject license in any of these subjects for grades 5-8.
3. For the general science license: at least 36 semester hours addressing the topics for the general science license.

(b) **Professional License.** Sponsoring organizations with approved preparation programs leading to the Professional license shall provide preparation that satisfies the requirements in 603 CMR 7.04 (2) (c) 5. a., b. i., or c. i. Coursework and experiences used by candidates to satisfy the requirements for an Initial license may not be used to satisfy the requirements for the Professional license in the same field. The academic disciplines appropriate to the instructional field of the Professional license sought are specified in appropriate provisions of 603 CMR 7.06 for teachers and in 603 CMR 7.07 for specialist teachers.

1. Approved teacher or specialist teacher license programs sponsored by an alternative preparation organization of at least 50 contact hours of content-

based seminars beyond the induction year.

2. Approved programs sponsored by accredited higher education institutions.
    a. For early childhood, elementary, physical education, teacher of students with moderate disabilities, teacher of students with severe disabilities, teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing, teacher of the visually impaired, and other teacher licenses at levels PreK-8: at least half the credits are in any combination of: upper-level undergraduate or graduate courses in arts or sciences or in professional schools, in the subject matter knowledge of the license sought; and pedagogical courses advanced beyond those for the Initial license based on subject matter knowledge of the Professional license sought.
    b. For specialist teacher licenses and teacher licenses at levels 5-12 and All: at least half the credits are in upper level undergraduate or graduate level courses in arts or sciences or in professional schools and are in subject matter knowledge or pedagogical courses advanced beyond those for the Initial license based on the subject matter knowledge of the Professional license sought.
    c. For teacher licenses at levels 8-12: at least half the credits are in graduate level courses in arts or sciences or in professional schools, in subject matter knowledge or pedagogical courses advanced beyond those for the Initial license based on the subject matter knowledge of the Professional license sought.

(4) **Annual Reporting.** All Sponsoring Organizations shall submit to the Department an annual report that includes the following information for each approved preparation program, in a form prescribed by the Department:

(a) Substantial changes to a program

(b) Candidate data:

1. Number and list of candidates enrolled.
2. Number and list of candidates completing all coursework, except the practicum/practicum equivalent.
3. Number and list of program completers.
4. Demographics:
    i. Race
    ii. Ethnicity
    iii. Gender

(c) Faculty and Staff data:

1. Number of full-time equivalent
2. Number of part-time equivalent

3. Demographics:
    i. Race
    ii. Ethnicity
    iii. Gender

(d) Annual Goals and Attainment

(e) Program with Zero Program Completers:

1. Reasons for zero program completers
2. Plans for increasing enrollment and number of program completers.

(f) Types of District Partnerships and Collaborations.

(5) **Public Reporting.** The Department shall publish an annual report including, but not limited to the following information for each Sponsoring Organization and approved preparation programs:

(a) Sponsoring Organization General Information

(b) Candidate Data

(c) Faculty and Staff Data

(d) District Partnerships and Collaborations

(e) Annual Goals and Attainment

(f) List of Approved Programs and Program of Study

(g) Admission Requirements for Approved Programs

(h) Manner of Exit from the Approved Program and Persistence Rates

(i) MTEL Pass Rates:

1. Single assessment and aggregate pass rates on licensing tests or assessments as required by 603 CMR 7.00.
2. Summary pass rates on licensing tests or assessments as required by 603 CMR 7.00 at the point of: enrollment, completion of all coursework but the practicum/practicum equivalent, and program completion.

(j) State Administered Survey Data from:

1. Candidates enrolled in an approved program.
2. Candidates who have completed all coursework, but the practicum/practicum equivalent.
3. Program completers
4. District personnel

(k) Aggregate Employment Data of Program Completers employed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

(l) Aggregate Evaluation Ratings of Program Completers

(6) **Revoking Approval.**

(a) The Department may conduct an interim review of an approved preparation program on an as-needed basis to corroborate and augment the information provided by an approved preparation program pursuant to 603 CMR 7.03 (4), or during the seven-year cycle review.

