

I was fortunate enough to be in northern New Hampshire to witness the awe-inspiring majesty of the total solar eclipse. And to me, it served as a beautiful metaphor for the power of a single degree of change. When the moon's coverage of the sun progressed from 99 to 100%, the children and adults around began to laugh, cheer, clap without inhibition, and many were moved to tears.

This is the work that is taking place in our schools each and every day. Thank you for all that you do every day to ensure each degree of progress. For each equation correctly solved, every note played in tune, each word fluently read, and every conflict resolved with words instead of hands – thank you. Your work is worth celebrating.



Total solar eclipse. Photo credit: [NASA](#)/Nat Gopalswamy

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Spotlight

Five Regional Licensure Assistance Centers Selected to Support Educators on Emergency Licenses and Waivers

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is announcing the selection of five Regional Licensure Assistance Centers to provide targeted support to emergency license holders working in Massachusetts schools and districts. Each Regional Licensure Assistance Center will provide wraparound and individualized support to emergency license holders as they work to convert their emergency licenses to a provisional or initial license. The selected regional centers and their respective catchment areas are:

- **Westfield State University** - Region 1: Western MA, supporting emergency license holders working in the Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden counties
- **Stonehill College** - Region 2: Central MA, supporting emergency license holders working in the Worcester and Middlesex counties
- **Bridgewater State University** - Region 3: Southeast MA, supporting emergency license holders working in the Norfolk, Bristol, Plymouth, Barnstable, Dukes, and Nantucket counties

- **Class Measures** - Region 4: Boston MA, supporting emergency license holders working in Suffolk County
- **Salem State University** - Region 5: Metro North MA, supporting emergency license holders working in Essex County

Please see the [DESE website](#) for more information about each center.

New Educator Licensure and Renewal (ELAR) System



The Department is pleased to announce the launch of a new Educator Licensure and Renewal (ELAR) system to support our educators, prospective educators, school districts and approved preparation programs (sponsoring organizations).

The new ELAR system is scheduled to go live to external users on **Thursday, May 2nd**. To assist in the migration of data from the current ELAR system to the new system, ELAR will not be available to internal and external users as of **Thursday, April 25th at 9:00 a.m.**

Users will continue to access ELAR via the Department's [Security Portal](#). As a result, Users will not need a new username or password to access the system.

Like the current version of ELAR, individual users will be able to apply online for licensure and license renewal, upload documents, monitor their status and more. School districts will continue to be able to request expedites, apply for waivers, upload documents and view ELAR statuses while sponsoring organizations will continue to endorse candidates for licenses and endorsements as well as upload reports.

Seeking Feedback – PST and CAP Guidelines Public Comment

We are pleased to share the draft [Guidelines for the Professional Standards for Teachers](#) and [Guidelines for the Candidate Assessment of Performance](#) for public comment. We are seeking feedback on these drafts through June 2nd to inform the final versions that will be released in summer 2024.

Public Comment Survey: Share feedback through a series of multiple-choice and open-response questions. You may also choose to submit comment added directly to the draft Guidelines. The [survey](#) will remain open through June 2nd.

Roundtables: Candidates, recent completers, supervising practitioners, and partners are encouraged to attend!

- Tues, May 7th from 12:30 p.m. - 2 p.m. on Zoom
- [Virtual Session Registration](#)

Spread the Word: Encourage others in your network to share feedback through the options above.

New MTEL Contract Through 6/30/2029

DESE has selected Evaluation Systems (ES) Group of Pearson as the vendor to support the administration and development of the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL). We look forward to partnering again with ES on the MTEL and are excited to share a few updates that we will be working on as part of the new contract over the next five years:

- Fee reductions for the Communication and Literacy Skills subtests and General Curriculum subtests when taken separately
- The redevelopment of the Communication and Literacy Skills test to align to the Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Communication and Literacy Skills (CLS2) Framework that is currently in development (a public comment opportunity for the CLS2 Framework will be posted in late spring/early summer)
- The development of additional online interactive practice tests
- The development of educator learning courses to support content gaps

- The exploration of new test structures and modalities for a subset of tests
- 3000 MTEL vouchers that will be made available across educator preparation organizations as part of the contract (an increase of 1000 from the prior contract)
- Aligning test developer training to the DESE Racial Equity Decision Making Tool (REDT)
- The development of additional MTEL-Flex options to be determined
- The redevelopment of 15 MTEs - More information to come about the tests that will be updated under this contract.
- There are also plans to open a new test site in Western MA

Equity and access continues to be a priority for the Department in the MTEL program and as we look ahead at the work we will do together with ES, we wanted to share the following from their proposal:

*"We believe that the importance of our work to further equity extends beyond macro-level impact **to affirmation of the lived experiences of prospective diverse educators that interact with our services** (see Petchauer, 2012). This holistic perspective serves to expand our notion of equity beyond test domain definition, assessment design, item development, and committee reviews to include interactions with our customer service team, the presentation of assessment-related materials (e.g., preparation resources), score reports, and website design. Centering equity in all aspects of our work means that we will not compromise on the development and implementation of equitable practices and that we will keep pace with the evolution of equity work worldwide."*

– Evaluation Systems Group of Pearson

We look forward to the continued partnership with ES and the important work of an equitable and accessible MTEL program.

