

MTA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 2010-2011

PROGRAMS FOR TEACHERS, PARAPROFESSIONALS, ADMINISTRATORS
AND SCHOOL/DISTRICT TEAMS



working for great public schools
center for education
policy and practice

www.massteacher.org/cepp



ABOUT THE MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

The Massachusetts Teachers Association is a member-driven organization, governed by democratic principles that accepts and supports the interdependence of professionalism and unionism. The MTA promotes the use of its members' collective power to advance their professional and economic interests. The MTA is committed to human and civil rights and advocates for quality public education in which lifelong learning and innovation flourish. The MTA is the 107,000 member state affiliate of the National Education Association.

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR EDUCATION POLICY AND PRACTICE

The Center for Education Policy and Practice works with local associations, other education professional associations, and public and private sector organizations interested in framing and advancing education policy issues. CEPP engages in work covering four broad areas.

- 1) Influence educational policy through collaborative discussions with members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Governor's Secretary of Education, the House and Senate Chairpersons of the Education Committees, and leaders of educational professional associations.
- 2) Inform, educate and improve the understanding of educational issues related to school reform, school improvement, and educator preparation, evaluation, and retention.
- 3) Improve practice for teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals through a range of staff development programs.
- 4) Collaborate with MTA divisions and local association leaders to ensure that teaching and learning focused on student achievement and school improvement become a collective bargaining goal.

2009-10 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Chairperson: Linda Perla-Mullins, M.Ed., Ashburham-Westminster

Secretary: Ronald P. Colbert, Ed.D., Fitchburg State College

Frances Cooper-Berry, M.Ed., Cambridge

Joan Dillon, M.S., M.Ed., Harwich

Anne Marie Erler, M.Ed., Methuen

Gary Gilardi, C.A.G.S., Director of Graduate Programs, Norfolk County Teachers Association

Gail Meehan, M.Ed., Longmeadow (retired)

Johanna Roses, M.Ed., (retired) Supervisor of Student Teaching, Boston College

Catherine Suess, NBCT, M.Ed., Acton-Boxborough

Anne Wass, M.Ed., Hanover, MTA President, *ex officio*

Paul Toner, J.D., Cambridge, MTA Vice President, *ex officio*

Kathleen J. Skinner, NBCT, Ed.D., Director, CEPP

2010-11 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Chairperson: Ryan Hoyt, M.Ed., Waltham

Camille Napier Bernstein, M.Ed., Natick

Chris Colbath-Hess, Ed.M., Cambridge

Ronald P. Colbert, Ed.D., Fitchburg State University

Rebecca Cusick, B.S., Fall River

Cheryl Delsignore, M.Ed., Worcester

Joan Dillon, M.S., M.Ed., Harwich

Jeanne Dyer, B.A., Attleboro

Anne Marie Erler, M.Ed., Methuen

Gary Gilardi, C.A.G.S., Director of Graduate Programs, Norfolk County Teachers Association

Susan Lanza, M.Ed., Revere

Gene Reiber, M.Ed., Hanover

Johanna Roses, M.Ed., Retired

Timothy Sheehan, M.Ed., Carlisle

Elizabeth Shevlin, M.Ed., Methuen

Paul Toner, J.D., Cambridge, MTA President, *ex officio*

Timothy Sullivan, Ed.D., Brockton, MTA Vice President, *ex officio*

Kathleen J. Skinner, NBCT, Ed.D., Director, CEPP

The 9th Annual Just for New Teachers Conference

For Educators in Their First Four Years of Practice

Date: Friday, December 3, 2010

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Location:

Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel and Conference Center
Marlborough, MA

Program:

Past conferences have had the following workshops:

- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Classroom Management
- Differentiating Instruction
- Legal Basics for New Teachers
- Professional Roles and Responsibilities
- SPED Primer for Regular Educators
- Working with Parents

This year's full program will be available at www.massteacher.org on October 1, 2010.

Important Notes

This conference is appropriate for school district use to partially fulfill the obligation to provide an induction program for all new teachers (603 CMR 7.00).

- MTA will provide participants with a record of sessions attended.
- Attendance at the whole-day program is required to receive a certificate of completion.
- The registration fee is \$60.00 per person and includes all sessions, materials, morning refreshments and lunch.
- Districts may inquire about registering individuals or groups by calling 1.800.392.6175 x8300.
- Individual teachers may register by going to www.massteacher.org after October 1, 2010. **There is no on-site registration.**
- On-site check-in is from 8:00 am – 9:00 am. There are exhibits and “good stuff free” during check-in; workshops begin promptly at 9:00 am; afternoon workshops conclude by 3:30 pm.

Courses, Workshops, Webinars, Briefings

	FACE-TO-FACE	ONLINE	PAGE
New Teacher Webinars – most webinars may also be scheduled as face-to-face workshops **			
Establishing Classroom Routines	X	X	8
Managing Student Behavior	X	X	8
Informal Classroom Assessments & Retesting	X	X	9
Grading Student Work	X	X	9
Preparing for Parent-Teacher Conferences	X	X	9
Dealing with Difficult Parents	X	X	10
Legal Basics for New Teachers	X	X	10
E-mail and Internet Perils - Avoiding the Avoidable in the Digital Workplace	X	X	10
Working with Instructional Aides	X	X	10
Transitions and Sponge Activities	X	X	11
Rules, Consequences and Positive Recognition	X	X	11
Reading and Implementing IEPs	X	X	11
Behavior and Performance Conferencing & Contracts	X	X	11
Preparing for the End – of the School Year!	X	X	11
Graduate Courses			
Becoming A Mentor	X		12
Better Beginnings: New Teacher Induction Program	X		13
Creating Performance Assessment Tasks	X	X	14
Developing a District Mentoring Program	X	X	14
Developing a Standards-based Unit of Instruction	X	X	15
Differentiating Instructional Practices	X	X	16
Strategies for Instructing English Language Learners	X	X	16
Mapping the Curriculum	X		17
Undergraduate Courses			
Inclusion Strategies for Paraprofessionals	X		18
Literacy Strategies for Paraprofessionals	X		18
Mathematics Strategies for Paraprofessionals	X		19
Professional Learning Workshops/Programs			
Bullying: What It Is and How to Stop It!	X		20
I Can Do It! Classroom Management for New Teachers	X		21
KEYS Online Survey	X		22
Using TeLLS Data to Address Achievement Gaps *	X		23
Visualize a Great Lesson	X	X	24
Preparing for MTEL Communications and Literacy Test	X		24
Informational Workshops			
Autism Spectrum Disorders	X	X	25
Language Acquisition for English Language Learners	X	X	25
Understanding the Requirements of IEPs and 504 Plans	X	X	26
Parent and Family Engagement	X	X	26
Regulatory Briefings			
Educator Licensure	X	X	27
Professional License Renewal	X	X	27
Understanding District and School Accountability	X	X	27

* Online for school and district teams only.

** Face-to-face workshops may be scheduled by contacting Beverly Eisenman at beisenman@massteacher.org

General Information

Local associations, school, and district staff development directors and committees should use this booklet in their staff development program planning.

Logistics for Face-to-Face and Hybrid Courses

MTA presenters will offer listed programs in a site arranged by the district. The schedule will be determined jointly by the district/association and MTA. The following apply to all courses, workshops and briefings, unless otherwise noted.

- **Session Time and Length:** All sessions are three hours, unless otherwise noted.
- **Learning Space:** Room with furniture appropriate for adult learners, such as a school library. Cafeterias and auditoriums are inappropriate learning spaces.
- **AV Equipment:** Most programs require a computer-ready multimedia projector and screen. Some programs may require an overhead projector or a TV and VCR/DVD player.
- **Minimum group:** 15 participants.
- **Maximum group:** 30 participants.

