

MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION COMPACT

BACKGROUND

The Elementary Education Compact builds upon both the Commonwealth Transfer Compact adopted by the Board of Regents in 1990 and the Joint Admissions Agreement adopted by the Board of Higher Education in 2000, and represents another step in continuing efforts to facilitate the transfer of credit within the public higher education system. The adoption in October of 2001 of new licensure regulations by the Department of Education intensified the need to identify a program of courses that would transfer from community colleges into teacher preparation programs at public four-year institutions. The looming teacher shortage and the widespread demand for more teachers from minority groups have heightened the need for a smooth transition into teacher education from community colleges, which have significant minority enrollment.

The proposed Elementary Education Compact:

- specifies a general education core that fulfills lower level arts and sciences coursework for the “Route One” requirements for the Initial Elementary Education Teacher License (Route One is the approved undergraduate program for teacher licensure);
- prepares students for entry into a Bachelor’s degree program approved for Elementary Education “Route One” licensure;
- guarantees admission to the Elementary Education licensure program at Massachusetts state colleges or university campuses offering Elementary Education licensure at the baccalaureate level (note: See Section IV for exceptions to this guarantee);
- guarantees that 60 credits earned by students who fulfill the core requirements and other provisions of the compact will be accepted as transfer credits by the receiving institution and applied to the students’ baccalaureate degrees.

The Elementary Education Compact not only reduces the student’s level of uncertainty about acceptance into an Elementary Education licensure program and transfer of credits, but also states the objective of applying the same requirements to transfer and native students alike. (The term “native students” refers to students who began their undergraduate education at the baccalaureate institution.)

THE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION COMPACT

For students transferring from Massachusetts community colleges to public colleges and universities offering Elementary Education licensure at the baccalaureate level who agree to the compact.

Section I. Requirement for Elementary Education Compact Status

A student shall be eligible for Elementary Education Compact status if he or she has met the following requirements:

- a. Completed an Associate degree with a minimum of 60 credit hours exclusive of developmental coursework;
- b. Achieved a minimum cumulative grade point average of not less than 2.75 (in a 4.0 system) (note: at their discretion, individual institutions may require a different grade point average);
- c. Completed the following 44 – 59 credit core, exclusive of developmental coursework. The core is designed to meet the requirements of both the Commonwealth Transfer Compact, and the Department of Education's regulations (see Section 7.05:1.b and Section 7.06:7.b of the *Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval ("Regulations")*).

6 credits *Composition/Writing*

18 credits *Humanities and Social Science (9 credits of each)*
To satisfy the Commonwealth Transfer Compact, students must complete 9 credits in each of the above areas. In addition, students must select courses that meet the following Department of Education core content knowledge areas, bearing in mind that competency must be demonstrated in all these areas on the General Curriculum Test of the Massachusetts Test for Educator Licensure (MTEL). Students are required to complete coursework in these areas at both the lower and upper level; areas not covered by coursework at the community college will need to be completed after transfer.

- Children's Literature

Note: to satisfy the Commonwealth Transfer Compact, this course must be a literature department course, not an education course.

- American Literature
- World Literature
- British Literature
- US History, colonial to present

- World History, ancient to present (includes European History)
- Geography
- Economics
- US Government (including founding documents)

- 4 credits *Physical Science with lab or Appropriate Integrated Laboratory Science* (appropriate to the Elementary School curriculum)
Note: to satisfy the Commonwealth Transfer Compact, this course must be a science department course, not an education course.
- 4 credits *Biological Science with lab or Appropriate Integrated Laboratory Science* (appropriate to the Elementary School curriculum)
Note: to satisfy the Commonwealth Transfer Compact, this course must be a science department course, not an education course.
- 6 credits *Mathematics* (appropriate to the Elementary School curriculum)
Note: to satisfy the Commonwealth Transfer Compact, this course must be a mathematics department course, not an education course.
- 3 credits *Child Development*
- 3 credits *Exploring Teaching/Foundations of Education with Pre-Practicum*
- 9 - 15 credits *Preparation courses for Academic Major after Transfer*
 (note: these courses may also fulfill other core requirements listed above)

- d. Achieved passing score on the Communication and Literacy Skills Test (CLST) of the MTEL.