(b) Following the interim review, if the approved preparation program fails to meet the requirements and benchmarks set forth in 7.03 (2) and (3) and the Guidelines for Program Approval, it shall receive a designation of low performing.

(c) The Sponsoring Organization shall submit an improvement plan to the Department for any of its programs that receive the designation of low performing. The Department will monitor progress in meeting the goals of the improvement plan. If, after one year under review, a program has not made satisfactory progress, its approval may be revoked. The Commissioner may extend the review for a second year if additional data must be collected, e.g., for small programs with enrollment of less than ten.

(d) The Commissioner will make the final determination regarding revocation of state approval.

(7) **Restoring Approval.**

(a) A Sponsoring Organization must wait two years after approval of an educator preparation program has been revoked before it can apply to the Department to restore approval. The Sponsoring Organization shall submit written documentation of how it will address the requirements set forth in 603 CMR 7.03 (2) through (4).

(b) The Department will review the written documentation to determine whether the organization and its program(s) satisfy all of the requirements set forth in 603 CMR 7.03 (2) through (4). Programs that demonstrate that they satisfy the requirements set forth in 603 CMR 7.03 (2) and (3) will be allowed to recruit students.

(8) **Implementation**

(a) Approved programs leading to the following licenses must address the requirements set forth in 7.06(25)(d)(4) and 7.06(26)(b)12 by December 31, 2011: Teachers of Students with Moderate and Teachers of Students with Severe Disabilities.

(b) Approved programs leading to licenses set forth in 603 CMR 7.09, must submit documentation to the Department by April 1, 2013 that they have addressed the requirements set forth in 7.09 and 7.10.

(c) Approved programs leading to the English as a Second Language license must address the requirements set forth in 603 CMR 7.06 (9) by December 31, 2013.

(d) Sponsoring organizations and approved programs must meet the reporting requirements set forth in 603 CMR 7.03 (5) by April 1, 2013.

(e) Sponsoring organizations and educator preparation programs seeking approval after August 31, 2013 must address the requirements set forth in 603 CMR 7.03 and 7.04.

(f) Approved programs must submit documentation to the Department by June 1, 2013 that they have addressed the requirements set forth in 603 CMR 7.08 (2) (a) 9, 603 CMR 7.08 (2) (b) 2. g. and h., 603 CMR 7.08 (2) (c) 1., 603 CMR 7.08 (2) (d) 5, 603 CMR 7.14 (1)(b) and 603 CMR 7.14 (2)(b) for the SEI endorsement, in accordance with the Guidelines for Program Approval issued by the Commissioner, in consultation with the Commissioner of Higher Education.

Regulatory Authority:
M.G.L. c. 69, § 1B; c. 69, §§ 1J and 1K, as amended by St. 2010, c. 12, § 3; c. 71, § 38G.

Appendix B: Formal Review Criteria

Domain: The Organization (ORG)

1. Organization demonstrates sufficient capacity and authority to effectively support and sustain effective educator preparation programs.
2. Systems/structures support collaboration within departments and across disciplines and improve candidate preparation.
3. Budgets support ongoing educator preparation program sustainability and allocate resources according to the Sponsoring Organization's goals.
4. All candidates, regardless of program or delivery model, have equitable and consistent access to resources.
5. Recruitment, selection, and evaluation processes result in the hiring and retention of effective faculty/instructors and staff.
6. Faculty/instructors and staff engage in professional development or work in the field that has a positive impact on the quality of preparation provided to candidates.

Domain: Partnerships (PAR)

1. Sponsoring Organization responds to the needs of PK-12 districts/schools.
2. PK-12 partners make contributions that inform Sponsoring Organization's continuous improvement efforts.
3. Partnerships improve experience for preparation candidates.
4. Partnerships positively impact the outcomes of PK-12 students.
5. Sponsoring Organization evaluates partnerships on an ongoing basis, sustains those that are effective, and takes steps to improve those that are not.