Logistics for Online Courses

Online courses cover the same topics and require the same performance tasks as face-to-face courses. Three-credit courses have 12 sessions; two-credit courses have eight sessions; and one-credit courses have four sessions. Webinars are two-hour, one-session programs.

- **Courses:** minimum 10 and maximum 19 participants. New sections established with 20 participants.
- **Webinars:** minimum 10 and maximum 25 participants.
- **Regulatory Briefings:** minimum 10 and maximum 25 participants.

Because of the nature of online learning, the methodology and specific content is not the same. Online learning requires at least as much time as a face-to-face course. [To see if online learning is for you, take the survey on page 28.]

- Participants must have an Internet connection and be able to use Microsoft Word in order to take these courses. There are no other technical requirements.
- Course sessions begin on a Tuesday and end on a Monday. Sessions over holiday and vacation periods are two or three weeks in length; all others are one week. [See table on page 4 for start date for each session.]
- Course participants are expected to log on at least three times per week to download assignments and readings, participate in discussion board forums, and upload completed assignments and performance tasks.
- Webinar participants must attend from the beginning to the end of the session and actively participate during that period.
- Districts wishing to offer an online course to a group of teachers should contact Beverly Eisenman @ 800.392.6175, ext. 8362 or email beisenman@massteacher.org.

Online Courses: 2010-2011 – Registration Deadlines

Semester 1

November 2, 2010

Semester 2

February 15, 2011

Course Dates

Semester 1: Sessions begin on Tuesdays

November 9, 16, 23; December 7, 14, 21; January 4, 11, 18, 25; February 1 and 8.

Semester 2: Sessions begin on Tuesdays

March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; April 5, 12, 26; May 3, 10, 17, and 24.

Course Documentation

MTA is a registered staff development provider with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the International Association of Continuing Education and Training (IACET).

If district staff completes attendance sheets, they must be provided to the MTA trainer for MTA to issue transcripts to participants.

- **Professional Development Points (PDPs):** Every educator with a PROFESSIONAL LICENSE must earn PDPs to relicense. One contact hour equals one PDP. A work product is required for all PDP workshops and courses.
- **Super PDPs:** Graduate credit courses earn 1.5 PDPs per hour, if the participant completes all required course work. Those failing to complete the graduate course work will earn 1 PDP per contact hour upon completion of the required work product.
- **Paraprofessional Training Points (PTPs):** One hour of training equals two PTPs. Work products are required for all PTP workshops and courses.
- **Continuing Education Units (CEUs):** In addition to relicensing, some educators, e.g. school nurses, must accrue CEUs for a second professional license; 10 PDPs equal 1 CEU.

Graduate Credit/Super PDP Requirements

The following requirements apply to all graduate level courses and to those participants taking the course for super PDPs.

1. **Face-to-Face Courses:** A learning log with one entry for each session using the KWL model: what did you know about the session topic in advance (K), what did you want to know (W), and what did you learn (L).
Online Courses: Full participation in each session’s discussion forum that includes one original posting to the forum prompt and at least responses to two other participants’ postings.
2. A reflective analysis of the primary text for the course answering the question, “*What did I learn from this reading that I can apply to my practice or to the implementation at the school/district level of specific learning outlined in the text?*” Reflective paper guidelines along with the text will be provided to participants at the first session.

3. Performance assessment task: Course descriptions include task outlines.
 - Two graduate credit courses require one performance task.
 - Three graduate credit courses require two performance tasks.
4. Action Research Project: Action research protocol – attached here – along with the text will be provided to participants at the first session.

Undergraduate Credit/PTP Requirements

The following requirements apply to all undergraduate level courses and to those participants taking the course for PTPs. *These courses are NOT for teachers. For Title I paraprofessionals who have not yet been identified as “highly qualified,” completion of this three-course sequence will result in 180 PTPs to be used toward the total of 360 PTPs needed for the highly qualified requirement.*

1. A learning log with one entry for each session using the KWL model: what did you know about the session topic in advance (K), what did you want to know (W), and what did you learn (L).
2. Completion of all in class activities assigned by the instructor.
3. Performance assessment tasks listed in each course description below.

Webinar Requirements

School districts should provide webinar participants with documentation using the following guidelines:

1. Complete the assigned reading in advance of the webinar and write a reflective essay answering the question, “*What did I learn from this reading that I can apply to my practice or to the implementation at the school/district level?*”
2. Active participation in the webinar.
3. Completion of an extending activity from a list provided during the webinar.

PDP, Super PDP, and PTP by Program

	Contact Hours	PDPs	Super PDPs	PTPs
3-credit graduate course	37.5	45	67.5	
2-credit graduate course	24	30	45	
1-credit graduate course	12.5	15	22.5	
2-credit undergraduate course*	24*			60
Professional Learning Workshops**	6	6		
Preparing for MTEL	6	6		
Informational Workshops**	3	3		
Webinars**	2	2		
Regulatory Briefings	2-3			

* All undergraduate paraprofessional courses require 8-12 hours of work outside of class time.

** Schools/districts can extend this learning by asking participants to develop implementation and/or lesson plans that incorporate the workshop information. PDPs/CEUs are dependent on the length of the program.

MTA Program Fees

The MTA fee includes trainer costs and instructional materials; this includes the primary text for all graduate level courses which is sent directly to participants upon completion of registration. For some programs, the instructional materials fees are waived if the district prints the materials and delivers them to the training site. A light meal will be provided during all after-school, multi-session courses. MTA prefers to contract with the school district food services. This cost is part of the program fee. MTA accepts credit cards (MasterCard and Visa only), purchase orders, and personal checks.

Fitchburg State College Tuition

Undergraduate or graduate credit is available through Fitchburg State College (FSC) for some programs. Participants must register and pay tuition at the first session; payment is to FSC which accept checks, credit cards [American Express, MasterCard, Visa] and purchase orders.

Per Person MTA Fee and FSC Tuition by Program			
	MTA Fee	FSC Tuition	Total MTA & FSC
3-credit graduate course ³	\$225	\$255	\$480
2-credit graduate course ³	\$190	\$215	\$405
1-credit graduate course ³	\$160	\$170	\$330
2-credit undergraduate course	\$160	\$170	\$330
Professional Learning Workshops ¹	\$50		\$50
Preparing for MTEL ⁴	\$60		\$60
Informational Workshops ²	\$30		\$30
Webinars	\$30		\$30
Regulatory Briefings	Free through MTA local association president.		

¹ Cost per person may be \$30 if the district opts to reproduce all workshop materials. Online version is \$30/person; all materials must be downloaded by the participant.

² Cost per person may be \$20 if the district opts to reproduce all workshop materials. Online version is \$20/person; all materials must be downloaded by the participant.

³ Online graduate courses have an additional \$15.00 technology fee payable to FSC.

⁴ Includes lunch.

Course Information

Course syllabi, requirements, and other relevant information about these programs may be accessed through the MTA web site after September 1, 2010 at www.massteacher.org/teaching/conferences/index.cfm

Registration Information

All registration is done online. Participants will be sent passwords to online offerings and textbooks. Go to www.massteacher.org/cepp and follow the Registration link.

Contact Information

Please contact Beverly Eisenman at beisenman@massteacher.org or 800.392.6175 x8362 for answers to specific questions or to schedule any workshop.

PRIORITY SCHOOL REDESIGN CENTER

Collaborating with educators for successful schools

The MTA Priority School Redesign Center partners with district, school, and teacher leaders to improve student achievement in Level 4 and 5 schools. The Center fosters collaboration among all stakeholders to redesign struggling schools.

The PSR Center provides facilitation, coaching, and direct instruction to the leaders and staff of Level 4 and 5 schools.

