Proposed Amendments to Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval Regulations, 603 CMR 7.00

Presented to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for initial action: October 27, 2026.

Period of public comment: through December 28, 2026

Final action by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education anticipated: January 19, 2027

This document shows proposed revisions to the Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval regulations, 603 CMR 7.00, that arise in connection with An Act Relative to Teacher Preparation and Student Literacy, passed by the Massachusetts Legislature in 2026 and signed by Governor Healey on June 26, 2026. The revisions show proposed changes to the current language by underline (new language) and ~~strikethrough~~ (deleted language).

In accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, M.G.L. c. 30A, § 3, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education invites written comments on the proposed regulations. Following the period of public comment, the Board is expected to vote on the regulations in final form at its regular meeting in December 2026.

7.02 Definitions

Interim Review: An on-site review conducted by the Department to determine whether an approved preparation program is meeting the standards and benchmarks set forth in 603 CMR 7.03 (2) ~~and~~ through (~~3~~4), if applicable, and the Guidelines for Program Approval.

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 general program approval standard set forth in 603 CMR 7.03 (2) and each early literacy program approval standard set forth in 603 CMR 7.03(3), where applicable.

(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)~~(5), where applicable, for each program for which approval is sought. As part of the formal review process, the Department shall review the written evidence for each proposed program and evidence collected by the Department. 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)~~(5), where applicable, 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) **General Program Approval Standards**. Each sponsoring organization seeking approval of its preparation program(s) shall provide evidence addressing the following General Program Approval Standards, in accordance with the Guidelines for Program Approval.

(a) Continuous Improvement: Demonstrate continuous improvement by conducting an annual evaluation to assess program compliance, effectiveness, and impact using an evidence-based system that includes the analysis of state available data.

(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: Demonstrate 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: Demonstrate 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: Demonstrate 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: Demonstrate 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: Demonstrate 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: Demonstrate effectiveness of program completers using 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.

(3) **Early Literacy Program Approval Standards.** Each sponsoring organization seeking approval of its preparation program(s) relating to early literacy shall provide evidence addressing the components of 603 CMR 7.03(2). In addition, each such sponsoring organization shall also provide evidence of:

(i) program implementation of evidence-based preparation in the research-based areas in reading instruction as defined in 603 CMR 58.02; and

(ii) the extent to which new teachers' effectiveness addresses persistent disparities in achievement.

(~~3~~4) **Preparation**.

(a) **Initial License**. All sponsoring organizations with approved programs leading to the Initial license shall provide preparation that addresses requirements for the license, in accordance with the Subject Matter Knowledge Guidelines and the Guidelines for Program Approval.

(b) **Professional License**. Sponsoring organizations with approved preparation programs leading to the Professional license shall provide preparation that satisfies the requirements for the license, in accordance with the Subject Matter Knowledge Guidelines and the Guidelines for Program Approval.

(c) **Assistive and Alternative Technologies**. All sponsoring organizations with approved programs leading to licenses for teachers of students with moderate disabilities or teachers of students with severe disabilities shall include in such programs instruction on the appropriate use of augmentative and alternative communication and other assistive technologies.

(~~4~~5) **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:
    a. Race
    b. Ethnicity
    c. Gender

(c) Faculty and Staff data:

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

3. Demographics:
    a. Race
    b. Ethnicity
    c. 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~~6) **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) Assessment 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~~7) **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~~5), 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~~ through (~~3~~4), if applicable, 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~~8) **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~~5), if applicable.

(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~~5), if applicable. Programs that demonstrate that they satisfy the requirements set forth in 603 CMR 7.03 (2) through ~~and~~ (~~3~~4), if applicable, will be allowed to recruit students.

(~~8~~9) **Implementation**

(a) Approved programs leading to licenses set forth in 603 CMR 7.04 will be required to implement new subject matter knowledge in accordance with the Subject Matter Knowledge Guidelines within 18 months of issuance of the new or updated Subject Matter Knowledge Guidelines.

(b) Approved programs leading to licenses set forth in 603 CMR 7.04 (3)(a) 1., 3., 6., 7., 9., 14., 22., 23., (b) 1., (c) 2. and (d) 1., will be required to implement the new license names, levels and license type requirements by July 1, 2019.

7.07: Specialist Teacher Licenses

For candidates who were prepared outside Massachusetts, see 603 CMR 7.05 (3).

(1) **Instructional Technology Specialist** (Levels: All)

(a) **Initial License**.

1. Prerequisite: Possession of a teacher license and at least one year of employment as a teacher or in an educational role accepted by the Department.
2. Passing score on the Communication and Literacy Skills Test or satisfying the requirements for the Alternative Licensure Pathway as outlined in 603 CMR 7.04 (2) (g).
3. Completion of an approved educator preparation program for the Initial license as set forth in 603 CMR 7.03 (2) (a).

(b) **Professional License**.

1. For candidates who do not hold any Professional teacher license, complete requirements set forth in 603 CMR 7.04 (2) (c).
2. For candidates who hold at least one Professional teacher license, complete three years of employment under the Initial Instructional Technology Specialist license.

(2) **Reading** (Levels: All)

(a) **Initial License**.

1. Prerequisite: At least an Initial teaching license and at least one year of teaching experience.
2. Completion of an approved educator preparation program for the Initial license as set forth in 603 CMR 7.03 (~~3~~4) (a).

3. Passing score on the reading specialist Subject Matter Knowledge Test addressing the topic outlined in the Subject Matter Knowledge Guidelines.

(b) **Professional License**.

1. For candidates who do not hold any Professional teacher license, complete requirements set forth in 603 CMR 7.04 (2) (c).
2. For candidates who hold at least one Professional teacher license, complete three years of employment under the Initial Reading license.

(3) **Speech, Language, and Hearing Disorders** (Levels: All)

(a) **Initial License**.

1. Master's degree in speech-language pathology from a program accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).
2. Eligibility for Clinical Fellowship.
3. Passing score on the Communication and Literacy Skills Test or satisfying the requirements for the Alternative Licensure Pathway as outlined in 603 CMR 7.04 (2) (g).
4. Completion of a clinical practicum consisting of 100 onsite hours in a public school or an approved private school setting.
5. Adherence to the Code of Ethics of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

(b) **Professional License**.

1. Possession of an Initial license.
2. Possession and maintenance of the license to practice speech-language pathology through the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology.
3. Completion of the Clinical Fellowship in speech-language pathology.
4. Passing score on the National Examination in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology.
5. Three years of employment under the Initial Speech, Language, and Hearing Disorders license.

Regulatory Authority:

M.G.L. c. 69, § 1B; c. 69, §§ 1J and 1K, as amended by St. 2010; c. 12, § 3; c. 71, § 38G, as amended by St. 2022, c. 154, § 10; c. 71, 38G ½; c. 71A, § 10; c. 76, § 19.