Domain: Continuous Improvement (CI)

1. Sponsoring Organization monitors individual program efficacy and ensures that candidates who complete the program are prepared to be effective in the licensure role.
2. The consistent and ongoing use of internal and external evidence, including ESE data, informs strategic decisions that impact the Sponsoring Organization, education programs, candidates, and employing schools/districts.
3. Sponsoring Organization acts on feedback solicited from internal and external stakeholders (including candidates, graduates, district and school personnel, and employers) in continuous improvement efforts.
4. Goals articulated in the State Annual Report yield improvements to the Sponsoring Organization's educator preparation programs.

Domain: The Candidate (CAN)

1. Systems to recruit and admit candidates result in the increased racial and ethnic diversity of completers in the workforce.
2. Admission criteria and processes are rigorous such that those admitted demonstrate success in the program and during employment in the licensure role.
3. Candidates receive effective advising throughout the program (including, but not limited to, being knowledgeable about licensure requirements and career development and placement services that contribute to employment upon completion).
4. Candidates at risk of not meeting standards are identified throughout the program (in pre-practicum, during coursework, and while in practicum) and receive necessary supports and guidance to improve or exit the program.
5. Waiver policy ensures that academic and professional standards of the licensure role are met.

Domain: Field-Based Experiences (FBE)

1. Practicum hours meet regulatory requirements as per 603 CMR 7.04 (4)
2. District partners are involved in the design, implementation, and assessment of field-based experiences.
3. Field-based experiences are fully embedded in program coursework such that connections between theory and practice are explicit.
4. Responsibilities in pre-practicum and practicum experiences build to candidate readiness for full responsibility in licensure role.
5. Sponsoring Organization secures and/or verifies placement(s) that meet regulatory requirements and the SO's expectations for a high-quality placement for all candidates.
6. Candidates participate in field-based experiences that cover the full academic year.
7. Field-based experiences are in settings with diverse learners (e.g., students from diverse ethnic, racial, gender, socioeconomic, and exceptional groups).
8. Supervising Practitioner qualifications meet regulatory requirements set forth in 603 CMR 7.02 and in Guidelines for Program Approval.
9. Supervising Practitioners and Program Supervisors receive training, support and development from the SO that impacts candidate effectiveness.
10. Candidates receive high-quality, targeted feedback during field-based experiences that improves their practice.
11. Sponsoring Organization ensures that Program Supervisors and Supervising Practitioners are measurably contributing to and effectively evaluating the readiness of candidates.

12. Candidate readiness for the licensure role is measured using a performance assessment (e.g. Candidate Assessment of Performance) that is implemented consistently across/within programs and rigorously such that only candidates who are ready to make a positive impact for PK-12 students in the licensure role complete the program.

Domain: Instruction (INS)

Sponsoring Organizations must monitor individual program efficacy (see CI Domain). For purposes of review, ESE will evaluate the quality of instruction with aggregated evidence for the following programs types: Initial Teacher – Baccalaureate, Initial Teacher – Post-Baccalaureate, Initial Teacher Specialist (e.g., Reading Specialist), Professional, Professional Support Personnel, and Administrative Leadership.

Outcome Criteria:

1. Completers have the content knowledge (SMK) to be effective in the licensure role. *For Professional licensure programs:* Completers have deeper content knowledge that makes them more effective in the licensure role.
2. Completers have the pedagogical skills (PST/PSAL) to be effective in the licensure role. *For Professional licensure programs:* Completers have increased pedagogical skill that makes them more effective in the licensure role.
3. Completers have a positive impact on outcomes for PK-12 students. *For Professional licensure programs:* Completers have an increasingly positive impact on outcomes for PK-12 students.

Supporting (Input) Criteria:

a) Program(s) of Study is sequenced to support the increased depth of skills and knowledge acquired and applied over time.

b) Program design results in a coherent program of study such that connections among and between courses are evident.

c) Content is differentiated by subject area and level of licensure.

d) Content delivery is calibrated for consistency within programs (e.g. different instructors of same course, in satellites, online, etc.).

e) Faculty/instructors model effective pedagogical and content practices of discipline (including strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners).

f) Faculty/instructors use formative and summative assessment data to target areas of candidate need.

g) Candidates receive targeted feedback from faculty/instructors in coursework that improves their practice.

h) Faculty/instructors use formative and summative assessment data to target areas of candidate need.

i) Candidates receive targeted feedback from faculty/instructors in coursework that improves their practice.