A hallmark of the PSR Model is planning for sustainability by building internal capacity through the identification and training of school leaders and teachers as facilitators, coaches, and/or staff developers in Years 1 and 2 and coaching them in these capacities during Year 3.

Priority schools often need to develop capacity in four critical areas: leadership development, professional development, data analysis, and facilitation and coaching. The PSR Center works to create an individualized plan appropriate for the leaders, faculty, staff and students of the school.

The PSR Center provides high-quality, research-based professional development, facilitation, and coaching supported by appropriate instructional materials and professional readings to guide school-based Instructional Leadership Teams (ILT) in:

1. Improving teaching and learning through a collaborative process;
2. Aligning the curriculum to standards and assessments;
3. Using multiple data sources to inform leadership and instructional decisions;
4. Redefining and expanding school leadership roles and responsibilities;
5. Implementing a school-based responsibility system;
6. Embedding professional development within the school day and year; and
7. Building internal capacity to ensure sustainability.

The PSR Center guides ILTs in developing old and new media communications strategies to:

- Foster school faculty ownership of proposed improvement goals and plans to ensure successful implementation in achieving desired outcomes;
- Engage parents/caregivers as partners in creating home-school connections focused on student achievement; and
- Involve community organizations as partners in extending learning beyond the school day and year through civic engagement projects.

For more information of services and fees, go to www.massteacher.org/psrcenter

PRIORITY SCHOOL REDESIGN CORNERSTONES	
SCHOOL ORGANIZATION & LEADERSHIP	CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION & ASSESSMENT
SYSTEMIC IMPROVEMENT SUPPORTS	COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

NEW TEACHER WEBINARS

New Teacher webinars are open to MTA members, or newly hired teachers in districts represented by MTA. Registration for each session is limited to 30 participants. These are designed to address new teacher concerns at appropriate times throughout the first semester.

Webinars last for two hours beginning at 4:00 PM and ending at 6:00 PM – electronic flyers will indicate specific times. The basic format is:

- *Reading in advance of assigned article – upon registration, participants will be emailed the link to the article.*
- *Trainer introduction and overview of the session.*
- *Brief introduction by participants.*
- *Online PowerPoint presentation with opportunity to ask questions throughout.*
- *Discussion among participants of content of article and presentation and issues raised by participants.*
- *Guidance from trainer about extending the webinar learning through applications to teaching practices.*

Please Note: We advise teachers to use landlines or their computer for the audio element of these webinars. Cell phones will work, but the user should be advised that s/he will be charged for the 120 minutes of the program.

Establishing Classroom Routines

Students want to know what you expect of them in your class. Smooth transitions throughout the day ensure that student behavior is guided by thoughtful routines and procedures. While you should have specific routines, it is advisable to have a discussion with students about the reason for each. You may even find that your students want to develop some routines with you. This webinar focuses on the following elements: helping students understand the reason for the routine by modeling each; allowing students to practice the routine through rehearsal; and establishing one routine at a time so as not to overwhelm students. Transition times will be framed for this webinar and will include some of the following: beginning and end of the academic day, entering and exiting classrooms, collecting and distributing papers and materials, signaling for quiet or attention, emergency drills, going to the restroom, asking questions, completing work early, and moving around the classroom.

Managing Student Behavior

Behavior management may be the critical skill you did not learn in your teacher preparation courses. Every teacher has his or her own recipe for dealing with student behavior in the classroom. For some, the recipe is strong and arresting, like Five-Alarm Chili or Shrimp Fra Diavolo. For others, it is mild and smooth, like a recipe for Pumpkin Pie or Crème Brûlée. Whatever your flavor intensity, this webinar provides some ingredients to include for a recipe that works time and time again: establishing routines, leading by example, being firm, and being fair.

Informal Classroom Assessments & Retesting

The term “formative assessment” is being overused. It essentially refers to teacher-developed assessments, as opposed to commercially developed tests. Essentially, formative assessment is used to help you determine how your students are doing. However, students can also become self-assessors with some guidance in learning how to judge their own performance and their own areas of need. This webinar focuses on five strategies of informal classroom assessment that provide teachers with quick analyses of student learning: letter-card responses, key questioning during discussion, whiteboard responses, traffic-signal technique, and rolling wheels.

Grading Student Work

Next to planning, grading students’ work is probably the most time-consuming, yet essential, aspect of teaching. Grades allow you to know how your students are doing and to inform them and their parents about performance. The information you gather may help you gauge your effectiveness as a teacher from one lesson to the next. This webinar focuses on ways to make sure the time and effort you put into evaluating students’ work is meaningful. Some of the topics covered include:

1. Develop a correction code to use in the margins of papers to signal errors and teach this code to your students.
2. Create a student work schedule that allows you to return graded work within 2-3 days.
3. Before returning graded assignments, give the whole class a brief overview of the positive aspects of the assignment as well as areas that need improvement.
4. Identify broad areas where many students demonstrated they needed additional guidance and reteach these elements.
5. Grade informal classroom assessments as a class.

Preparing for Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences occur at least once a school year. Many schools opt to have at least one parent-teacher conference per marking period to help keep parents apprised of the progress their child is making in class. You should spend a great deal of time preparing what to say, since a good parent-teacher relationship will help you to better understand the needs of each student. This webinar will focus on key elements of successful, professional parent-teacher conference, which include:

1. Communicating with parents about how and when to contact you.
2. Avoiding surprises and developing an alliance with the home by corresponding with parents via letters home, emails, phone calls about student performance and behavior.
3. Preparing for conferences by gathering examples of student work and listing what each student has accomplished, needs to master, and ideas for parents to assist with student learning.
4. Maintaining a professional, business-like demeanor during conferences.
5. Scheduling follow-up sessions with parents who may need additional information or more time to meet with you.

Dealing with Difficult Parents

All teachers must deal with parents who might best be described as “difficult.” Some always come to the defense of their “perfect” children, others may be “helicoptering” over their children, still others may have legitimate grievances. Whether you believe their behavior is justified, treat difficult parents with the same respect as you would treat any other parent. That means maintaining a professional demeanor:

1. Listen attentively without arguing or interrupting.
2. Do not accuse or judge, just state how you feel about the situation.
3. Display your educational and teaching credentials in your classroom.
4. Create an adult conversation space within your classroom away from the teacher desk.
5. Develop a range of follow-up communications strategies with parents.

Legal Basics for New Teachers

As a teacher, your main duty is to teach children. But every teacher knows that s/he must also act at times as a social worker, police officer, witness, psychologist, mediator, advocate, and mandated reporter. All of these roles are intrinsic to your job, and all affect your obligations and liabilities as a teacher. Through the use of hypothetical situations, this interactive workshop will explore various legal issues that a teacher may face during his/her career, including sexual harassment, discrimination, student fights, liability, child abuse, Professional Teacher Status and union activity.

E-mail and Internet Perils - Avoiding the Avoidable in the Digital Workplace

The Internet has fundamentally changed our access to information and our means of communication, and these changes affect us all directly as professional employees and as citizens. This presentation will focus on the perils and pitfalls that face teachers in their use of the internet and e-mail both at work and at home. We will talk about how we communicate at work, employee privacy issues, social networking and other on-line activities while off-duty, school “acceptable use policies,” employer monitoring practices, and other issues related to our digital rights and responsibilities.

Working with Instructional Aides

Instructional aides are a vital resource for many classroom teachers. However, most are not teachers and need direction when working with students. Your role is to define the activities that students should be accomplishing under the guidance of a paraprofessional. To do this effectively, you should:

1. Develop activities specific to the needs of individual and/or small groups of students.
2. Meet with the instructional aide and explain what s/he should do with the students.
3. Indicate time frames and expected outcomes and clarify any questions prior to the activity beginning.

