June 2014

Dear Massachusetts Educator:

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) is committed to academic success for all learners. The Sheltered English Instruction (SEI) Endorsement requirement is an important initiative addressing proficiency gaps in the academic achievement of English language learners (ELLs) in our schools.

The Requirement to Obtain an SEI Endorsement

If you are a core academic teacher¹ who had or will have one or more English language learners (ELLs) in your classroom during your district’s cohort training window, you must earn the SEI Teacher Endorsement.

To determine your district’s cohort, click here http://www.doe.mass.edu/retell/. District training windows are explained below.

If you are a principal/assistant principal or supervisor/director² (hereafter referred to as "administrator") who supervised or will supervise or evaluate one or more core academic teachers of ELLs during your district’s cohort training window, you must earn the SEI Administrator Endorsement.

This requirement applies to you if you work in a Massachusetts public school, including charter schools, or are employed by an education collaborative.

Enrolling in an SEI Endorsement course in School Year 2014-15

SEI Endorsement course registration begins on June 23rd for educators in Cohort 1 and on July 21st for educators in Cohorts 2 and 3. The site will not go live until June 23rd, and at that time only educators from Cohort 1 will be able to complete the registration process.

The Registration site can be accessed at http://www.cvent.com/d/k4q05f.

Many of the links referenced later in this letter will not become accessible until the registration site goes live on June 23rd. Enrollment in SEI Endorsement courses will be on a first-come, first-served basis. If you are eligible to enroll, we encourage you to register promptly after registration opens for your district cohort.

¹ The following teachers are "core academic teachers" for purposes of providing SEI instruction: teachers of students with moderate disabilities; teachers of students with severe disabilities; subject-area teachers in English, reading or language arts; mathematics, science; civics and government, economics, history, and geography; and early childhood and elementary teachers who teach such content.

² Commonwealth charter school administrators who are not required to hold an educator license should review 603 CMR 7.09(3)(b) concerning the supervisor/director license to determine whether your role would require you to obtain the SEI Administrator Endorsement.
You are eligible to enroll in a no-cost SEI Endorsement course offered in the 2014-15 school year (SY 2015) if you have not yet obtained the SEI Endorsement and you have not already availed yourself of your no-cost training opportunity to do so, and:

1. You are a core academic teacher, and you anticipate that you will have one or more ELLs in your classroom during SY 2015 at the time that you will be participating in the class; and/or
2. You are a principal/assistant principal or supervisor/director and you will be supervising or evaluating one or more core academic teachers of ELLs during SY 2015 at the time that you will be participating in the class.

You can avail yourself of your no-cost opportunity to earn an SEI Endorsement in SY 2015 by enrolling in an SEI Endorsement course. Enrollment in an SEI Endorsement course in SY 2015 is solely your responsibility. By self-enrolling, you will have the opportunity to select the course that works best for you and your schedule. When you enroll, you are assigned to the 2014-2015 cohort year, which ends on August 31, 2015. Once you are assigned to a cohort year, you must earn the SEI Endorsement before the end of your cohort year, or you will not be able to advance, renew, or extend your license until you obtain the SEI Endorsement. Furthermore, if you are assigned to the 2014-15 cohort year and you do not earn the SEI Endorsement by August 31, 2015, you will have to earn the SEI Endorsement at your own expense.

Enrolling in an SEI Endorsement Course with no Identified Facilitator; Failing to Find an SEI Course with Available Seats

When you attempt to enroll in an SEI Endorsement course through our registration system, you will see that some courses have an identified facilitator and others do not. The latter courses will note “Facilitator: TBD” which signals that the Department has not yet identified a facilitator for the particular course.

The Department has made, and continues to make strenuous efforts to recruit and train qualified SEI Endorsement course facilitators, and we anticipate that facilitators will be identified for several courses that are now listed as “TBD.” That said, the pool of facilitators, while large, may not be large enough to meet the high demand for courses in SY 2015. Consequently, some of these “Facilitator: TBD” sections may ultimately have to be cancelled.

Any individual who has enrolled in an SY 2015 SEI Endorsement course which the Department subsequently cancels, should attempt to register for another course. If he or she is unable to do so, the educator will be assigned to the 2015 - 2016 cohort year (SY 2016) and, subject to appropriation, will be given a no-cost opportunity to earn the Endorsement in SY 2016. This includes educators in Cohort 1 whose training window would otherwise end in SY 2015.

