What is the LOOK Act?

- The Language Opportunities for Our Kids Act is designed to improve the education of English learners (ELs) and other students.

Proposed LOOK Act Regulations

- English Learner Parent Advisory Councils (603 CMR 14.09)
- English Learner Programs (603 CMR 14.04)
- Bilingual Education Endorsement (603 CMR 7.14 and 7.15)
- State Seal of Biliteracy (603 CMR 31.07)

1. English Learner Parent Advisory Councils (ELPAC)

- Districts that require an EL Parent Advisory Council are those with 100 or more English learners or where English learners comprise 5% of the student body
- Schools that require an EL Parent Advisory Council are those that have ELE programs and are underperforming or chronically underperforming.
- The council shall receive assistance from the ELE Director or other appropriate school personnel as designated by the Superintendent.
- ELPAC duties include but are not limited to:
  - Create by-laws (rules) regarding officers and operational procedures,
  - Advise the school district, school committee, and board of trustees on matters related to English learners,
  - Meet regularly with school or district leaders to participate in the planning and development of programs to improve educational opportunities for English learners
  - Advise the district on any new ELE programs before they are submitted for approval
  - Participate in the review of district and school improvement plans as they relate to English learners, and
  - Meet at least annually with the school committee or school council.

2. English Learner Programs: Proposed Regulations

- Proposed regulations establish the process that districts and the Department would use when a district applies to offer a new Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) program OR an alternative English learner education program.
- Proposed regulations also specify the process a district would follow when a parent/guardian requests to enroll or transfer an English learner into an English learner education program offered by the district.
Review Process for New ELE Programs Requirements: LOOK Act

- Districts that wish to operate a new SEI or alternative ELE program must submit information required to the Department.
- The Department has 90 days to review the information submitted and notify the district in writing whether the program fails to meet federal and state law requirements.
- There are two possible outcomes based on the Department’s review:
  - The district can begin the proposed program.
  - If required, the district will have 30 days to submit a revised proposal incorporating the feedback to bring the program into compliance.
- The Department will then review the revised proposal and determine whether the district can start implementing the program.

Parental Requests for an ELE Program

- A parent can request to enroll or transfer their student into another ELE program in the district. This is ultimately the Superintendent’s decision.
- Parents of 20 or more students may request the implementation of a new ELE district program. This is ultimately the Superintendent’s decision.
  - Districts must respond within 90 days after receiving the request and provide:
    - a plan for implementation of the requested program; or
    - a denial of the request, in writing, including an explanation of the denial.

3. Bilingual Education Endorsement; Proposed Regulations

- Proposed regulations clarify the requirements to earn a Bilingual Education endorsement.
- Proposed regulations specify which educators will need the SEI or Bilingual Education endorsements.
- Proposed regulations allow the Commissioner to issue a one-year waiver of the Bilingual Education Endorsement requirements under certain circumstances.

4. State Seal of Biliteracy: Proposed Regulations

Proposed regulations describe the process and criteria for earning the State Seal of Biliteracy.

Seal of Biliteracy Proposed Criteria

1. Meets all graduation requirements.
2. Demonstrates a high level of proficiency in English as measured by MCAS.
3. Demonstrates a high level of proficiency in a foreign language by attaining a minimum score on a nationally recognized and readily available assessment or an alternative evidence method established by the Department.

For Comments, please see the information below:

Written comments on the proposed amendments may be submitted by mail to: Sibel Hughes, OELAAA, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148; by fax to: 781-338-3395; or by email to: LOOKAct@doe.mass.edu. The following link may also be used to submit public comment on the proposed revisions: Proposed Amendments to English Learner Education Regulations: Public Comment Survey. The deadline for submission of public comment is Friday, May 18, 2018. The Board is expected to vote on the proposed amendments to the regulations at its regular monthly meeting scheduled for June 26, 2018.