



Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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MEMORANDUM

To: All Core Academic Teachers in Cohort 1 and 2 Districts (as defined under the RETELL regulations)
From: Dr. Jonathan Landman, Assistant Commissioner for Teaching and Learning
Date: June 12, 2013
Subject: Enrollment in Upcoming Sheltered English Immersion Teacher Endorsement Course

I am writing to let you know that you have been identified as a core academic teacher¹ who may teach one or more English language learners (ELLs) during the 2013-14 school year, and to provide information on next steps you should take this summer to meet the new SEI Endorsement requirement under the Commonwealth's Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL) initiative.

Our state's top priority in K-12 education is to improve outcomes for all students and ensure that all public high school students graduate college and career ready. ELLs are the state's fastest growing group of students, and, as a group, experience the largest proficiency gap when compared to their native English speaking peers. In order to strengthen instruction and better support the academic achievement of ELLs, the state Board of Elementary and Secondary adopted new regulations in June 2012. These new regulations, which include a requirement that all incumbent core academic teachers of ELLs earn a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) Teacher Endorsement by July 1, 2016, are at the centerpiece of the Department's RETELL initiative to transform the teaching and learning of ELLs across the Commonwealth.

While there are several pathways to the SEI Teacher Endorsement (see below), most educators will earn it by successfully completing a new SEI Teacher Endorsement Course. The courses have three overarching goals:

1. To help teachers effectively carry out their responsibility for the teaching and learning of ELLs as well as to understand the social and cultural issues that contribute to and impact the schooling of ELLs.
2. To expand teachers' knowledge of how language functions within academic content teaching and learning, and how children and adolescents acquire English as a second language.

¹ The following teachers are classified as "core academic teachers" under RETELL regulations: early childhood and elementary teachers; 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. The classification applies to teachers in all MA. public schools, charter schools and collaboratives.

3. To provide teachers practical research-based protocols, methods, and strategies to integrate subject area content, language, and literacy development—per the expectations of the Massachusetts English Language Development *World Class Instructional Design and Assessment* (WIDA) standards—and thus to support ELL students’ success with the 2011 *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for English Language Arts and Literacy* and *Mathematics* and other Massachusetts content standards.

For more detailed information about the SEI Teacher Endorsement Courses, see the attached “SEI Endorsement Course Information” below.

As a core academic teacher, the time when you will be required to earn the SEI Teacher Endorsement will depend upon your individual circumstances. **Please note the following important steps that you will need to take this summer:**

Step 1: Check your status on August 1, 2013

Beginning on or shortly after August 1, check your district email account to determine whether you have been assigned one or more ELLs for the coming school year. **If you have been assigned one or more ELLs for 2013-14, your district will forward you an email from the Department with very important information on registration for the no-cost SEI Teacher Endorsement Courses.**

Step 2: Complete the enrollment process if you will have one or more ELLs in 2013-14

This self-enrollment process is different from the one used in RETELL Cohort 1 districts in spring 2013. **The opportunity to self-enroll in SEI Teacher Endorsement Courses will be on a first-come, first-served basis starting on August 1.**

Step 3: Understand the significance of your cohort year

When you enroll in one of the SEI Teacher Endorsement Courses, the Department will assign you to a RETELL cohort year. For example, if you enroll in the SEI Teacher Endorsement Course in fall 2013, then 2013-14 is your RETELL cohort year. Each cohort year begins on September 1 and ends on August 31 of the following year. Once you are assigned to a cohort year, you must earn the SEI Teacher Endorsement within the time period designated for your cohort year, or you will not be able to advance, renew, or extend your license until you obtain the SEI Teacher Endorsement. See 603 CMR 14.07(2)(b):

Educators assigned to a cohort must meet the requirements for an SEI Endorsement within the time period designated for their cohort. Educators who fail to earn an Endorsement by the time designated for their cohort, shall not be eligible to advance or renew their educator license under 603 CMR 7.00 and 603 CMR 44.00 until such educators earn an SEI Endorsement....

Educators who do not earn the SEI Teacher Endorsement within the time period designated for their cohort will have to earn the SEI Teacher Endorsement **at their own expense**. To reiterate,

your Department- assigned cohort year is your opportunity to take this training at no cost to you. In the attachment entitled “**Background on the SEI Endorsement,**” please find some additional information on the SEI Teacher Endorsement.