Appendix C: Program Approval Standards and Domain Crosswalk

Domain	Program Approval Standards (603 CMR 7.04)
Organization	Standard (C) Capacity: Create, deliver and sustain effective preparation programs.
Partnerships	Standard (B) Collaboration and Program Impact: Collaborate with school districts to ensure positive impact in meeting the needs of the districts.
Continuous Improvement	Standard (A) Continuous Improvement Conduct an annual evaluation to assess program compliance, effectiveness, and impact using a data driven system to ensure continuous improvement.
	Standard (G) Educator Effectiveness Analyze and use: aggregate evaluation rating data of program completers, employment data on program completers employed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, results of survey data, and other available data to improve program effectiveness.
Candidate	Standard (c) Capacity: Create, deliver and sustain effective preparation programs.
	Standard (d) Subject Matter Knowledge **Initial License** - Subject Matter Knowledge (SMK): Ensure that program completers have content mastery based on the subject matter knowledge requirements; 603 CMR 7.06, 7.07, 7.09, and 7.11, at the level of an initially licensed educator.
Field-Based Experiences	Standard (C) Capacity: Create, deliver and sustain effective preparation programs.

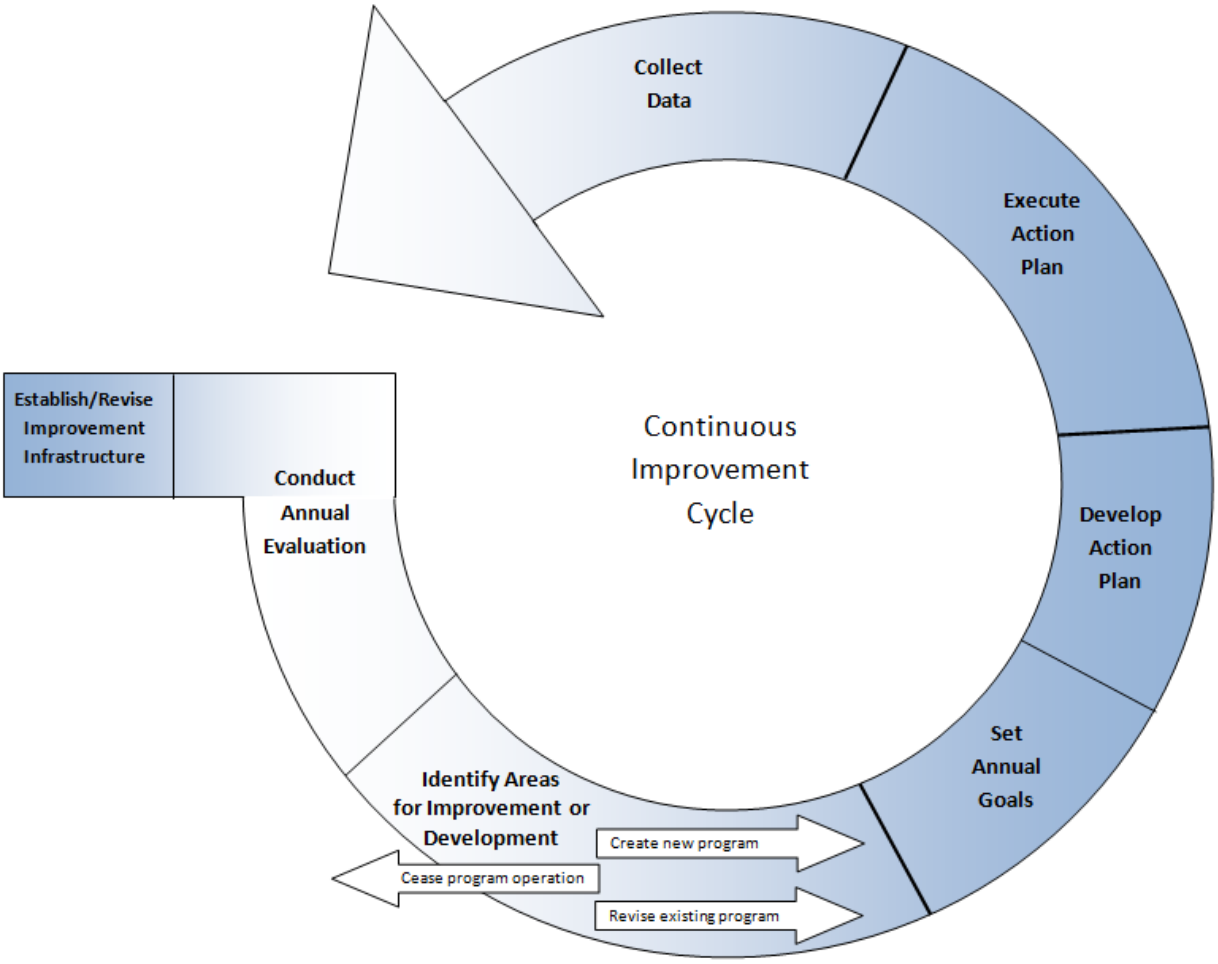
Domain	Program Approval Standards (603 CMR 7.04)
Instruction	Standard (C) Capacity: Create, deliver and sustain effective preparation programs.
	Standard (D) Subject Matter Knowledge **Initial License** - Subject Matter Knowledge (SMK): Ensure that program completers have content mastery based on the subject matter knowledge requirements; 603 CMR 7.06, 7.07, 7.09, and 7.11, at the level of an initially licensed educator **Professional License** – Advanced Subject Matter Knowledge: Ensure that program completers have advanced content mastery based on the subject matter knowledge requirements; 603 CMR 7.06 and 7.07 at the level of a professionally licensed educator.
	Standard (E) Professional Standards for Teachers **Initial License** – Professional Standards for Teachers: Ensure that program completers have been assessed and mastered the Professional Standards for Teachers, 603 CMR 7.08 at the level of an initially licensed teacher. **Professional License** – Advanced Professional Standards for Teachers: Ensure that program completers have been assessed and mastered the Professional Standards for Teachers at the level of a professionally licensed teacher.
	Standard (F) Professional Standards for Administrative Leadership: Ensure that program completers have been assessed and mastered the Professional Standards for Administrative Leadership at the level of an initially licensed administrator.
	Standard (G) Educator Effectiveness: Analyze and use: aggregate evaluation rating data of program completers, employment data on program completers employed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, results of survey data, and other available data to improve program effectiveness.