Transitions and Sponge Activities

Classroom transitions guide students from one activity to the next without lost time or interruptions to learning. They may include everyday routines and rituals or a specific activity designed for one or two students who need additional directions. A “sponge” activity is designed to produce learning during the times taken up when some students may have completed their work. Transitions and sponge activities may be tied to: arrivals and departures, moving into large-group or to small-group activities, finishing work on assignments early, and moving students in and out of the classroom as a group

Rules, Consequences and Positive Recognition

Believe it or not, students like rules – and they like consequences for those who do not live by the rules. Students also like to be recognized when they do the right thing. Getting your students engaged in defining both the rules and the consequences helps to ensure greater acceptance of both – you are also acknowledging that they have an important role to play in creating a positive learning environment for everyone. This webinar focuses on: defining “civility,” engaging students in rule making, and identifying consequences for both good and bad behavior.

Reading and Implementing IEPs

Some of your students may come with defined learning disabilities that are defined in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) which also details the accommodations that you may have to use to ensure that the student is provided with the assistance needed to be academically successful. The webinar will explain: what an IEP looks like, how to read required accommodations, and how to address accommodations within the classroom.

Behavior and Performance Conferencing & Contracts

Every teacher hopes that all of his/her students will be perfectly well behaved 100 percent of the time. However, that typically does not happen. Conferencing allows you to work with a student one-on-one and learn more about when s/he has trouble abiding by the rules. Contracts help students to monitor their own behavior. For those students who are persistently earning negative consequences for their actions, creating a contract – in cooperation with the parents – may be a positive solution to a negative problem. This webinar focuses on: preparing for and conducting a student conference, writing a performance contract, rewarding positive changes and engaging parents.

Preparing for the End – of the School Year!

The end is in sight - but there is still lots of work to be done – including MCAS administration! How do you get yourself – and your students – organized for the closing of school. Determining deadlines and communicating these clearly is essential. Dealing with closing grades, recommendations for summer school, providing book lists for incoming students, communicating with parents – especially of those students who may not have passed your classes – and getting your classroom and materials ready for the summer closing are all important issues that will be the focus of this webinar.

GRADUATE COURSES

Becoming a Mentor – 2 Graduate Credits

Massachusetts Regulations (603 CMR 7.00) require that new teachers be provided with a “trained mentor” within two weeks of hire. Mentors must have certain skills in order to appropriately assist their protégés through the first two years of practice.

Course Description: Mentor Training is designed for veteran teachers – those with at least five years of classroom experience – to be trained as MTA Certified Mentors for Beginning Teachers. Participants will learn observational techniques that can be applied when observing novice teachers. Time will also be spent learning both pre-conferencing and post-conferencing skills. Participants will be ready to mentor beginning teachers with a focus on instructional practice.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Understanding adult learning theory
2. Observational techniques
3. Pre-conferencing
4. Post-conferencing
5. Mentoring roles and relationships
6. Developing an Individual Mentoring Plan
7. Developing a mentor-protégé calendar of events
8. The “nuts and bolts” of mentoring in Massachusetts (statute, regulations, school district readiness and practice)

Performance Assessment Task:

A copy of the mentor’s Individual Mentor Plan that must include:

- Three (3) specific, personal objectives (skills or expertise to be practiced and refined), including the reason each was selected.
- A calendar of planned events for the mentor and protégé to engage in over the course of the academic year.
- An explanation of how this plan supports or will be integrated into the mentor’s Individual Staff Development Plan.

Required Text:

Mentoring in Action: A Month-by-Month Curriculum for Mentors and Their New Teachers by Carol Pelletier.

Better Beginnings: New Teacher Induction Program - 3 Graduate Credits

Massachusetts Regulations (603 CMR 7.00) require both induction and mentoring for all new teachers and administrators. More importantly, research tells us that new teachers who have high quality staff development and mentoring at the school/district level are more likely to have positive teaching experiences in their first years of practice. They are also more likely to stay both in the profession and in the district. So, districts benefit from investing in high quality new teacher programs.

Course Description: This course is designed to support beginning teachers in establishing effective professional communities with one another to overcome the challenges peculiar to early career teaching. A variety of activities allow new teachers to learn the content of the eight topics and hands-on classroom applications. Teachers work cooperatively on an activity related to the theme, incorporating classroom instruction, case study discussion, and application during each session.

Course Topics:

1. Managing the Inspired Classroom: Classroom management; Communicating effectively with the home; Managing instructional time
2. Standards-based Curriculum and Instruction: Assessing student learning – MCAS and other assessment tools, rubrics and benchmarks; Incorporating literacy strategies into instructional practice; Developing standards-based units of instruction; Differentiating instruction
3. Professional Issues: Professional roles; Education policy landscape; Engaged practice

Learning Outcomes:

1. Using instructional time effectively and as a means of managing student behavior
2. Creating units of instruction aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks
3. Understanding and applying the theory of standards-based curriculum, instruction and assessment
4. Learning how to “plan backwards” from the assessment model
5. Differentiating a unit by process and product for three distinct groups of students
6. Creating working relations within the school and between the school and home

Performance Assessment Tasks:

1. Completion of one standards-based unit of instruction using the planning-backwards model.
2. Completion of one standards-based unit of instruction that uses a planning-backwards model from two learning standards differentiated by process and product based on student readiness.

Required Text:

The Key Elements of Classroom Management: Managing Time and Space, Student Behavior, and Instructional Strategies by McLeod, Fisher & Hoover.

Creating Performance Assessment Tasks - 3 Graduate Credits

Course Description: This course focuses on the theory and practice of creating, teaching, and refining authentic performance assessments related to the learning standards of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and differentiating one based on student readiness to learn and another based on level of student independence.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Understanding the theory of performance-based learning and assessment
2. Understanding the array of assessment practice used to gauge student performance
3. Name and describe the components of performance assessment tasks
4. Demonstrating an understanding of the use and evaluation of performance assessment tasks
5. Developing performance tasks with rubrics
6. Differentiating performance tasks – using low-prep differentiation strategies – to address specific student learning profiles

Performance Assessment Tasks:

1. A Performance Assessment Task with the following components: *goal, role, audience, situation, product performance and purpose, and standards and criteria for success*. This task must have multiple steps. The student directions must be provided. The scoring rubric must be provided.
2. A second Performance Assessment Task with the same components as the first. However, this task will use low-prep differentiation for the process that students must follow and the product they must create. The rationale for the differentiated groups must be provided. The task must have multiple steps. The student directions must be provided. The scoring rubric must be provided.

Required Text:

A Teacher's Guide to Performance-Based Learning and Assessment. (1996). Educators in Connecticut's Pomperaug Regional School District 15.

Developing a District Mentoring Program – 1 Graduate Credit

Course Description: This course is designed for district teams creating a mentor program that meets the Commonwealth's licensure requirement. The course meetings will be spread over a 10-week period to allow for data collection and team time. Guidelines and guidance documents come from MTA's revised *Charting a Course: A Mentor Training Handbook*.

Learning Outcomes: This course will provide district educators with a broad understanding of:

1. Regulatory requirements
2. Knowing the personnel needs of the district over the next 3-6 years
3. Learning about new teacher research and how it can inform program development
4. Step-by-step program development
5. Planning to meet the needs of mentors and protégés
6. Program evaluation

Performance Assessment Task:

- *District Mentor Plan* that addresses the regulatory requirements, dovetails with your District Improvement Plan and/or the District Professional Development Plan, and staff development details that support the professional growth of both mentors and protégés.

Required Text:

A Better Beginning: Supporting and Mentoring New Teachers, edited by M. Scherer.