You will have the opportunity to place your name on a waitlist if you are unable to find an open seat. The registration system will have additional details about the waitlist. If you are enrolled in a class through the waitlist process, you will be assigned to the SY 2015 cohort year and will have the same obligation to earn the SEI Endorsement as other educators and will be subject to the same licensure consequences if you do not.

Likewise, any educator who has been unable to find an open seat in an SY 2015 course, and has placed their name on a course waitlist for an SY 2015 course, and has not gained entry into the course for which they have been waitlisted, will be assigned to the SY 2016 cohort year and, subject to

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3 If you already took the Department course and failed it, or you previously registered for the course and cancelled your registration without an approved reason after the deadline for cancellation and have not been granted a hardship exception, you are not eligible to take the course. An example of an approved reason for cancellation after the deadline is that you learned you did not have an ELL in your classroom.
appropriation, will be given a no-cost opportunity to earn the Endorsement in SY 2016. **This includes educators in Cohort 1 whose training window would otherwise end in SY 2015.**

**Core Academic Teachers Who Must Earn the SEI Endorsement but No Longer Have an ELL**

There will be some teachers in Cohorts 1 and 2 who had an ELL in their classroom during their district’s training window and are therefore obligated to obtain an SEI Endorsement before that window closes, who do not anticipate having an ELL in SY 2015. The Department is developing a new SEI Endorsement course, which will be available for the first time in the fall SY 2016. This new course will enable these core academic teachers who had an ELL during their district’s cohort training window but do not have ELLs in SY 2015 to earn the SEI Teacher Endorsement during the following school year without licensure consequences. **Eligible educators will include the individuals in Cohort 1 who have no ELLs in SY 2015 but had ELLs earlier in their district’s training window, and therefore must obtain the Endorsement.**

**District Training Windows**

Please be advised that the window for a no-cost SEI Endorsement course in your district is limited. The windows for training opportunities are as follows:

- **Cohort 1** – SY2015. **THIS IS THE LAST YEAR OF TRAINING EXCEPT AS EXPLAINED BELOW:**
  
  The district training window will be extended through SY 2016 ONLY for educators who:

  - enroll in a **SY 2015** course that the Department subsequently cancels,
  - have not been able to get a seat in a course but have placed their name on a waitlist, or
  - had an ELL during their district’s training window but do not in SY 2015.

  Educators who meet the criteria bulleted above will be assigned to the SY 2016 cohort year.

  This means that if you are eligible to enroll in a SEI Endorsement course and you **do not** register for a SEI Endorsement course for SY 2015, you will lose your no-cost opportunity to earn the SEI Endorsement. If you do not earn the SEI Endorsement by other means by August 31, 2015, you will not be able to renew, advance, or extend your core academic license(s) until you earn the SEI Endorsement.

- **Cohort 2** – SY2015 and SY2016
- **Cohort 3** – SY2015 and SY2016

**Educator Assignment to the Cohort Year**

The Department’s goal is that educators will voluntarily enroll in the SEI Endorsement courses, and we expect that in most districts, a sufficient number of eligible educators will take advantage of the self-enrollment process. However, if you are an eligible core academic teacher and you do not self-enroll, the Department may assign you to the 2014-15 cohort year if there are not enough self-enrolled educators to fill up the seats allocated to your district for SY 2015. Should you be so-assigned, you will have the opportunity to enroll in an SY 2015 SEI Endorsement course, and will have the same obligation to earn the SEI Endorsement by August 31, 2015 as those who self-enrolled.

Cohort 2 and 3 educators should be aware that in SY 2016, the Department plans to assign each eligible teacher and administrator who has not already self-enrolled, and who has not obtained the SEI
Endorsement by the start of the final year of their districts’ SEI cohort training window, to that final cohort training year. If you are so-assigned to the SY 2016 cohort year and if you do not obtain the SEI Endorsement by August 31, 2016 you will not be able to advance, renew, or extend your core academic license(s) until you obtain the SEI Endorsement.

If you are a core academic teacher with an ELL in your classroom, or you are an administrator who must obtain the SEI Endorsement, you are strongly encouraged to complete an SEI Endorsement course (or otherwise earn the SEI Endorsement) during your district's SEI cohort training window. As of July 1, 2016, all core academic teachers instructing ELLs, and their administrators as defined above, must possess the SEI Endorsement or earn it within one year of the date that the ELL student is assigned to them. For this reason, and because you may not be able to advance, renew, or extend your core academic license(s) if you have failed to obtain the SEI Endorsement during the SY 2013-2016 cohort years, lack of the SEI Endorsement may affect your employability.

