

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure® (MTEL®)

Test Development Summary

Background Information

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 requires teacher licensure candidates to pass a test of communication and literacy skills and the appropriate test of subject matter knowledge for each license sought. In April 2007, the State Board of Education approved an amendment to the Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval (603 CMR 7.00) for the purpose of strengthening the preparation and licensing of elementary and special education teachers to teach mathematics. As a result, the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure® (MTEL®) program's **General Curriculum** test is being updated to include a separately scored mathematics subtest, to be administered for the first time early in 2009. The Massachusetts Department of Education (the Department) has contracted with the Evaluation Systems group of Pearson to assist in the development and administration of the MTEL.

Description of the General Curriculum Test

The new General Curriculum test will include two subtests. The subtests together will comprise 100 multiple-choice test items (questions) and two open-response items. Subtest I, which addresses the content areas of Language Arts, History & Social Science, and Science & Technology/Engineering, will include 55 multiple-choice items and one open-response item in the content area of either History & Social Science or Science & Technology/Engineering. Subtest II will include 45 multiple-choice items and one open-response item in the content area of Mathematics. The two subtests may be taken and passed together at one test administration or at two separate test administrations.

Test Development Activities

Test development activities associated with the MTEL tests are accomplished with the participation of Massachusetts public school teachers, teacher preparation faculty, college faculty involved in other academic departments, and teacher licensure candidates. Educators have opportunities to serve on review committees, respond to surveys, and provide pilot-testing support. Teacher licensure candidates will be asked to participate in pilot testing. The following is a brief explanation of the test development process.

Test Objectives Development (completed June 2007)

The test objectives, which are broad, meaningful statements of subject matter knowledge and skills that are important for entry-level teaching in Massachusetts public schools, define each test. The test objectives have been prepared based on several sources, including the state licensing regulations and student curriculum frameworks, with extensive input from and review by Massachusetts educators.

Content Validation Survey (Fall 2007)

A Content Validation Survey was conducted for the MTEL to provide empirical and confirmatory evidence in support of the validity of the test objectives. The Content Validation Survey, which is sometimes referred to as a *job analysis survey*, validates the test objectives that will form the basis of test content by ascertaining that job incumbents and educator experts (i.e., Massachusetts public school educators, arts and sciences faculty, and educator preparation faculty) consider the content of each test objective important for entry-level teaching. The Massachusetts Content Validation Survey is an important component of the validity evidence in support of the content of the MTEL. The purpose of the survey is to obtain judgments from Massachusetts educators about:

- the importance of each objective for entry-level teaching in Massachusetts public schools;
- how well the descriptive statement represents important aspects of each objective; and
- how well the set of objectives, as a whole, represents the subject matter knowledge required for entry-level teaching in Massachusetts public schools.

Item Development and Review (Winter 2008)

Following the Content Validation Survey, test items, or questions, will be developed based on the validated test objectives and other relevant materials from committees of Massachusetts educators. Draft test items will be reviewed and approved by committees of Massachusetts public school educators and faculty members at Massachusetts educator preparation institutions.

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Pilot Testing (Spring/Summer 2008)

Items for the new General Curriculum test will be pilot tested to gather information about their quality and technical characteristics. The pilot test will provide teacher candidates and other individuals at Massachusetts institutions the opportunity to respond to test items that may be included on future test forms.

Test Administration (Winter 2009)

The new General Curriculum test will be first administered in the winter of 2009.

Establishment of Passing Scores (Winter 2009)

Following the first administration of the test, a panel of Massachusetts educators will participate in standard setting activities in which they review results of the test administration and provide the Department with input for setting the passing standards for the test.

National Evaluation Systems is now the Evaluation Systems group of Pearson.

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