

Match Teacher Residency

“The Contract”

Our goal is to lay out the program expectations to ensure that our program is a good fit for you.

Remember: you don't need MTR to get a teaching job. You can get a Massachusetts license just by taking a test, so you don't need us for a license, either.

You don't need us! If you're signing up for our training program, the only good reason is:

You want us to mold you into a jaw-droppingly good No Excuses first year teacher.

1. Change

This program benefits from continuous improvement based on your feedback and the feedback of your predecessors.

Therefore, certain elements of the content and the process may change.

To participate effectively you must be willing to deal with occasional change.

2. Program Content & Format

We pride ourselves on learning by surveying our trainees. After each session, we get feedback on a scale of 1 to 10 for everything we did together. From that, we constantly tweak the weekend training.

This leads to better training for you. It also means, however, one more online survey, after every day of training. Thoughtful participation in the surveys is a requirement.

We use our limited time to practice (until mastery) specific "teaching moves", rather than engage in lengthy discussions about alternative approaches. We are very open to such discussions, but we'll ask you to table that either until after training sessions are over, or during the regular week when you have a free period.

In other words, please indulge us when you or another trainee asks us a question during our training, and we politely table it -- and move on.

The tone and feedback in the program is often direct rather than suggestive. That doesn't mean we are trying to exert authority for its own sake. It means that, just like a violin teacher, we'll say "Okay now do X" instead of "Hmmm....well, you could try X, or Y, or Z...."

3. Assessing You

When most people think of measuring teachers, they think of in-class performance. How effective are you in front of groups of kids? First, do you have them focused and exerting a lot of effort? Second, are you turning that effort into learning? And indeed, those are the main ways we evaluate our residents.

However, we will also assess other aspects of your work. We find that they're equally critical to becoming an unusually effective first year teacher.

Here are the areas in which you will be assessed during the residency year:

1. In-Class Execution

- a. Degree to which you execute a tight, legit lesson¹ where kids are focused, exerting effort and turning effort into learning.

2. Feedback Implementation

- a. Degree to which you embrace and quickly act on the feedback your coaches give you

3. Lesson Planning Quality

- a. Degree to which you plan curriculum that is appropriately rigorous and engaging for students.

4. Professionalism and Efficiency

- a. The degree to which you present a positive affect, responsibly complete tasks on a timeline, communicate with students and families about progress, interact professionally with training staff and colleagues, and generally manage “the grind.”

5. Mastery of Coursework

- a. Written assessments (daily content mastery quizzes & formal “test days”)
- b. Performance assessments throughout the year

4. Formal and Informal Calendar Checkpoints

MTR has checkpoints. Since you don't need an MTR certification to teach, the checkpoints free us to pursue our goal – which is excellent rookie teaching, not decent rookie teaching.

Formal Checkpoints:

- **November and April:** You take written assessments for the courses you take in the fall and the spring.
- **November/December:** In December, you'll receive the results of the certification tests (MTEL) that you took in November. You need to pass the MTEls necessary for your subject area in order to continue in the program. If you don't pass these tests in November, you'll have one more chance to take the tests in March 2013. However, we won't start the job process with you until we get the results of your March test – which probably won't come until mid-April. That means you'll be “on the sidelines” while your MTR colleagues are interviewing, and in some cases, getting and accepting job offers. If you don't pass the March test, you'll exit the program. So this is all to say: the MTEL matters a lot.

¹ You'll learn exactly what we mean by tight-legit lessons in your instructional methods courses.

- **January:** The January Gateway is a formal assessment of the work you do in your “Group of 6” simulations. This is the first real test in front of kids: simulated classes of 5 to 10 minutes where kids deliberately misbehave in a highly controlled way. You will have had many weeks of practice before this Gateway. You need to essentially show that you can manage a classroom reasonably well, while also juggling some basic instructional planning and execution tasks.
- **May:** Your spring student teaching is assessed through four components: your ability to implement feedback, overall classroom performance, lesson planning and professionalism. We’ll explain each of these in more detail as we get closer to this.
- **July:** Your summer student teaching is assessed through the same four components as spring student teaching, plus a fifth category that measures your ability to succeed in the day-to-day planning and teaching grind. A challenge for us: it’s really only during the summer when you teach every day, and we get to observe you as a full-time teacher. Therefore it’s possible that a trainee could get through May student teaching (since you are paired with another teacher), yet struggle in the summer. In the last week of **July**, we give either graduation with distinction, graduation, or no graduation/certification. If you are at any risk of non-certification, you’ll have had a series of meetings in advance.