Hardship Exception

If you are assigned to the SY 2015 cohort year, and you are unable to participate in or complete the SEI Endorsement course, you may apply to the Department for a hardship exception to the requirement that you earn the SEI Endorsement by August 31, 2015. To qualify for this exception, you must be able to demonstrate hardship consisting of "serious illness or injury, or other circumstances that are beyond the control of the educator and impede the educator's ability to complete the requirements for an SEI endorsement." The following link will take you to the application for a hardship exception: [http://www.doe.mass.edu/retell/HardshipException.docx](http://www.doe.mass.edu/retell/HardshipException.docx). If the application is granted you will be given additional time to obtain the SEI Endorsement. You also will retain your no-cost opportunity to take the course through SY 2016, subject to appropriation.

Other Paths to the SEI Teacher Endorsement

The following additional routes may qualify you for an SEI Teacher Endorsement:

1. Passing the SEI MTEL (Examination fee of $155 plus $30 non-refundable registration fee for a total fee of $185.00, is the responsibility of the educator) For more information, click here: [http://www.doe.mass.edu/retell/sei-mtel/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/retell/sei-mtel/);
2. Possession of a valid ESL/ELL license; or
3. Possession of a bachelor's degree in a Department-approved major, or other Department-approved graduate level training.

If you possess a valid ESL or ELL license, you automatically qualify for the SEI Teacher Endorsement (but must still apply for the endorsement through ELAR). You may still audit an SEI Endorsement course; for information about auditing, go to Auditing a course. If you are an administrator and you hold the SEI Teacher Endorsement, you are eligible to apply for the SEI Administrator Endorsement. However, you still must first apply for the SEI Teacher Endorsement through ELAR. Instructions for applying for the Endorsement are here: [How to apply for the SEI Endorsement](http://www.doe.mass.edu/retell/sei-mtel/).

If you believe that you may qualify for the Endorsement by virtue of having the appropriate degree or graduate level training, you may submit materials to the Office of Educator Licensure for no-cost transcript review (see link to instructions, above).

There is no charge for the SEI Teacher or SEI Administrator Endorsements to eligible educators who qualify or otherwise apply for the Endorsement(s) between 7/1/2012 and 8/31/2016.
What You Need to Know About the Enrollment Process

- The registration site has the information you need to register for the right course.
- You will need your personal/professional calendar at hand when you go online to register.
- As noted above, the pool of qualified SEI Endorsement facilitators in the Commonwealth is limited. As a result, some educators who seek to enroll in SEI Endorsement courses this year will be unable to find an open seat in an appropriate course; others will enroll in courses for which the Department is unable to secure a facilitator. Subject to appropriation, the Department is committed to providing all eligible educators with a no-cost opportunity to enroll in the SEI Endorsement course before no-cost training concludes in summer 2016. Those eligible educators who register but are not able to take the SEI Endorsement course this year due to a course cancelation, provided they have put their names on a waitlist, will have an opportunity to complete no-cost SEI Endorsement training in SY 2016.
- You must have an ELL to enroll in a SEI Teacher Endorsement course in SY 2015 because the course and the course work are designed for teachers of ELLs. If you enroll but do not have an ELL during the timeframe of the course (for the purposes of eligibility for this course, Former Limited English Proficient or “FLEP” students are not ELLs) you will have difficulty completing the work expected of you. If this information becomes known to the Department, you will be unregistered from the course, will not earn the SEI Endorsement, and will lose your no-cost opportunity for training.

The Department understands that you may enroll with the belief that you will have an ELL in your classroom, but learn on the opening of school that you do not. In such circumstances, our expectation is that you will promptly cancel your registration. There will be no licensure consequences if you cancel your for an approved reason, and not having an ELL is an approved reason. It is critically important that you cancel your registration as soon as you learn that you do not have an ELL so that an eligible educator can fill your seat.

- In order to enroll, you will need to:
  - Ensure that your Educator Licensure and Recruitment (ELAR) account is up-to-date
  - Confirm your Massachusetts Educator Professional Identification (MEPID) number and write it down and keep the number handy for the enrollment process.
  - If you do not have an ELAR account or a MEPID number you will need to acquire one before you are able to register. Detailed instructions for completing these steps, including information on creating a new account and obtaining a MEPID are provided at the course registration site.
  - Technical support is available for all aspects of the registration process. Please begin by following all instructions provided at the registration site. If you encounter difficulties please go to the Department’s professional development customer support page: RETELL Customer Support.

We look forward to learning together in SEI courses throughout the coming year and improving the academic achievement of our English language learners! As ever, thank you for all you do for our Commonwealth's students.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Landman
Assistant Commissioner for Teaching and Learning