Appendix D: Continuous Improvement Cycle

Federal and state policies continue to focus on improving how educators are prepared to teach effectively in 21st-century classrooms. This increased scrutiny of educators and educator preparation has led to both greater accountability and expanded opportunities for educator preparation organizations. It has also created a need to re-assess how these organizations are reviewed.

Both the 2012 *Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval* and the updated program approval process focus on the need for Sponsoring Organizations to establish a continuous improvement system that examines program effectiveness through the compilation and analysis of data, both quantitative and qualitative. The system enables each Sponsoring Organization to reflect upon and assess the design, development, and delivery of its educator preparation programs and ensure that they reflect the mission, vision, and goals of the Sponsoring Organization and that they are aligned with state requirements.

Ongoing collection and analysis of program data drives the continuous improvement process. This continuous improvement cycle results in more effective programs.



What Continuous Improvement Looks Like

Step in Cycle	Description	Potential Actions
Establish Improvement Infrastructure	Collect, align, allocate, acquire or create the resources necessary to support the continuous improvement cycle. It is advisable that organizations consider internal capacity for sustaining improvement initiatives and design structures that support these efforts.	• Create an improvement committee • Schedule in advance standing meetings to support each step in the cycle • Enlist external partners and stakeholders in supporting the infrastructure • Employ the Datawise protocol, a cycle of data inquiry used in the PK-12 system and adapted for post-secondary use. Several SO's have taken part in ESE's Datawise pilot
Conduct Annual Evaluation	The annual evaluation should assess program compliance, effectiveness, and impact using an evidence-based system (CMR 7.03(2)(a)). State-supported data that should serve as sources of evidence include: • state administered surveys; • district employment data; • candidate persistence and completion rates; and • aggregate program completer evaluation ratings. Data collected and reported as required by the State Annual Report (SAR) will likely also contribute to this evaluation.	• Gather data from Edwin, the database of MA education information • Evaluate trends in data, such as evaluation ratings specific to program design • Compare impact data to organization vision and mission • Determine progress towards prior year goals
Identify Areas of Improvement	Based on the analysis above, target areas for focused attention and work to identify those with potential for addressing the	• Revise an existing program using the continuous improvement cycle • Cease program operation:

