

**2025 -2026 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS FORM FOR CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN
MASSACHUSETTS READING SPECIALIST INITIAL LICENSURE (25 CREDITS)**

Initial Licensure for Reading Specialist Certificate Program (updated 5/27/25)

This form confirms your understanding of the program requirements and policies in the 25-credit Reading Specialist Initial Licensure Certificate Graduate Program.

Please read carefully, sign below, and return this form to the graduate admissions department with your completed application in order to enroll in classes.

Coursework Requirements:

- Once a student begins the licensure program courses cannot be transferred into the graduate program.
- The student must earn grades of B or better in all courses in the program. If a student earns a B- in a course, the student must pay and retake this course and receive a B or better. A grade of C+ or below will cause an automatic withdrawal from the program.
- Graduate students are not permitted to audit graduate courses.
- All courses need to be completed as required by the time the student completes the practicum. .
- **Reading Practicum/Reading Specialist Licensure:** Within the established time frame, teachers who want to pursue Massachusetts Reading Specialist licensure must successfully complete the following:
 1. Finish as required all Reading and Literacy Instruction degree courses.
 2. Pass the Reading Specialist and Communication and Literacy MTEs.
 3. Hold at minimum an initial teaching license and have taught under that license for one year.
 4. Complete a field experience in a Massachusetts public school, approved private special education school, Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care approved preschool, educational collaborative, or a school that requires Massachusetts educator licensure.
- **Attendance Policy from Academic Catalog:** Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes as outlined in the course syllabi. Absences and lack of participation significantly affect a student's learning and, therefore, their final grade. Specific absence policies are determined by each course instructor, announced at the beginning of each course and presented in the course syllabus. The syllabus includes course learning outcomes, assignments, grading information, and policies for attendance, make-up work, late work and related issues. Faculty will take attendance and will notify the Registrar's Office in writing of the last date of attendance of any student who stops attending classes.
- **Zoom Attendance Policy:** There is a Zoom attendance policy and that for every hour of ZOOM class missed, two points will be subtracted from a student's final course grade.
- **Late Work Policy:** There is a late work policy as outline in course syllabi. All assignments are expected to be completed and submitted in the learning management system, Canvas, as assigned, on the due date, and with no exceptions. Missing assignments are recorded as a zero until submitted. Once submitted, late assignments will receive a five-point deduction for each day past the due date.
- **MTEL Information:** The student must **pass** the **Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL)** prior to entering the Reading practicum RDG 590-Z1.
 - There are two required MTEs:
 - **Communication & Literacy**
 - **Reading Specialist Test**
 - It is the student's responsibility to register for all the tests and to be aware of registration deadlines, appropriate and required tests needed, and rules of test participation. Classes may be held on computer-based testing MTEL dates. *Students are not exempt from BPU classes on computer-based testing MTEL dates.* Please plan your test dates accordingly.
 - On occasion BPU may offer a Reading Specialist MTEL Online Test Preparation training. Participation in the workshop is highly recommended. If a student chooses to participate, enrollment in the session does not guarantee that a student will pass the MTEL.

Reading Practicum Requirements: Please note that BPU practicum goes above and beyond requirements set by DESE.

- A student will be eligible for a pre-practicum/practicum placement when s/he has passed all required components of the MTEL, holds a 3.0 cumulative grade point average, has a grade of B or better in every course, and has completed the required coursework.
- Students must complete a CORI (Criminal Offense Records Investigation) and any other requirements as mandated by a school district. Students are responsible for any required expenses associated with their placements including fingerprinting.
- Students who are completing fieldwork or practicum experiences in districts which require medical documentation services will be responsible for the cost of the service.
- If a student is withdrawn from the university before the practicum experience is completed, the student will need to be withdrawn from the entire practicum experience and repeat the entire practicum experience if admitted back into the university.
- A student who fails the practicum experience will not be allowed to return to BPU to complete another practicum experience.
- Candidates for reading specialist licensure must attend a Pre-Practicum Session (0 credits) which takes place prior to the start for the reading practicum. Practicum experiences take place at the site where the candidate is employed. When needed, Bay Path University will establish an appropriate Reading Specialist practicum site on the candidate's behalf. All practicum sites are approved by the program coordinator. The practicum site must be secured and approved prior to the start of the practicum. The site must be conducive to the various roles required of the Reading Specialist candidates (i.e., teaching individual students and groupings of students, assessing students and planning instruction, consulting with appropriate school staff on reading needs, instruction and materials, and providing professional development). In order to qualify for a practicum, the practicum teacher must complete all required licensure courses and pass all components of the MTEL (Communication & Literacy and Reading Specialist Licensure tests). There are four practicum sessions that run concurrently with the practicum experience. Practicum candidates throughout the practicum experience should demonstrate growth and contribute to the school and community. The integration in the program of Reading Specialist Subject Matter Guidelines (SMGs) for universal design, inclusive practices, sheltered English immersion, and diversity, ensures that candidates develop these competencies.

