



# Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Jeffrey C. Riley  
Commissioner

March 9, 2021

Dr. Richard S. Lapidus  
President  
Fitchburg State University  
160 Pearl Street  
Fitchburg, MA 01420-2697

Dear President Lapidus:

Under the authority of the certification law (M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 38G), the Commissioner “may approve programs devoted to the preparation of teachers and other education personnel.” In support of this, Fitchburg State University underwent a formal review during the 2020-2021 academic year in accordance with the regulations outlined in [603 CMR 7.00](#) and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s (Department) [Guidelines for Program Approval](#).

In coordination with the leadership and staff at your organization, the Department was able to conduct a robust performance evaluation that included a document review, an assessment of available outcome data, and a virtual onsite visit during which we interviewed several stakeholder groups including recent program completers, current candidates, and your PK-12 partners.

Based on the evidence and judgments outlined within the enclosed Formal Review Report, I have determined that Fitchburg State University is granted **full approval**. A Sponsoring Organization that has been granted full approval is recognized by the state to have met all standards for preparing effective educators in Massachusetts. Candidates are well-served by this organization and receive a high-quality preparation experience. Attainment of full approval under the 2012 Program Approval Standards is a significant achievement. I extend my congratulations to you and the Fitchburg State University community for achieving full approval of your educator preparation programs.

This approval status is provided to your Sponsoring Organization overall. Your organization’s overall approval status affords you the authority and the responsibility as an educator preparation provider to continue to monitor and assess the efficacy of individual programs throughout the period of approval.

Given the approval status, your organization is authorized to endorse candidates for licensure through August 31, 2028, with an anticipated review prior to that.

In the event that your Sponsoring Organization ceases to meet the requirements set forth in [603 CMR 7.03 \(2\) through \(4\)](#) or the Department finds insufficient evidence of your ability to continue to meet standards at either the program or organization level, the Department may conduct an interim review on an as-needed basis at any interval during the seven-year review cycle.

During your period of approval, candidates must be endorsed electronically through the Department's Early ID system by the individual you have identified as responsible for completing an audit of each candidate's successful completion of all approved program requirements prior to endorsement. Transcripts of Fitchburg State University's candidates for licensure must include the following endorsement statement:

*(This candidate) has completed a Massachusetts State approved program for licensure in (indicate field, level and type, e.g., Mathematics, 5-8, Initial) and is endorsed for licensure in this field under terms pursuant to the NASDTEC Interstate Agreement.*

On behalf of the Commonwealth, I would like to take this opportunity to commend Fitchburg State University for its demonstrated commitment to effectively preparing educators for Massachusetts' schools. I am grateful for your efforts and the resulting impact you have in supporting the success and achievement of our students.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey C. Riley  
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

C: Nancy Murray, Dean, School of Education  
Jason Miles, Director of Education Unit Accountability and Licensure  
Lindsay Zorich, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education State Specialist for Educator Preparation  
Carlos E. Santiago, Commissioner of Higher Education

Enclosure: Fitchburg State University's Formal Review Report