These are the formal assessment check points during the Residency Year. You must meet the criteria for each check point in order to continue in the residency program. We have detailed documents describing all of these components and tasks. We’ll review all of it with you.

Informal Checkpoints: Grade Level Focus & Job Search

Early November: In late October/early November, you’ll have an opportunity to formally request a program change from Elementary to MS/HS or from MS/HS to Elementary. In late October, the program for Elementary begins to diverge from the MS/HS program in terms of the methods courses as well as the practice. The practice culminates in the Gateway. You need to pass the Gateway for the level you student-teach and intend to teach next year – either elementary or MS/HS. If you would like to request a program change, you must do so in writing, before November 1st. The request does not automatically get approved. We talk about it as a team. If the request is approved, then your courses, practice and student teaching also change.

February/March: There is an informal checkpoint that occurs around the job search. In late February/early March, we meet to discuss your job preferences, and also to help explore any uncertainties you have about whether indeed you want to become a teacher, or you want to continue in our program.

It is our job to know how hireable you are; we want you to be an excellent rookie teacher with a job in a No Excuses school. If you’re not on track to do that, we’ll let you know. If there is stuff that is limiting where you’ll be able to be placed (i.e. hired), we’ll tell you.

Basically, at this point, you passed the January Gateway and have since done several weekends of student teaching. Based on all your work in the MTR program so far, plus Nedra’s/Sara’s/Matt’s evaluation of your work *as a tutor*, we need to tell you that we are either recommending you or not.

This yes/no should not be a surprise. If there are warning signs, you'll know in advance. While our past cohorts don't necessarily predict the future ones, this is probably a concern for about 10% of MTR.

We call this a "checkpoint" because it may mean that we delay the job search process for you until we can confidently recommend you to one of these schools.

Although there's not enough data for us to pass judgment on your potential to one day become a great rookie teacher, we can use the data points we have from your performance in MTR so far, feedback from MC directors, and your first few weekends of student teaching to determine whether you're ready to enter the job search process.

We've had a few cases of people who were really struggling at this point and who were very openly questioning whether they wanted to go on in the program. We were also transparently questioning whether they were on track to successfully complete the program. In those cases, we delayed the job search until we had more information about their performance and felt comfortable putting them forward in the process.

We get asked point blank by principals: would you hire this person to teach at Match? If the answer is no, we need to be honest with the principal and with you.

4a. Healthy Exit

We at MTR don't believe we have a perfect program, or that we're the right fit for everyone. We're not. There are many good approaches to teaching. And other good approaches to training.

At some point during the program, you might realize:

- a. You don't want to be a teacher
- b. You want to teach, but don't want to teach in a No Excuses style, and therefore our program isn't right for you
- c. You don't really buy our methods, or you think we're well-intentioned but not particularly useful to you
- d. Even though you like MTR, you feel stretched on time and want to quit so you can focus on being an effective tutor

Per #4 above, if you want to leave at any of the formal or informal checkpoints, no hard feelings! Outside of the dates listed above, if the program or job we're training you for doesn't feel like a good fit for you, come talk to us.

In Cohort 4, we started with 56 trainees. We ended with 36. Fifteen chose to leave (eight before the Gateway, two before student teaching started in February, and five during the first two months of student teaching.) Five didn't pass the January Gateway.

In Cohort 3, we started with 42 trainees. We ended up with 28. Nine chose to leave (eight before the Gateway, and 1 during student teaching) and five didn't pass the January Gateway.

If you decide that MTR is not right for you (for any of the reasons above), it's okay. You're not leaving 100 kids without a teacher on Monday morning; you're not letting down colleagues who now have to cover your classes. You're still part of the Match family.