We ask for your understanding and flexibility throughout this challenging but also very promising process. We understand that these courses will take time from educators who will be juggling other important demands. At the same time, we expect that the SEI Teacher Endorsement Courses will prove a rich and important learning experience for educators, and as we learn to implement the effective practices promoted in the course, our ELLs’ access to academic learning will be transformed.

Thank you for all you do on behalf of the Commonwealth’s youth, and for your attention to this important matter.

Assignment to the Cohort Year by the Department of Education

In order to ensure that the Department can enroll all core academic teachers of ELLs across all districts over the time frame of this initiative, we have set a target enrollment number for your district for SY 2014. If an insufficient number of teachers from your district enroll for SEI Teacher Endorsement Courses, the Department will assign enough additional core academic teachers of ELLs to the 2013-2014 cohort year to meet the district’s target. This assignment process will take place, where necessary, in early September. Should you be assigned to the cohort year under these circumstances, the Department will provide you additional information.

Attachments: SEI Endorsement Course Information
Background on the SEI Endorsement

Endorsement Course that are in excess of the required 150 PDPs to renew a license can be carried forward to the next license renewal cycle.

Graduate Credit: Teachers will have the option of applying for graduate credit for successful completion of the full-length course. A number of graduate schools are offering credit; the cost and process for acquiring the credit varies by institution. The Department will not be involved in applications or payments for pursuing graduate credit. Enrollees will receive more information about graduate credit when courses begin.

Course Schedules: Some districts will be training a sufficient volume of teachers to be able to host “district-based” course sections which will initially be reserved for only staff from those districts. For teachers from other districts with lower ELL enrollments, the Department will also be providing regional course offerings. Some will be offered late on a particular weekday afternoon/early evening; others on Saturday mornings. When the registration system goes live in August, teachers will be able to survey the course options and select a course that is most convenient for them. Seats will be limited and registration will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

We recognize that some teachers’ class rosters will change and that by September some teachers who in August expected to have ELLs will no longer have them. There will be a process to account for these shifts via adjustments to enrollments and cohort year assignments.

Getting a Jump on the Reading: Our copyright permissions allow us to make course materials available to individuals once they are enrolled in an SEI Endorsement Course. To the extent possible, we intend to make course readings available to participants as soon as they enroll so that individuals who wish to get a jump on the homework by doing some or all of the readings in advance will have the opportunity to do so.

Enrollment Calendar

- **August 1:** Enrollment opens for all SY 2014 SEI courses
- **August 23:** District-based sections which have not yet filled change to open enrollment
- **September 20:** Fall and full-year SEI course enrollments close
- **November 15:** Spring course enrollments close

ATTACHMENT: Background on the SEI Endorsement

The No Cost SEI Teacher Endorsement Course Option: Subject to appropriation, the Department has committed to providing every core academic teacher of ELLs assigned to a cohort year from the 2012-2013 school year 2 through the 2015-2016 school year with *a single no-cost opportunity* to participate in an SEI Teacher Endorsement Course.

Other Routes to SEI Teacher Endorsement: Besides completing the approved course of study, the following are the only other routes to earning the SEI Endorsement:

1. Possession of an ESL/ELL license (for teachers who possess an Initial or Professional-level license, adding an ESL teaching license requires passing the ESL MTEL and completing a 150-hour internship in the role of an ESL teacher);
2. Passing an SEI MTEL test (please note that this test is in development with anticipated availability in the spring of 2014); or
3. Possession of a bachelor's degree in a major approved by the Department, or other graduate level training approved by the Department.

For any inquiries related to the ESL/ELL license or applicable degrees, please contact the Department's Office of Educator Licensure at 781 338-6600.

Educators who neither successfully complete the SEI Teacher Endorsement Course as part of their assigned cohort, nor qualify for the SEI Teacher Endorsement by completing one of the other approved routes during their cohort year, will not be able to advance, renew, or extend their license until they obtain the SEI Teacher Endorsement.

For further information about the SEI Teacher Endorsement requirement, see Frequently Asked Questions at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/retell/>

Hardship Considerations: The Department realizes that some educators may have personal circumstances that make it particularly difficult to participate in the SEI Teacher Endorsement Course when assigned to do so. These educators may qualify for a hardship exception to earning the SEI Teacher Endorsement at this point in time. For additional information about requesting a hardship exception, go to <http://www.doe.mass.edu/retell/>.