

RETELL in a Nutshell

Core Academic Teachers

Defined in regulations as early childhood and elementary teachers, teachers of students with moderate and severe disabilities and teachers of the following academic subjects at all grade levels: English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, civics and government, economics, history, and geography. (603 CMR 7.02)

“Core academic teachers” who teach English Language Learners (ELLs) will soon be required to obtain a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) Teacher Endorsement under the state’s **Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL)** initiative.¹ The impact of this requirement is a mandatory subject of bargaining. Districts may not assign ELLs to

affected teachers who have not obtained the endorsement by the required deadline. Training to meet the requirement will be rolled out between the spring of 2013 and the 2015-16 school year. When they have met the requirement, affected teachers will apply for the SEI Endorsement via their ELAR accounts. There are still several unanswered questions about RETELL. More information will be available from the MTA at www.massteacher.org/ell, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) at www.doe.mass.edu/retell/, your local association and your district administration. Below are highlights of ways teachers can obtain an endorsement.

Have an ESL or ELL License

Have Completed Approved Prior Training

Completion of undergraduate- or graduate-level training in applied linguistics, teaching ESL or other related subjects, if approved by the DESE.

Complete Certain Category Trainings Plus an Abridged SEI Course

Completion of an abridged DESE-developed SEI Endorsement course for those who have taken two or three of the following Category trainings: 1, 2 and 4. (This course is not yet available.)

Complete DESE-Approved SEI Endorsement Course

This course will be provided by the DESE and offered at the district level on a staggered schedule beginning in the spring of 2013 and ending in the 2015-16 school year. Teachers required to participate must complete the course during the time frame (cohort) to which they are assigned. This is equivalent to a three-credit graduate course and provided at no cost.

Complete Educator Preparation Program

Students who complete an approved educator preparation program for an Initial License after July 1, 2014, must receive SEI instruction that will qualify them for the endorsement.

Pass DESE-Approved Assessment

DESE intends to offer an SEI Massachusetts Test for Educator Licensure – MTEL. Earning a passing score will qualify teachers for the endorsement. (This test is not yet developed.) Subject to DESE approval, an ESL or SEI Endorsement obtained in another state may also qualify.

¹ RETELL stems from a U.S. Department of Justice finding that Massachusetts is violating the civil rights of ELL students by failing to ensure that their teachers are adequately trained in SEI. Administrators who supervise SEI teachers must obtain a separate SEI Administrator Endorsement. Educators holding a Professional License who are not required to obtain the endorsement must participate in 15 hours of professional development in SEI (and another 15 in special education instruction) in order to relicense after July 1, 2016.