

Teacher Credentialing Models Massachusetts

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Why did your state decide to develop a teacher credentialing process?	While licensure had been discussed by the field for nearly 25 years, a change in the Massachusetts legislation in 1997 prompted ABE teachers to request a license of their own. Please see the attached overview of the development of the license.
As you began the development process, how did you involve the field?	Task forces, advisory councils, work groups, "road shows," surveys, public comment periods; kept field up to date with interim reports and Certification Updates, a regularly published newsletter
What did you use to guide the development of the credentialing process (e.g., K-12 credentialing model, teacher standards/competencies, etc.)?	Two things: 1) K-12 structure: Looks like and sounds like all other MA teacher's licenses 2) ABE content: Focuses specifically on ABE subject matter
What are the components and requirements for your teacher credentialing process? Is it mandatory or voluntary? Is it administered through the K-12 teacher credentialing system, or is it a separate entity?	Requirements: 2 teacher tests: Communication and Literacy Skills, which is required of all Massachusetts teachers, and the ABE Subject Matter Test. MA statutes require all Massachusetts teachers pass both the ComLit test and a test of the subject matter in the area of licensure. Voluntary The ABE license is administered within the K-12 licensure office by a separate individual.
Once the credentialing process was developed, how did you present it to the field (e.g., piloted it with a select number of teachers first, regional focus groups, statewide meeting, etc.)?	Regulations were released. A group of six candidates were piloted using a draft of the guidelines that were intended to support the regulations. The guidelines were revised after the pilot and released to the public. All information was made available to the public via the Department's web-site.
If your process is voluntary, what has the participation rate been? Are there incentives to encourage pursuit of the credential?	Approximately 10% of 2000 teachers in MADOE funded ABE programs have applied for the license; 87 licenses have been issued (68 entry level; 19 professional level) While programs receive extra points for credentialed teachers as part of their five year applications for funding, there are no other incentives.
How are you measuring and tracking the impact of the credentialing process on teacher quality and effectiveness?	We are entering teachers' license status and professional development activities into our SMARTT system, which is also able to track student outcomes.
What recommendations would you give to a state interested in pursuing teacher credentialing?	Make the licensure process look, sound, and feel like the K-12 process in your state to help lessen the amount of suspicion it may raise if it differs. Build in reciprocity with other licenses already within the state. If the license isn't mandatory, provide incentives for teachers to pursue the license. Be sure that your state has ample professional development opportunities for the licensure candidates, whether they are available at the college level or offered through a state's professional development organization. Include the state's professional development providers in the discussion.