Developing a Standards-based Unit of Instruction - 3 Graduate Credits

Course Description: The course focus is on developing a two-week unit of instruction aligned with the learning standards of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The materials and instruction are informed by the work of Wiggins and McTighe and Carol Ann Tomlinson, among others. The course is appropriate for whole school faculties, departmental groups K-12, or individual teachers. The standards-based unit that is developed will be taught and debriefed during the course. Topics include: identifying standards to be assessed; articulating major understandings; developing essential questions; determining the specific content and skills to be mastered during the unit; understanding the range of assessments that could be used; and developing an instructional calendar.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Understand the theory of standards-based curriculum development
2. Name and describe the components of standards-based unit of instruction
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the planning backwards model of curriculum development
4. Demonstrate how to “unpack” or “unwrap” content and grade specific learning standards
5. Understand the array of assessment practices used to gauge student performance
6. Determine acceptable evidence
7. Define major understandings and essential questions
8. Identify specific content and skills

Performance Assessment Tasks:

1. Using the format in the Ainsworth text, participants must “unwrap” at least ten learning standards used in their teaching practice; make connections among the standards using a graphic organizer; and identify at least one “power” standard within the ten and provide a rationale for this identification.
2. Each participant will create a standards-based unit of instruction of at least two-weeks in length, teach this unit; and write a reflective paper using the guidelines provided by the instructor.

Required Text:

“Unwrapping” the Standards: A Simple Process to Make Standards Manageable by Larry Ainsworth.

Differentiating Instructional Practices - 3 Graduate Credits

Course Description: This course focuses on the decision making that the teacher must make about student readiness and level of independence as the basis for differentiating existing units of instruction. It is critical that participants have a two-week unit prepared as the basis for the coursework. Topics include: determining readiness and independence; low-preparation and high-preparation differentiated instructional strategies; differentiating student work by process and product to address learning styles, readiness, independence, and interests.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Understanding what “differentiating” is and is not
2. Determining learning styles, readiness, and interests
3. High-prep and low-prep differentiation practices
4. Developing differentiated lessons by process and product based on readiness, learning styles, and/or interests.

Performance Assessment Tasks:

1. Completion of one standards-based unit of instruction differentiated by low-prep process and product for two student groups based on readiness, learning style, or interests.
2. Completion of one performance assessment task differentiated by low-prep process and product for two student groups based on readiness, learning style, or interests.

Required Text:

How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed Ability Classes by C.A. Tomlinson.

Strategies for Instructing English Language Learners - 3 Graduate Credits

Course Description: The purpose of this course is to provide regular education classroom teachers with instructional strategies to use when adapting classroom instruction for English language learners (ELLs) in the regular education classroom. The course content is based on the primary text, *Classroom Instruction that Works with English Language Learners*. Significant use of online resources will guide participants through a series of activities resulting in lessons and units that are adapted to meet the needs of ELLs. The course content is applicable to DESE’s Category 1: *Second Language Learning and Teaching* and Category 2: *Sheltered Content Instruction*.

Learning Outcomes:

1. The stages of second language acquisition
2. Setting objectives and providing feedback
3. Nonlinguistic representation
4. Cues, questions, and advanced organizers
5. Cooperative learning
6. Summarizing and note taking

7. Homework and practice
8. Reinforcing effort and providing recognition
9. Generating and testing hypotheses
10. Identifying similarities and differences

Performance Assessment Tasks:

1. Completion of weekly activities related to chapters in required text
2. Completion of adapted lesson plan, unit plan and assessments – traditional and performance – for English language learners

Required Text:

Classroom Instruction That Works with English Language Learners by Hill, J.D. & Flynn, K.M.

Mapping the Curriculum - 3 Graduate Credits

Course Description: Aligning the local curriculum with the learning standards of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks is the focus. Mapping is based on the work of Heidi Hayes Jacobs and Susan Udelhofen. Trainers will assist the school/district participants in determining an appropriate mapping format and strategy with the goal of mapping the taught curriculum, finding the redundancies and omissions. Maps will be aligned both horizontally (September to June) and vertically (grade to grade). The goal is to create a document – that may change as the frameworks and needs of students change – that provides explicit guidance about what learning standards are taught, when and by whom.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Mapping the curriculum of specific courses
2. Aligning the maps with the learning standards of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks
3. Articulating the topic, content, skills, and assessments for each map segment
4. Identifying the texts and instructional materials used to support instruction
5. Developing adaptations for remedial assistance for students on IEPs

Performance Assessment Tasks:

1. Completion of one initial year-long curriculum map for one content area using template provided by instructor that aligns content and skills taught to the learning standards of the appropriate curriculum framework(s).
2. Completion of one final year-long curriculum map for one course that adds texts and instructional materials, and adaptations for students with special needs and/or English language learners to the initial map.

Required Text:

Keys to Curriculum Mapping: Strategies and Tools to Make It Work by Susan Udelhofen.

UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

Inclusion Strategies for Paraprofessionals – 2 Undergraduate Credits

Course Description: This course focuses on managing student behavior and addressing different learning styles and needs within the classroom with portfolio entries about:

1. Documenting student behavior and consequences
2. Communicating effectively with students about behavior and learning issues
3. Designing activities for different learning styles, readiness levels, and interests
4. Modifying activities for different learning styles, readiness levels, and interests

Learning Outcomes:

1. Communication styles for student and parent interactions
2. Interventions for selected difficult behaviors encountered in the classroom
3. Building positive, working relationships with the home
4. Multiple intelligences – understanding how children learn
5. Modification and adaptation of classroom lessons and assessments

Performance Assessment Task:

Culminating activity related to the readings and activities in *The Inclusive Classroom* (Khalsa, 1999) focused specifically on

- Modifications and adaptations to meet individual learning styles
- Management of student behavior

The format of this activity will be determined through consultation between the instructor and the student.

Required Text:

The Inclusive Classroom: A Practical Guide for Educators by S. Khalsa.

Literacy Strategies for Paraprofessionals – 2 Undergraduate Credits

Course Description: This course provides paraprofessionals with an understanding of the importance of activating prior knowledge, vocabulary development, reading comprehension strategies, and graphic organizers in the instruction of reading. Participants will learn the basics about the reading theories supporting each of these instructional strategies and apply what they have learned to a Caldecott or Newbery Award book of their choosing. In addition, paraprofessionals will understand the steps of the “writing process”: drafting, writing, revising, rewriting, publishing. Connections between reading and writing will be made.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Understanding readability of texts
2. Activating prior knowledge
3. Vocabulary development approaches
4. Reading comprehension strategies
5. The writing process
6. Narrative, descriptive, and persuasive writing

Performance Assessment Tasks:

1. A series of activities directly related to one trade book appropriate for grades K-3 from the Caldecott Award and Honor list or grades 3-7 from the Newbery Award and Honor list. The work will be organized into a mini-portfolio and will be directly related to course work on: readability, prior knowledge, vocabulary development, use of graphic organizers, and application of reading comprehension strategies; and the final step writing process.
2. Completion of one piece of personal writing that reflects working through each of the five steps in the writing process.

Required Text:

A trade book selected from the Caldecott or Newbery Award and Honor lists.

Mathematics Strategies for Paraprofessionals – 2 Undergraduate Credits

Course Description: This course provides paraprofessionals with instruction in the content of and theory behind the Massachusetts Mathematics Curriculum Framework. Each participant will focus on the learning standards as they apply to the grade level(s) in which s/he assists with instruction. Topics to be covered will include understanding instructional strategies that focus on:

1. Addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of whole numbers, fractions and decimals
2. Number sense, patterns, relationships, and measurement
3. Understanding the use of manipulatives in acquiring mathematical understanding

Learning Outcomes:

1. Standard algorithms for solving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division number and word problems
2. Non-standard algorithms for solving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division number and word problems
3. Understanding the use of manipulatives
4. Understanding and applying various measurement and number systems

Performance Assessment Task:

1. Creation of a series of one-day lesson plans focused on solving computation problems and word problems; measurement systems; and using manipulatives.