Overview of the Reading Practicum & Seminar (RDG 590):

- The Practicum (RDG 590) is a Post Baccalaureate field-based experience for licensure as a reading specialist (Academic: Specialist Teacher, Reading Initial All Levels) within the Bay Path University Reading and Literacy Instruction Degree Program. The candidate's performance is supervised and evaluated jointly by the sponsoring organization and the Supervising Practitioner. Candidates complete a 150-hour, supervised, semester-long practicum that enables them to engage in the multiple roles of the Reading Specialist (i.e., instruction, assessment, and leadership). Candidates are expected to work with students individually, in small groups, and with whole classes who are at different ability levels. Candidates are expected to administer formal and informal reading, writing, and spelling assessments; analyze formal and informal test results; and communicate results with appropriate school personnel. It is further expected that assessment results will be used to plan structured literacy instruction in (1.) phonemic awareness or phonics; (2.) comprehension; and (3.) writing. In addition to assessment and instruction, candidates are expected to demonstrate leadership skills as a reading specialist and literacy coach by planning and implementing targeted professional development, modeling lessons, and observing lessons at various grade levels. Candidates act as a resource for colleagues and administration by sharing instructional strategies, materials, and assessments learned in licensure coursework. Candidates also assist appropriate school personnel through consultation and collaboration for grouping options, and curriculum determinations.

Practicum Site:

- Practicum experiences take place at the site where the candidate is employed. When needed, Bay Path University will establish an appropriate Reading Specialist practicum site on the candidate's behalf. The Program Director of the Reading Specialist Program approves all practicum sites. The practicum site must be secured and approved prior to the start of the practicum. The site must be conducive to the various roles required of the Reading Specialist candidates (i.e., teaching individual students and groupings of students, assessing students and planning instruction, consulting with appropriate school staff on reading needs instruction and materials, and providing professional development). In order to qualify for a practicum, the Practicum Candidate must complete all required licensure courses and pass all components of the Massachusetts Test for Educator Licensure (MTEL) (i.e. Communication & Literacy and Reading Specialist Licensure tests) prior to beginning practicum hours. In addition to the Reading Pre-Practicum course, RDG554, the Reading Practicum Course, RDG590, consists of five practicum sessions that run concurrently with the practicum field

experience. Practicum Candidates throughout the experience should demonstrate growth, participate in educational activities, and contribute to the school and community.

Licensure:

- There is no guarantee that you will be recommended for licensure or will pass required exams.
- It is the student's responsibility to remain informed and compliant with all Massachusetts requirements for licensure; including MTEL test requirements.

Financial Aid:

- It is the student's responsibility to monitor his/her financial aid. Grades, changes to programs, etc. could have financial aid implications that students are required to monitor.
- Please know the federal financial aid guidelines limit the number of classes a student can complete within a program. If a student is switching between program options and/or degrees, or adding certificates to the program of study, it is the student's responsibility if seeking financial aid to work with the Office of Student Services to make sure all coursework will be covered.

General Program Information:

- **Each student must check his/her BPU Google email account on a daily basis.** All information about the program (as well as MTEL information) is posted in the School of Education Group in Canvas. Students are responsible for checking the School of Education Canvas Group weekly. Students must check the **Graduate Academic Catalog** for additional university/program policies. The catalog is found on the BPU Portal under Academics
- Students need to follow all university policies stated in the online graduate catalog.
- Students are responsible for making sure the correct audit is posted and for completing the required courses listed on the audit. The audit is found on the BPU Portal under Students.
- Student must adhere to all syllabi requirements and policies.
- Online courses are different than face-to-face courses. There are certain skills that an online student should have (or develop) in order to be successful in her or his online learning. **Before enrolling a BPU online course, you must complete BPU's EXT 099 Student Self-Paced CANVAS Online Training.** It is critical for you to know what is expected from you and what is needed to be a successful online learner.
- Requirements in the reading graduate program are subject to modification due to changes as stipulated by Bay Path University and/or recommendations from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Reading Specialist Licensure Candidates please sign and return to the Graduate Admissions Department.

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student's Name (*Print*): _____