Step in Cycle	Description	Potential Actions
	greatest need.	Often occurs in program areas with low enrollment or completion rates. With new data, program effectiveness may become a more significant factor. • Restructure or implement new systems at the organizational level • Create a new program either due to need demonstrated in an employing district, state/national trend, or candidate interest
Set Annual Goals	These annual goals will be reported in the SAR and on public Profiles. Goals can address formal review criteria by yielding improvements to programs and by guiding the organization's Strategic Plan. Additionally, they should have a measurable impact on educator-preparation outcomes and/or PK-12 students. Existing evaluation and improvement cycles in use in MA commonly adopt the SMART[4] goal approach; organizations may consider this alignment valuable.	• Draft SMART goals in collaboration with stakeholders such as PK-12 partners, faculty, staff, and others • Connect to larger vision/ mission. • Establish ongoing measurements of progress toward goals. • Regularly report out progress to faculty and staff, and adjust plans where necessary.
Develop Action Plan	Outline in detail the steps/strategies the organization will employ to achieve goals. Assign responsibilities and set clear timelines. Depending on the structure of annual goals set, it may be necessary to create more	• Look for potential best-practices nationally or in the state • Enlist stakeholder support • Build check points into action plan in order to assess progress towards

[4] SMART Goals are: Smart & Specific; Measureable; Action-oriented; Rigorous, Realistic, Results-Focused; Timed & Tracked. For more information, see Educator Evaluation Resources.

	than one action plan.	goals • Identify data sources to evaluate action plan outcomes
Execute Action Plan	Implement the plan created above.	
Collect Data	Collect the data elements identified in the action plan. This data should contribute to the annual evaluation.	

Appendix E: Delivery Models

ESE recognizes that a variety of delivery models exist for educator preparation programs in Massachusetts and expects each program to abide by the regulations governing educator preparation and licensure.

Massachusetts-based Off-Campus/Satellite Programs, Hybrid (online and face-to-face) and Online Programs

Significant modifications to existing approved programs should be reported to ESE, including approved programs offered at off-campus/satellite locations or online within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Sponsoring Organizations who wish to offer approved educator preparation programs at in-state off-campus/satellite locations or online must notify ESE and submit a letter of intent prior to committing any significant resources to the new site or online program.

The letter of intent should provide a succinct description and rationale for the proposed off-campus/satellite location or online program. This should include the following:

- how the additional instructional location or online program aligns with the mission and priorities of the Sponsoring Organization;
- oversight of instructors/faculty, library, academic technological support, and student services including academic advising and counseling;
- plan and structure for organization and governance;
- details of the programs to be offered (Include how the delivery of the program(s) differs from that/those offered at the main campus/facility); and
- demonstrated educational need from local districts and communities.

Review Process for Off-Campus/Satellite Programs, Hybrid and Online Programs

Programs offered at an off-campus/satellite location, hybrid approach or online are reviewed at the same time that educator preparation programs offered at a Sponsoring Organization's main campus/facility are reviewed. Candidate files and work samples shall be included in the evidence room at the time of the onsite visit to the main facility. Candidates, faculty, alumni and other stakeholders representing the programs offered at the off-campus/satellite location shall make up a portion those interviewed during the onsite formal visit at the main campus.

Additional Information Related to Design and Review of Online Programs

ESE has many resources to support the development and delivery of effective online courses, please see the following link on ESE website for additional information and links to these resources: http://www.doe.mass.edu/odl/standards.html.