What happens if you're not on track by March for us to recommend you for a job? One of two things: 1) we delay your job process and create very clear performance criteria. Once you've met the performance criteria, we open the job search. Or: 2) You don't go through the No Excuses job search process that we lead; there's no point. You healthy exit. Depending on your situation, this might include:

- a) We help you apply for other teaching jobs where the hiring bar is not crazy high (i.e., 3 openings and 600 applicants) or we help you seek other non-teaching jobs. This could be a prep school, suburban school, or other school. In no way do we stop you from pursuing any job you want, just like anyone in a normal grad school. We just can't use our relationship to GET you job opportunities.
- b) You may decide to pursue something else – which we'll also help you with.

Remember: you don't need MTR to become a teacher. If you're signing up for our program, it means ***you want us to mold you into an unusually effective No Excuses first year teacher.***

(After the February/March checkpoint, we are recommending you for jobs. So then it does become a problem...if you were to take a job, and then renege on the commitment, it hurts your MTR peers by leaving that school in the lurch.)

We don't want any ill feelings whether you choose to leave (though we still believe you're on track to be a great first year teacher), or we mutually agree that MTR is not the right fit, or even in the rare case where you want to stay but we don't feel you're on track to graduate from MTR.

We want a healthy exit, where you now have your Fridays and Saturdays free again, where you may pursue any other teacher training option or teaching job (which we'd expect to *help* you with), where your focus is now 100% back on your tutees and you don't have the stress of MTR.

5. Time and Commitment

a. Your MATCH Corps **responsibilities to your tutees cannot be compromised** by participation in the teacher training program.

I.e., you can't tell Nedra, Sara or Matt or a teacher or anyone else: "Sorry I didn't prepare well for Monday's tutorial or didn't accomplish XYZ -- I really was tired from teacher training."

b. **Attend all training sessions.**

c. MTR strives to keep all the trainings to our allotted Friday and Saturday. This means Friday from 8:30 to 6:30 and Saturday, 8:00 to 5:00 p.m. we'll fit in most the training, readings, assessments, prep time, and surveys. You'll have two books to read over the course of the year. They'll be scheduled so that you can read them a little at a time or all at once over a vacation. These texts, in addition to your coursework on Fridays and Saturdays, will be assessed in your fall and spring written assessments.

Sometimes MTRs choose to put in extra prep time for their student teaching in the Spring.

6. Job Placement

We were pleased with our success last year of getting teaching jobs for our trainees, much better than Teach For America or Boston Teacher Residency, for example. Last year, all 36 members of Cohort 4 got teaching jobs (all signed by June). In many cases, a charter school had several hundred applicants, 2 or 3 jobs, and chose an MTR. In fact, they even pay MTR a fee (which is same as Teach For America) to hire you.

With that said, we do not in any way guarantee you a job. You own your job search.

However, we do provide enormous help to you, much more than any traditional university program.

In February/March you will meet with us for a 1 on 1. You tell us if you want to be in Massachusetts or elsewhere; and if you want to be in a No Excuses charter school, a turnaround school, or elsewhere.

We then bring in a number of principals who "shop" for teachers in March. That way, by May or June, you already know if you've gotten a job from one of the No Excuses and if you don't, you can expand your search accordingly.

Due to the changes in the charter cap in Massachusetts, Boston No Excuses charters generally have more openings than they've had in the past. These positions are still highly competitive. Remember, you're not just competing against other first year teachers or TFAers for a position; you're competing with the veteran teachers, too.

For now, though, you understand that MTR needs you to make a good faith effort to obtain a teaching position next year, and teach for at least two years total, in a high-poverty school.

We suggest a No Excuses type, and we prefer one in Massachusetts (because half our funding comes from a foundation which serves MA kids).

But as long as it's a high-poverty school somewhere in USA, then that fills our requirement.

(Our success and our ability to continue training teachers in the future will be measured not just by the quality of teachers we produce, but also by whether we are providing teachers to serve kids from low-income backgrounds for two or more years).

7. The Charles Sposato Graduate School of Education and the M.E.T. degree

MTR's sister organization is the Charles Sposato Graduate School of Education. (CSGSE). As an MTR, you are automatically enrolled in the CSGSE. CSGSE provides the graduate courses; MTR provides the coaching, practice and student teaching. At the successful end of your MTR year, you may opt to continue the second year with the CSGSE to earn a Master of Effective Teaching degree.

