# A picture containing DESE's logo

# **Massachusetts Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program**

# **Application Guidance**

**Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**

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# **Program Overview**

## **Apprenticeship Goals**

Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Programs (RTAPs) offer a new pathway to earn an Initial Teacher license in Massachusetts. RTAPs integrate on-the-job training with academic coursework, allowing participants to earn while they learn. This hands-on approach ensures that apprentices gain practical classroom experience under the supervision of experienced educators while simultaneously completing the requirements for Initial Teacher licensure. In Massachusetts, RTAPs focus on three key goals:

**Educator Diversity**

* When embedded in diverse communities, RTAPs help to close the gap between student and teacher demographics
* RTAPs prioritize equitable recruitment and hiring
* RTAPs are based in culturally and linguistically sustaining teaching and learning environments

**Educator Pipeline**

* RTAPs support multiple entry points, including post-baccalaureate paraprofessional pipelines and high school-to-college pathways
* RTAPs provide wrap-around supports and full-time employment for the duration of the term
* RTAPs prioritize localized, high-need, hard-to-staff roles (e.g., Early Childhood, English as a Second Language, Secondary STEM, and Special Education)

**Educator Quality**

* RTAPs are supported by approved educator preparation providers committed to equity-driven preparation and supports
* RTAPs are aligned to all state requirements for effective preparation and licensure
* Teacher apprentices are prepared through job-embedded teaching and learning grounded in rigorous standards for effective practice and subject-matter knowledge

## **Apprenticeship Roles**

RTAPs are made possible by strong partnerships between several key stakeholders, including:

* **Massachusetts Division of Apprentice Standards (DAS)**: Entity within the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and the authorizing body for all apprentice occupations, including teacher apprentices.
* **Massachusetts Department of Elementary Education (DESE)**: Entity that acts as the Intermediary to the Division of Apprentice Standards, responsible for establishing RTAP program standards in accordance with state licensing and preparation requirements and authorized to approve and monitor all RTAP partnerships, implementation, and outcomes.
* **Massachusetts Local Education Agency (LEA)**: District or coalition of districts (including charter schools and approved special education schools) that employ(s) apprentices and serves as the co-sponsor for registered teacher apprentices in their employment.
* **Educator Preparation Provider (EPP)**: Higher education institution or organization that provides related technical instruction to apprentices. The EPP works closely with the LEA to ensure that all apprentices are fully supported to meet all licensure requirements. The EPP must be [approved by DESE](https://elar2.com/Public/ProgramSearch) to endorse candidates for Initial Teacher licensure in Massachusetts.
* **Program Supervisors:** EPP employees that serve as liaisons between the EPP and employing districts. Program supervisors work alongside journeyworkers to observe apprentice practice, provide ongoing feedback, and evaluate ultimate readiness for the licensure role.
* **Journeyworkers**: Full-time district employees that serve as mentor teachers/supervising practitioners for apprentices. Journeyworkers model effective teaching practice and work alongside program supervisors to observe apprentice practice, provide ongoing feedback, and evaluate ultimate readiness for the licensure role.
* **Apprentices**: Teacher candidates enrolled in the RTAP.

## **Additional Resources and Supports**

Please visit the [RTAP webpage](https://www.doe.mass.edu/csi/diverse-workforce/teacher-apprenticeship/default.html) for additional information about the RTAP model and expectations. If you have any questions, please email [EducatorApprenticeships@Mass.Gov](mailto:EducatorApprenticeships@Mass.Gov).

# **Application Guidance**

# **Application Process and Timeline**

## **Stage 1: Intent to Submit and Needs Assessment**

At this point in the application process, you should have already conducted an internal self-study, completed the Intent to Submit and Needs Assessment, and engaged in a strategic planning call with DESE.

## **Stage 2: Full Application**

The Full Application should only be completed after DESE approves the Intent to Submit and Needs Assessment. The Full Application will ask you to outline the proposed RTAP’s objectives, program design, partner organizations, and implementation supports in alignment with the [RTAP Programmatic Requirements and Work Process Schedule](https://www.doe.mass.edu/csi/diverse-workforce/teacher-apprenticeship/appendix-a.pdf).

The Full Application is designed to be completed by the LEA and EPP after they have established a formal partnership.

All applications must be submitted in accordance with the following timelines:

* General applications: March 31st, 2025
* DESE RTAP Grant Applications: February 28th, 2025

## **Stage 3: Application Review and Notification**

DESE will review applications within 30 days of submission. During this time, DESE will assess alignment with RTAP programmatic goals and requirements and conduct interview calls with applicants.

Applicants will be notified of their status by April 30th, 2025, for General Applications and March 31st, 2025, for DESE RTAP Grant Applications.

Please note that it is possible for an RTAP grant application to be declined for funding but approved for program implementation. In these cases, the LEA would be required to seek outside funding to begin implementation.

**Stage 4: Program Launch**

* DESE training for LEA/EPP partners: May 2025 (specific dates to be determined)
* Journeyworker and apprentice recruitment and selection activities: Spring 2025
* RTAP official launch: Summer 2025

# **Application Instructions**

**General Applications**

* **Submission Platform**: All general applications (i.e. non-grant applications) must be submitted through SharePoint.
* **Tips for Submission**:
  + Utilize the instructions in the SharePoint Tip Sheet to access the site, edit template application forms, and upload additional required documentation.
  + Review your application carefully to confirm that all fields are complete before submitting.
  + Submit your application at least 48 hours before the deadline to allow time for troubleshooting any technical issues.
  + If you encounter any issues, contact us at [EducatorApprenticeships@mass.gov](mailto:EducatorApprenticeships@mass.gov)

**Grant Applications**

* **Submission Platform**: All grant-related applications must be submitted through the GEM$ portal: <https://mass.egrantsmanagement.com/>
* **Tips for Submission**:
  + Ensure all required documents are uploaded in the appropriate file format (PDF or Word).
  + Confirm that all fields in the GEM$ portal are complete to prevent submission delays.
  + Save your progress frequently in the GEM$ portal to avoid losing data.
  + Submit your GEM$ application at least 72 hours before the deadline to allow time for addressing any technical difficulties specific to the GEM$ portal.
  + Use the GEM$ Help Center or contact us at [EducatorApprenticeships@mass.gov](mailto:EducatorApprenticeships@mass.gov)

# **Application Checklist**

1. Massachusetts Local Education Agency

2. Approved Educator Preparation Provider

3. Program of Study and Related Technical Instruction

4. On-the-Job Training

5. Journeyworker Selection, Training, and Compensation

6. Apprentice Eligibility, Role, and Wage Schedule

7. Implementation, Funding, and Sustainability Plans

8. Assurances