PreK-12 Corner

Applications Now Open: Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet

We are now accepting applications for the 2024-2025 Principal and Teacher Advisory Cabinet. The Massachusetts DESE Teacher and Principal Advisory Cabinet is a diverse

stakeholder group of 25-30 educators (teachers and leaders) who play a critical role in shaping policy and driving resource development that supports educator effectiveness. Since its inception in 2012, this cabinet creates leadership opportunities, elevates excellent teaching and leadership, and makes space for networking and collaboration for educators across the state.

In SY2024-25, the Teacher and Principal Advisory Cabinets will review and provide feedback on several key projects that focus explicitly on efforts to develop and sustain a workforce that is diverse, culturally responsive, well-prepared, and committed to continuous improvement so that all students have equitable access to effective teachers.

Application Link: [2024-2025 PAC/TAC Application](#)

Due Date: May 31, 2024

Application Now Open: Instructional Leadership Institute

For the second year, DESE will offer its Instructional Leadership Institute, a learning space for school and district leadership teams to:

- deepen their understanding of high-quality instruction as defined by DESE's [Educational Vision](#) and the [Standards of Effective Practice](#), and
- refine or develop equity-centered instructional leadership routines and structures.

DESE and partners will provide teams with the opportunity to learn from and with their peers across the state, explore instruction through an equity lens, and develop the systems necessary to support high-quality instruction. Districts can consider sending teams of three to eight individuals.

The institute will be at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester in person from **8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Monday, July 29 and Tuesday, July 30** and *virtually* from **8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 31**. Participants are expected to attend all three sessions. The [application](#) is available online, and teams will receive confirmation in May.

Resource: Student Feedback Surveys

Did you know? [Student feedback surveys](#) are available that are directly aligned to the Focus Indicators for Teaching. These tools are a great way to hear directly from students about their learning experiences and can be used as evidence in the educator evaluation process. There is a discussion protocol for K-2 students and paper-based surveys for students in Grades 3-5 and 6-12, and they are available in English, Haitian Creole, Chinese (Mandarin), Portuguese, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Check out our [webpage](#) for more resources and guidance on leveraging student feedback to support teaching and learning.

Ed-Prep Corner

MoGEA Still Available for Massachusetts Candidates

As part of the regulatory pilot accepting alternative assessments to the MTEL, Massachusetts approved the Missouri General Education Assessment (MoGEA). In February of 2024, Missouri announced that they will no longer administer the MoGEA in Missouri.

Massachusetts candidates will continue to have access to the MoGEA assessment via online proctoring through the end of the regulatory pilot on June 30, 2025. Candidates should register for the [MoGEA via the MTEL website](#) so that their MEPID is collected for score reporting purposes. Candidates who previously took the MoGEA in Missouri will continue to be able to request that Evaluation Systems Group of Pearson send the Department hard copy scores of old MoGEA tests taken from prior to the regulatory pilot.

Research Corner

New Research on Emergency Licensed Teachers in Massachusetts

[Four Years of Pandemic-Era Emergency Licenses: Retention and Effectiveness of Emergency-Licensed Massachusetts Teachers Over Time](#)

Research into the first cohorts of Emergency licensed teachers describes how many were

already in the pipeline with prior preparation or classroom experience before receiving an Emergency license and, for those that were hired into classrooms, were largely as effective as other novice teachers with more traditional preparation and licensure paths. However, new research by the Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data (CALDER) examines additional years of data and finds more nuanced patterns. Later cohorts of Emergency licensed educators were less likely to have engaged in a teacher preparation program or have prior classroom experience, and their students did not perform as well on some academic outcomes than those of novice teachers with Initial or Provisional licenses. The authors conclude that “Overall, this study suggests policymakers should be cautious when drawing sweeping conclusions about the impacts of teacher licensure based solely on the earliest cohort of teachers who obtained pandemic-era Emergency licenses” because “early applicants may not be representative of potential candidates [if] these pathways are more permanent.”

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