

Archived Information

Massachusetts Department of Education

GOAL: IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY

ACTIVITY: RECRUITMENT OF MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE TEACHERS

PURPOSE: Since 1999, the Department has been using a variety of strategies to recruit talented mid-career professionals and recent college graduates to enter teaching through alternative licensure programs, such as the Massachusetts Institute for New Teachers (MINT). These programs are structured to limit the obstacles that often prevent high-quality candidates from making a transition to the teaching profession.

SUMMARY: Recruitment efforts take place year-round, and involve a variety of activities targeted at groups that have experience in mathematics and science related fields. Activities include the following:

1. *Maintaining a comprehensive web site* – According to survey data collected during the 2002 MINT application process, 32% of the candidates cited the internet as their primary source of information about the program. The primary goal of the web site is to provide clear information about the program components and state licensure requirements and to bolster recruitment efforts by highlighting the success of former program participants through “testimonials” and profiles.
2. *Public relations campaign* – In collaboration with the Department’s media relations office, “human interest” stories featuring MINT graduates are disseminated to local and state-wide media outlets. Media exposure of this kind serves the dual purpose of raising public awareness about the program, and providing a clear profile of candidates we seek to attract.
3. *Partnership with the Division of Employment and Training (DET)* – The Massachusetts DET maintains a comprehensive database of employment opportunities and resumes of job seekers. The DET works with the Department to disseminate information about alternative licensure programs to targeted groups of candidates. The DET has the ability to send emails and flyers to all job seekers in their database with degrees in math or science related fields.
4. *Outreach to school administrators* – The Department disseminates information about alternative licensure programs through mailings to school administrators in urban communities. These administrators are often in contact with parent volunteers, high-quality substitute teachers, and paraprofessionals who could have an interest in becoming a full-time licensed teacher.
5. *College campus outreach* – Department recruiters make announced visits to top-notch college campuses throughout Massachusetts and surrounding states. They work with college career centers to schedule and announce information sessions, which are held throughout the academic year. The Department has identified numerous math/science related campus organizations (i.e., Society of Black Engineers) and contacts them prior to scheduled visits.
6. *Community information sessions* – The Department schedules and publicizes evening information sessions at community colleges and high schools in urban communities. Ads are typically placed in local newspapers for several days leading up to the information session. At the sessions, recruiters provide basic programmatic information, as well as strategies to help candidates prepare for the state-required teacher licensure exams.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: In 2002, the DOE received 954 applications for the MINT program. The following data provide an overview of their qualifications: (1) 80% mid-career professionals (5 or more years of work experience); (2) 3.2 average undergraduate GPA; (3) 48% possess master’s degrees; and (4) 12% possess doctoral degrees. The Department accepted 300 candidates to the program in 2002; 220 matriculated and completed the summer component of the program. Of this group, 96 participants are currently teaching in Massachusetts’s public schools and are on-track to complete state licensure requirements in secondary mathematics or science.