Required Text:

Mathematics Curriculum Framework, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING WORKSHOPS/PROGRAMS

Bullying – What Is It & How to Stop It! – 6 hours

Workshop Description: Many young people have a good idea of what bullying is because they see it every day! Bullying happens when someone hurts or scares another person on purpose and the person being bullied has a hard time defending himself/herself. Usually, bullying happens over and over, and includes.

- Punching, shoving and other acts that hurt people physically
- Spreading bad rumors about people
- Keeping certain people out of a “group”
- Teasing people in a mean way
- Getting certain people to “gang up” on others

Bullying also can happen on-line or electronically. Cyber bullying is when children or teens bully each other using the Internet, mobile phones or other cyber technology. This can include:

- Sending mean text, e-mail, or instant messages
- Posting nasty pictures or messages about others in blogs or on Web sites
- Using someone else’s user name to spread rumors or lies about someone

Learning Outcomes:

1. Nature and extent of the problem
2. Identification of bullying behaviors
3. Strategies for dealing with bullies
4. Strategies for dealing with victims
5. Identification of school-wide solutions
6. Communication with parents/caregivers about bullying behaviors and solutions

Workshop Requirements:

1. Attendance at the complete program
2. Active participation

Reading list/Resources: *Bullying* training materials developed by MTA.

We recommend offering Bullying – What Is It & How to Stop It! as a whole school program or district wide only with teachers from the same school level. Bullying behaviors experienced by elementary school children are significantly different from those experienced by middle or high school students. This workshop is appropriate either as a whole-day program or two 3-hour sessions.

I Can Do It! Classroom Management for New Teachers – 6 hours

Workshop Description: This program is designed for K-12 teachers in their first three years of teaching. Included in the curriculum is information about the elements necessary for successful classroom management: building a community of learners; developing and reinforcing rules and routines; understanding various interventions for difficult behaviors; positive parent/teacher relationships; and pacing instruction and activity hints. The training is designed to impart as much information as possible while maintaining an interactive approach.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Creating a classroom community
2. Rules and routines
3. Reinforcement strategies
4. Polishing your techniques
5. Pacing instruction and activity hints
6. Dealing with difficult behaviors
7. Home and school communication

Workshop Requirements:

1. Attendance at the complete program
2. Active participation

Reading list/Resources:

I Can Do It! training materials developed by the National Education Association and adapted for Massachusetts schools.

We recommend offering I Can Do It! early in the academic year – especially with a large number of beginning teachers. Research and survey information tells us that new teachers are most concerned about classroom management. This workshop is most appropriate as a whole-day program; however, it may be offered in two 3-hour sessions.

KEYS Online Survey & School Planning



MTA offers local associations and their school districts access to the NEA KEYS Online Survey and assistance in analyzing the data to make school improvement decisions. The best use of this data tool is for all schools within the district to participate. This allows for both school-based and district-wide data to be aggregated and analyzed.

NEA researchers identified the school conditions needed for students to achieve at the highest levels and found that high quality schools display the same set of effective schools characteristics, or quality indicators, centered around six “keys”:

1. Shared understanding and commitment to high goals
2. Open communication and collaborative problem solving
3. Continuous assessment for teaching and learning
4. Personal and professional learning
5. Resources to support teaching and learning
6. Curriculum and instruction.

The result of this groundbreaking research is Keys to Excellence for Your Schools, KEYS: an online survey tool that lets schools measure for themselves the extent to which the quality indicators are present; and a data analysis process that brings educators, parents and the community together to improve their local schools.

Through four sessions, MTA staff will assist the School Leadership Team (SLT):

Session 1 – Getting ready for KEYS, which includes scheduling and logistics.

Session 2 – Interpreting the data, which includes preparing a faculty presentation of the data and findings.

Session 3 – Formulating the improvement objectives, which includes preparing faculty members to take “ownership.”

Session 4 – Developing the implementation plan, which includes a professional learning calendar.

The KEYS 2.0 Online Survey is available at no cost to MTA affiliates **only**. MTA staff will work with the school community to learn about the survey and the process for analyzing the data and identifying school goals. To learn more about the KEYS Initiative and to take a demonstration survey, visit www.keysonline.org/survey.html?id=827. To view an informative video, visit <http://vimeo.com/2722682>.

Please Note: *NEA, MTA and the local affiliate “own” the KEYS data, which may not be made public. All members of the school and district staff must honor this requirement.*

Using TeLLS Data to Address the Achievement Gaps – 3 Graduate Credits



State and federal laws are requiring that schools create the conditions for improved student achievement and narrowing gaps among student subgroups. This course is designed to use the Massachusetts Teaching, Learning and Leading Survey results by either a joint Labor-Management Team (LMT) at either the

- a. **District Level** – usually 10-18 teachers and education support professionals and central office and school-based administrators, including the association president and the superintendent of schools; or
- b. **School Level** – usually seven to nine teachers, education support professionals, administrators, and the principal.

Course Description: LMT members are trained in using TeLLS data and MCAS performance in English language arts and mathematics, locally administered standardized tests or district-created benchmarked assessments, and other student data (attendance, tardiness, course/school completion rates, etc.) are used to determine student performance measured against the learning standards of the curriculum frameworks. A case study will provide an overarching frame for the LMT's work.

Learning Outcomes: A broad understanding of

- State and federal accountability requirements
- District/school improvement and action plan requirements as outlined in Chapter 69, section II
- Analysis and interpretation of survey, test, and other performance and school data
- Definition of areas of strength and weakness from data-based conclusions, improvement objectives, what educators must know and be able to do, appropriate staff development
- Development of improvement plan and action plan

Performance Assessments

- Either a completed collaboratively developed District or School Improvement Plan which includes:
 - Specific improvement objectives that, if achieved, will result in improved student achievement and/or narrowing of achievement gaps
 - Staff development necessary to achieve the improvement objectives
 - Budgetary requirements to achieve the objectives
 - Program evaluation components to measure the degree of achieving objectives

- A completed, collaboratively developed Action Plan for Year 1 which includes:
 - Specific activities for each objective being addressed
 - Persons responsible for ensuring activities are conducted
 - Staff involved in each activity
 - Timeline for each activity
 - Financial resources to support each activity

Visualize a Great Lesson – 3 hours

Workshop Description: Visual thinking is an important skill for teachers. Research suggests we educate best when we use pictures and text. We will explore new whole brain approaches to using tools such as white boards and PowerPoint in more powerful and persuasive ways in your classroom.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Whole brain theoretical approaches
2. PowerPoint presentation skills – some knowledge of PowerPoint in advance is required; **this is not an introduction to PowerPoint.**
3. Whiteboard presentation skills – a portable whiteboard will be provided if there is no such technology at the training site.
4. Adapting a lesson/unit through “visualization” techniques

Workshop Requirements:

1. Attendance at the complete program
2. Active participation

Reading list/Resources:

MTA developed materials.

Preparing for MTEL Communications and Literacy Test – 6 hours

Workshop Description: Many teachers have difficulty passing the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) – either the Communications and Literacy test or their subject specific test. This session is designed to assist participants in learning some test-taking skills. This all-day program guides participants through the reading and writing tests and goals for content area tests. Activities include taking and analyzing test questions, dealing with test anxiety, and determining how best to prepare for upcoming tests.