The second year of the CSGSE happens during your first year of teaching, but 85% of your master's degree work is done at the end of the residency year. During this "Year 2" you participate in a "distance-learning" course (during your rookie year of teacher.) Roughly 2-4 hours per week of work (in addition to your 60-70 hour work week). The course involves collecting different types of evaluations of your teaching, and implementing action plans in response to those evaluations.

The award of the M.E.T. degree is determined by 1st year teaching performance as measured by principal input, student surveys, observations and student achievement data.

You have a chance to hit our M.E.T. benchmark in your 2nd year of teaching if you fail to reach it in Year 1.

Again, the degree is "opt-in" for those who successfully graduate from MTR.

8. Your Pledge

I am 100% committed to doing the work required by MTR.

I will teach for the 2 years immediately following the completion of MTR. A co-teaching or assistant teaching job, if I choose to take one, also fulfills this pledge.

I understand the MTR preference is that I will teach in a Massachusetts charter school, or in a No Excuses charter school in another city, but this is just a preference.

I realize MTR is a one-year program, from September through the end of July. July is summer teaching.

Then, even after I get a license and a job, in August, September, and October I may receive ongoing coaching from MTR in my new job. I realize that this ongoing support helps MTR to fulfill their promises to employers that MTR grads will be unusually effective, and to analyze common challenges of MTR grads to improve the overall training program for the next year.

8. Tuition

The cost to train each MTR is over \$15,000 per person. Here's the breakdown of how we finance that cost:

- Total \$15,000
 - \$4,000 paid by philanthropists. No cost to you.
 - \$6,000 paid by the school who hires you for September 2014. No cost to you. (This is similar to how Teach for America works).
 - \$5,000 paid by you. None of this is due until you start getting full-time teaching paychecks -- the year AFTER you graduate from MTR.

The \$5,000 tuition is paid back to the Sposato GSE in multiple installments during your first two years of full-time teaching. No tuition is due during the residency year at Match.

To be clear:

A. While in MTR, you will not be responsible for paying ANY tuition to MTR.

B. After you graduate from MTR, you will be responsible for paying \$5,000 of tuition retroactively if and only if we place you in a teaching job for the following year.

C. You will be responsible for paying that \$5,000 regardless of anything that happens once we've successfully placed you in a teaching job (i.e. if you change positions, take a leave of absence, quit before teaching for 2 full years, or are fired, you'll still need to make your payments).

We'll waive the tuition if:

- a) You depart MTR before job placement happens, and do not seek employment as a full-time teacher in a school with a similar no-excuses philosophy. Again, see the "Healthy Exit" section of this contract, or
- b) You seek a teaching job in good faith (in our judgment), but don't find one.

We, the Match Teacher Residency Program Staff and Faculty, make a good faith promise:

- **To generally restrict teacher training learning to Fridays and Saturdays.** We won't assign 4 hours of readings and say "Do this by next Friday." If you are struggling in a particular area, however, we'll work together to find some extra practice time.
- To help teacher candidates find, secure, and prepare for teaching jobs in No Excuses schools once they graduate. **We're pretty confident in this area, but of course can make no guarantees.**
- To provide candidates with the time, teaching "at-bats", and coaching necessary to meet program requirements and become unusually successful first-year teachers.
- To respond to any concerns and questions you may have about training content or any other aspect of the training program within one week's time.
- To provide induction support to program graduates in August, September, and October 2013.

- To hold the teacher training team accountable for the quality of training sessions, as evaluated by the candidates themselves, as well as outside judges.
- To hold the teacher training team accountable for the performance of program graduates -- in terms of generating big gains in student achievement each year.

I, a Match Teacher Residency Program Participant, promise:

That I have read, understand and carefully thought about these commitments. I understand that at times it may be difficult to balance the demands of my responsibilities in the Corps with the demands of MTR. But I am willing to put in the amount of effort necessary to persevere and succeed because I believe in the importance of this work.

Accepted and Agreed:

Name of Trainee
Home Address

Orin Gutlerner
Director of Match Teacher Residency