The sending institution is responsible for identifying the transcript of each student who is a candidate for transfer under this compact.

Section II: Credits to be Transferred

Students fulfilling the requirements of the Elementary Education Compact are guaranteed a minimum of 60 transfer credits, exclusive of developmental credit as

defined by the Board of Higher Education, applied to their degree requirements at the State College or University. The credits will be applied as follows:

- a. lower level arts and sciences coursework for the "Route One" requirements for the Initial Elementary Education Teacher License;
- b. institutional general education requirements;
- c. academic major requirements;
- d. elementary education lower level requirements;
- e. free electives.

Only college-level course credits consistent with the standards set forth in the Undergraduate Experience recommendations are included under this Compact. Credits awarded by the sending institution through CLEP, challenge examinations, and other life-experience evaluations for course credit will be included when the community college certifies that a student qualifies under this Compact.

Section III: Credits Beyond the Associate Degree

To complete the baccalaureate degree and receive Elementary Education licensure at the baccalaureate level, a student who transfers under this Compact may not be required to take more than 68 additional credits at the receiving institution unless the requirements of the student's academic major are such that:

the combination of additional requirements in arts and sciences coursework for the "Route One" requirements for the Initial Elementary Education Teacher License, institutional general education requirements, academic major requirements, and elementary education requirements total more than 68 credits.

Under these circumstances, transfer students will be subject to the same requirements as native students. (The term "native students" refers to students who began their undergraduate education at the baccalaureate institution.)

It is further understood that receiving institutions may require additional coursework if Department of Education licensure requirements change during the course of the associate degree.

Section IV: Admission to Competitive Majors or Programs

If because of space or fiscal limitations the receiving institution does not admit all qualified applicants to a given major or program, the receiving institution will use the same criteria for applicants who are transfer students under this Compact as it does for its native students.

Section V: *Elementary Education Transfer Coordinating Committee*

An Elementary Education Transfer Coordinating Committee, convened by the Board of Higher Education, will provide implementation and oversight of the Elementary Education Compact. The Coordinating Committee will consist of a total of eleven members: six members who are education faculty/administrators familiar with licensure regulations (two from the Community Colleges appointed by the Community College Executive Office, two from the State Colleges appointed by the State College Council of Presidents Office and two from the University appointed by the President's Office in consultation with the campuses); the three Joint Admissions Steering Committee co-chairs (one representing the Community Colleges, the State Colleges and the University campuses, respectively); and representatives from the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education and the Department of Education.

The Coordinating Committee will monitor, evaluate and, when necessary, modify the administration of the Elementary Education Compact. In addition, the Committee should implement guidelines that are consistent across the system to address such issues as: professional development, student advising, preparation for the CLST of MTEL, and curriculum development. The Elementary Education Transfer Coordinating Committee will work to create a system for evaluating the effectiveness of this Compact, and will assist the campuses with developing courses that meet the Department of Education's core content knowledge areas.

Section VI: *Publication of Requirements*

Each public college and university that accepts this policy shall include in its official undergraduate catalog the provisions of the Elementary Education Compact. Each campus agrees to use its best effort to provide participating Community College, State College or University campuses, respectively, with prompt notifications of changes in programs and curricula.

Section VII: *Transfer Records*

The student with Elementary Education Compact status will be furnished by the receiving institution a list of courses to be fulfilled to earn a bachelors degree no later than the end of the first semester at the receiving institution.

Section VIII: *Student Appeals*

A student who believes that the provisions of this Compact have not been applied fairly to his/her transfer application has the right to appeal.

Initially, differences of interpretation regarding the award of transfer credit shall be resolved between the student and the institution. The student shall present his/her evaluation of the situation to the institution from which he/she is transferring.

Representatives from the two institutions shall then have the opportunity to resolve the differences.

Absent a satisfactory resolution, differences of interpretation may be presented to the Joint Admissions Agreement Subcommittee for Appeals.

Section IX: Effective Date

The Elementary Education Compact takes effect for students matriculating at participating Community Colleges beginning September 1, 2004.