Learning Activities:

1. Taking and reviewing practice reading test
2. Taking and reviewing practice writing test
3. Review goals for individual content area tests
4. Developing a test preparation plan

INFORMATIONAL WORKSHOPS

These three-hour workshops provide educators with essential information that allows them to more effectively work with their students. Each session is divided into two parts:

- Part 1 – the first 90 minutes is a direct instruction presentation outlining the major issues that educators should understand about the topic. The specifics of each course are described below.
- Part 2 – the second 90 minutes includes a 60-minute small-group facilitated discussion, guided by the presenter, that allows participants to answer the question: *How can we incorporate the information we have just learned into our practice or into school policy to better enable us to meet our students' needs?* This is followed by a 30-minute whole-group reporting out and identifying next steps.

If schools/districts sponsor these workshops, the expectation is that participants will earn PDPs from the district. If others sponsor them, MTA will provide PDP documentation.

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

Inclusion policies have resulted in classrooms that serve a wider array of students with varying learning needs. More students are coming to schools with autism spectrum disorders – or pervasive developmental disorders – from the severe Autistic Disorder to the mild Asperger Syndrome.

Participants will be provided with information about the range of student behaviors encompassed by ASD. Workshop content focuses on the questions:

- *What is “autism?”*
- *How do students with autism present in the classroom?*
- *What is the range of behavior that educators might expect to find with ASD students?*

Language Acquisition for English Language Learners

The issue of second language acquisition through sheltered immersion programs was mandated by the Unz petition that passed on the November 2002 ballot. Now, more and more educators have English Language Learners (ELLs) in their classrooms and schools. ELLs have a right to be taught by qualified teachers who are able to employ Language Acquisition Strategies (LAS) as an integral part of their instructional practice. However, in order for teachers and administrators to meet the needs of students, there must be high-quality, sustained staff development. Expecting educators to implement changes in organizational structure without training is unethical.

Participants will be provided with information about the legal requirements for schools and the range of LAS available. Workshop content focuses on the questions:

- *What does “language acquisition” mean?*
- *What is the array of recommended language acquisition strategies?*
- *What is required as a result of the DESE’s “Guidelines for Agencies Providing Sheltered English Immersion Staff development for Content Teachers of English Language Learners”?*

Understanding the Requirements of IEPs and 504 Plans

Some students come to us with defined learning disabilities that are detailed in Individualized Education Program (IEPs); students with medical issues have their detailed needs outlined in a 504 Plan. Both IEPs and 504 Plans detail the accommodations that educators must take to ensure that students are provided with the assistance needed to be academically successful.

Participants will be provided with information about the requirements for schools to understand the requirements of these plans and for teachers to use the information to make accommodations for individual students. Workshop content focuses on the questions:

- *What is an IEP?*
- *What is a 504 Plan?*
- *What does the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) require?*
- *What does the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) require?*

Parent and Family Engagement

With frequent interactions among schools, families, and communities, students are more likely to receive common messages from various people about the importance of school, working hard, thinking creatively, helping one another, and staying in school.

Parents are the key stakeholders in their children's education. Parental involvement at the district and school level is essential for student success. The achievement of a student in school is not based solely on income or socioeconomic status, but the extent to which that student's family is able to create a home environment that encourages learning; communicate high yet reasonable expectations for the child's achievement and future careers; and become involved in their child's education at school.

Participants will be provided with information about the six National Parent Teacher Association standards for parent and family engagement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, student learning, school decision-making, and collaborating with community. Workshop content focuses on the questions:

- *What is two-way communication between the school and the home?*
- *What are the benefits of positive two-way communication between students and educators?*
- *How can the school create conditions that improve parent and family engagement?*

REGULATORY BRIEFINGS

MTA provides local associations with a series of regulatory workshops at no cost. These programs may be offered district-wide, but only at the request of the local association president. All are two hours in length, which includes time for general questions and answers. The presenter will remain for an additional 30-60 minutes to answer specific questions from members of the audience. The minimum group for regulatory workshops is 20 and there is no maximum. These programs are not eligible for PDPs or PTPs. These programs are not available to non-MTA schools or districts.

Educator Licensure – 1.5-hour informational workshop

This workshop explains the regulatory requirements covering licensure. It is appropriate for all educators who hold Temporary, Preliminary or Initial stage licenses or who are working under waivers. Trainers explain how a teacher moves through the stages of licensure from Preliminary to Initial to Professional. The presenter will explain how the educator documents his/her progression through each stage and the roles and responsibilities of both the educator and the district.

Professional License Renewal – 1.5-hour informational workshop

This workshop explains the regulatory requirements covering professional license renewal (formerly recertification). The trainer explains the requirements for relicensure for those who hold a Professional License. The presenter will explain how the educator documents his/her professional learning to renew all professional licenses held.

Understanding District and School Accountability – 1.5-hour informational workshop

This workshop is designed to help the whole school community – including school council members and parents – understand the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) accountability process. The presenter will explain the role of student test results in determining a school's accountability status. The most recent DESE's school accountability regulations will be explained and suggested strategies will be recommended. In addition, the importance of school improvement planning that is collaborative and ensures teacher ownership will be explained.

MTA recommends that any school identified as in need of improvement or underperforming as a result of AYP should request this workshop as soon as possible.

Is Online Learning For Me?

The purpose of this self-assessment is to better acquaint you with the basic requirements of an online environment. Please note: This guide is not designed to make decisions for you, but rather to help you decide if online learning is the right choice for you.

Computer Hardware and Software Tips

When considering an online course, it is important to think about the **minimum** system recommendations of an online environment. The following guidelines will allow you to successfully use MTA's Blackboard applications. As an online student, you are strongly advised to determine if you have accessibility to the bulleted computer system items. If you have any questions or concerns about any of these system items, contact Beverly Eisenman at beisenman@massteacher.org.

- 56K (or faster) Internet connection speed
- Windows 98 (or higher) computer operating system
- Internet Explorer 6 (or higher) web browser
- Microsoft Office 97 (or higher) software

Online Self-Assessment Guide: *(Check best response for you under each heading, and the comment.)*

	Question	How your response should inform your online choices.
1	My technology access is best described as:	
	I have a computer at home with Internet access and I have my own e-mail account.	Great! You'll need to be able to download course material, get assignments and communicate with other students and your instructor.
	I have regular access to a computer with Internet access, have my own e-mail account and have permission to download files.	Fabulous! You'll need to be able to download course material, get assignments and communicate with other students and your instructor.
	I don't have a computer or an e-mail address.	If you do not have a computer or access to a computer and the internet then online courses will not work for you.
2	My technology skills are:	
	Very good. I can use e-mail, Web browsers, word-processing software, and can download files and create attachments. I like trying to solve technology problems on my own and don't get frustrated easily.	Good. These are all skills you'll likely need in any course you take.
	Average. I can use e-mail, Web browsers and word-processing software. I don't feel comfortable solving technology problems on my own.	It's good you understand these basic skills and it would be wise to have a backup plan in case you have technology problems.

	Question	How your response should inform your online choices.
	Very basic. I have used e-mail, Web browsers and word-processing software, but I get frustrated when things don't work the way they should.	Beware! You may need to get more comfortable working online and develop technical problem-solving skills before taking an online course.
3	Face-to-face communication is:	
	Not essential to me. I am comfortable learning without face-to-face interaction.	Good. You'll probably feel comfortable in an online course.
	Important to me and I wonder about my ability to learn without being able to see the instructor or other students.	Consider how important this is to your learning and decide whether or not you are currently willing to challenge yourself to learn in a new way.
	Essential and I learn only if I can interact in person with the instructor and other students.	Stop here! If you can only learn in a face-to-face classroom then online classes are not for you. You may consider taking a hybrid class (a class that combines online learning with at least half of the time spent in a traditional classroom). A hybrid class may be more flexible than traditional classes.
4	When I need help in class:	
	I feel comfortable asking questions and asking for help.	Great. It is your responsibility to speak up if you have any questions or concerns (that may be the only way the instructor can tell if you're challenged in any way).
	I hesitate to ask questions of the instructor, but I will ask for help if I need it.	Great, it's good that you realize when it is important to speak up. It's likely that if the instructor doesn't hear from you he/she will assume you're doing fine.
	I often feel intimidated asking questions or asking for help.	It is important that you contact your instructor if you're having any sort of problem. If you're not likely to do this, you should consider taking a face-to-face class, which may be more comfortable
5	The amount of uninterrupted time I have to devote to an online class is:	
	10 hours or more per week, anytime during the day or night.	Super! You'll likely need this time to complete assignments and stay on task.
	7-10 hours per week, mainly at night	Good. This is the minimum amount of time you will probably need to stay on schedule in your class. Find the time of the day that works best for you and make a habit of studying then.
	Less than 7 hours per week.	Reconsider. To increase your online success rate consider taking an online course when you have at least 7-10 hours per week for class.

	Question	How your response should inform your online choices.
6	I would describe my personal style as:	
	Self-motivated, self-disciplined and organized.	Just what you need to succeed! Keep it up.
	Motivated, but I need help remembering assignments and due dates.	Keep sharp! You may need to push yourself to complete assignments because no one will be showing up to remind you.
	Spontaneous and not too disciplined- I need someone to motivate me and help me stay on top of my coursework.	If you tend to procrastinate, watch out; online classes often require you to regularly participate in discussions and assignments in the classroom. Also, in online classes you have only yourself to rely on and you can fall behind quickly!
7	My reading and writing abilities are:	
	Above average. I enjoy reading and writing and have confidence in my abilities.	Learning and communicating in online courses requires much reading and writing; these skills are essential.
	OK. I read well, but I'm not comfortable expressing myself in writing.	You may need to work on your writing skills in order to be successful in an online course. If you are unable to accurately express yourself, it will be difficult to succeed.
	Below average. I don't like reading and look for classes without a lot of writing assignments.	Online classes center around reading and writing. If this is a struggle, you will have more success taking online courses once you've improved your reading and writing skills.
8	When it comes to analyzing class materials and expressing my own opinions about them I feel...	
	Confident; I can analyze class materials and formulate opinions on what I've learned.	Many online classes require you to evaluate material and give your opinion. You may enjoy this opportunity to express yourself and participate in discussions with other classmates.
	A bit nervous; I can sometimes analyze class materials and form opinions but it is a struggle for me.	You'll need to decide if you feel confident enough to spend the extra time it takes to understand the material well enough to express your own opinion about it.
	Need to decide if you feel confident enough to spend the extra time it takes to understand the material well enough to express your own opinion about it.	You will probably not want an online course; many online classes require you to evaluate material and give your opinion.

	Question	How your response should inform your online choices.
9	Class discussions are:	
	Important to me and useful in helping me learn the information presented in class. I almost always participate in class discussions.	Great! You will probably really enjoy your online experience, as discussions are a large part of many courses.
	Somewhat important to my learning. I sometimes participate in class discussions.	Discussions are a large part of online courses and often play a significant role in your final grade. If you're not sure that you'll be a consistent participant, you may want to reconsider taking an online course.
	Not very useful to me. I don't usually participate in class discussions.	Discussions are a large part of online courses and often play a significant role in your final grade. If you don't think you'll participate in class discussions, you'll probably be better off not taking online classes.
10	When it comes to learning:	
	I welcome opportunities to learn new things and master new technologies.	Great. You'll probably really like online courses!
	I get nervous around new technologies, but I like to learn.	If you're up for a challenge, online learning may still work out for you. Allow yourself ample time to work through any difficulties that may arise, and see if your school offers classes to help you become more familiar with new technologies.
	I get very nervous around technology and would rather not try it.	If online learning would be considered a new technology for you, it would probably be best for you to look at options other than online courses.
11	I am considering taking an online course because:	
	I've taken an online class before and enjoyed the experience.	Super! Although classes may greatly vary, you have a general idea of what to expect.
	I'm curious about online classes and have room in my schedule.	Great! You may also want to check out our online tutorial for some hands-on experience in a sample online course.
	I need the class for a job situation and I can't fit a face-to-face course into my schedule.	If you are looking to squeeze a class into an already full schedule, it may be wise to skip an online course.

Adapted from *Is Online Learning for Me?* at https://www.waol.org/prospective_students/isonlineforme.aspx

Center for Education Policy and Practice Publications

PDF versions of these publications may be downloaded by going to www.massteacher.org/cepp and following the Research Reports link.

1. *Fulfilling the Promise of Education Reform: Narrowing the Achievement Gaps, Closing the Staffing Gaps, Reducing the Funding Gaps*
2. *Facing Reality: What Happens When Good Schools are Labeled “Failures”*
3. *Tomorrow’s Teachers: Preparing the Education Workforce for 21st Century Schools*
4. *Selective Attrition in Boston Charter Schools*
5. *Massachusetts Teaching, Learning and Leading Survey: Creating School Conditions Where Teachers Stay and Students Thrive*
6. *TeLLing Your Story: Labor-Management Collaboration: Using TeLLS Data to Address Achievement Gaps and School Improvement*
7. *Charter School Success or Selective Out-Migration of Low Achievers? (Effects of Enrollment Management on Student Achievement)*

PDF versions of the From Policy to Practice series may be downloaded by going to www.massteacher.org/cepp and following the Policy Briefs link.

1. *Language Acquisition Staff Development: Qualified to Meet Needs of English Language Learners*
2. *Special Education: Understanding Federal and State Statutory Requirements*
3. *Education Proficiency Plans*

Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) folders are free to MTA local associations through direct requests from local presidents only. For all others, they are sold in packets of 25 for \$25 plus shipping and handling.

Standards-based Unit of Instruction folders are sold in packets of 25 for \$25 plus shipping and handling.

Please contact Beverly Eisenman for single copy and bulk rate fees

Call: 617-878-8362 or 800-392-6175, ext. 8362 or email beisenman@massteacher.org.

CEPP STAFF

Kathleen J. Skinner, NBCT, Ed.D., Director kskinner@massteacher.org
Ralph Devlin, M.S., Professional Development Specialist rdevlin@massteacher.org
Beverly Miyares, M.C.P., Professional Development Specialist bmiyares@massteacher.org
Nora Todd, B.S., Professional Development Specialist ntodd@massteacher.org

CEPP ASSOCIATE STAFF

Mary Chamberlain, M.A., West mchamberlain@massteacher.org
William Durkee, C.A.G.S., Northeast bdurkee@massteacher.org
Judith Ferrari, M.A., Central jferrari@massteacher.org
Linda Jordan, M.Ed., Southeast ljordan@massteacher.org
SiriNam Khalsa, NBCT, M.Ed., West skhalsa@massteacher.org
Carol Liff, C.A.G.S., Northeast cliff@massteacher.org
Joyce Martin, M.Ed., Southeast jmartin@massteacher.org
Donna McDonald, M.Ed., Cape and Islands dmcdonald@massteacher.org
Arlene Wasdo, M.Ed., Central awasdo@massteacher.org

CEPP SUPPORT STAFF

Beverly Eisenman, Secretary – PD Registration & Information beisenman@massteacher.org
Diane Gately, Coordinator – Conference Registration & Information dgately@massteacher.org
Jill Jackson, Secretary – Transcripts jjackson@massteacher.org



MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

20 ASHBURTON PLACE

BOSTON, MA 02108

800.392.6175

www.massteacher.org

