Introduction

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, districts will start collecting feedback from students and staff for use in educator evaluation. Student feedback will be a source of evidence in all educators' evaluations, and staff feedback will inform administrators' evaluations. Many districts, schools, and educators already use feedback to inform educator practice. Districts and schools across the Commonwealth, for example, use surveys to improve school climate and safety, and educators frequently collect student feedback on lessons, assignments, and classroom routines to reflect on and improve their own practices.

The inclusion of student and staff feedback as a source of evidence in educator evaluation is an exciting opportunity for all districts to solicit and apply feedback from students and educators throughout the district to the improvement of educator practice. Students—those with the most to gain from improved teacher practice—will have the opportunity to provide information to their teachers that will lead to meaningful adjustments in the classroom. Similarly, staff will be able to reflect on the practices of their administrators and highlight areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

Recent research has shown that student perception data, when combined with observations and multiple measures of student achievement, can result in judgments of educator practice that are more valid and reliable than evaluations based on just one or two types of evidence. By including student and staff feedback in educator evaluation, Massachusetts districts will be able to provide the most comprehensive, clear, and descriptive picture of an educator's effectiveness.

Implementation Timeline

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, all districts are required to:

- Incorporate student feedback as a source of evidence related to one or more of the Standards of Effective Teaching Practice or Standards of Effective Administrative Leadership Practice used in determining each educator's Summative Performance Rating
- Incorporate staff feedback as a source of evidence related to one or more of the Standards of Effective Administrative Leadership Practice used in determining each administrator's Summative Performance Rating

ESE Support & Engagement

In July 2014, ESE will release model surveys for students and staff that will be closely aligned to the Standards and Indicators of Effective Teaching and Effective Administrative Leadership Practice. Districts can adopt or adapt these surveys, and/or choose to use other feedback instruments. ESE will also release guidance on incorporating feedback into Summative Performance Ratings, as well as model contract language to support collective bargaining. To develop the model surveys and guidance, ESE is engaging educators at all levels, conducting two survey administration pilots in nine MA districts, and consulting with national experts. ESE is also partnering with a vendor to develop an online survey platform which will be used to facilitate the survey administration pilots and will potentially be available for use by all districts in 2014-15.

To receive updates on this project and learn about opportunities to provide input, subscribe to our monthly Educator Evaluation e-Newsletter: http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/communications/newsletter/.
1. **How has ESE engaged stakeholders in the development of the model instruments and guidance documents?**

ESE has consulted with a diverse group of stakeholders in the development of the model instruments and guidance documents. Notably, teams of educators, including PreK-12 teachers, school administrators, and district leaders were convened in Fall 2013 and Winter 2014 to review and provide feedback on pilot survey items.

2. **How does feedback get incorporated into an educator's evaluation?**

There is no weight or value associated with feedback in an educator’s evaluation. Districts have the flexibility to determine how student and staff feedback informs the Summative Performance Rating. Based on recommendations from stakeholders and research partners, ESE is recommending student and staff feedback be used to inform an educator’s self-assessment, shape their goal-setting process, and/or demonstrate changes in practice over time.

3. **Will districts be required to adopt ESE’s model survey instruments?**

No, districts are not required to adopt the model surveys. ESE recognizes that many districts may already have a history of administering student and staff surveys, or may have other feedback instruments they prefer. The model surveys will be an available resource, not a requirement.

4. **Are surveys the only method of collective feedback that ESE recommends?**

No. While surveys are a widely used method of collecting student and staff feedback, districts are free to choose alternative vehicles for collecting feedback. Districts may conclude that surveys are appropriate for some educator roles, but not all. For example, ESE’s model student surveys is designed to collect feedback about a student’s primary classroom teacher and the model staff survey is designed to collect feedback about a school principal. If districts choose to use these resources, they will have to adapt or supplement them with other tools in order to collect feedback for other educator roles.

---

**Learn More About Student & Staff Feedback:**

Student perception surveys can be a helpful tool for improving professional practice.

- Measures of Effective Teaching: Final Research Report
- Student Perceptions and the MET Project
- Policy & Practice Brief: Asking Students About Teaching
- Policy & Practice Brief: Gathering Feedback for Teaching
- Student Voices: What Makes a Great Teacher?

Staff effectiveness and school climate are also key factors in promoting student achievement.

- Policy Brief: Exploring the School Climate-Student Achievement Link
- School Climate Brief: Center for Social and Emotional Education
- Multiple Measures of Teacher Effectiveness in Hillsborough County Public Schools: The Role of Principals

Visit the “Student & Staff Feedback” page on the ESE Educator Evaluation website: http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/
Beginning next year, teachers and administrators will start collecting and utilizing feedback about their practice as part of the 5-step cycle of evaluation. Although this is a new component of the evaluation process, feedback from students and staff already plays a key role in teaching and learning in schools throughout the Commonwealth. Whether it’s a third grade teacher using weekly exit slips to gather student input on learning activities, a principal convening a group of teachers to collect feedback on a new initiative, or a librarian canvassing students for opinions about new resources, the use of feedback to shape and refine practice is a familiar idea for many educators.

Students possess invaluable insight about their teachers’ day-to-day practice. Similarly, staff possess valuable insight into administrators’ day-to-day practice. Rebecca Duda, an 8th grade social studies teacher in Dracut and member of ESE’s Educator Effectiveness Teacher Cabinet, describes the integral role feedback plays in her instruction: "Two-way communication between teachers and students is a cornerstone of effective practice. I have been utilizing surveys for several years to gauge how effective different assessments or other learning activities in my classroom are. The feedback helps inform my practice."

By adding student and staff feedback to the types of evidence that educators will use in the evaluation process, the Massachusetts’ educator evaluation framework seeks to highlight and leverage this critical perspective to support professional growth and development. Through ESE’s engagement with the field, we’ve learned it’s important to keep in mind the following key messages when talking about incorporating student and staff feedback into the 5-step evaluation cycle:

- **Feedback is one component of an evaluation framework that draws on many different types of evidence.** Alongside artifacts, observation feedback, and student performance measures, feedback will provide educators and evaluators with another type of information about the effectiveness of their practice.

- **Feedback should be meaningful and actionable.** What’s important is that the feedback be directly related to the educator’s day-to-day practice, and that it yield information that’s meaningful and actionable to the educator.

- **There are no weights or formulas.** There is no weight or value associated with feedback in an educator’s evaluation. Rather, the feedback provided by students or staff can be used to inform an educator’s self-assessment, shape their goal-setting process, and/or demonstrate changes in practice over time.

- **Feedback collection tools can take many forms.** While student and staff feedback is frequently collected using surveys, districts can choose to use alternative collection tools for some or all educators. Feedback can come from many places—surveys, feedback slips, focus groups, etc. We know that many educators are already collecting feedback from students and staff. This is an opportunity to further develop those processes and to explicitly share how they inform changes to practice.

In an effort to assist districts with this work, ESE will publish two model surveys in July 2014—one for students to complete about a classroom teacher and one for staff to complete about a school leader. The model surveys are aligned to observable practices associated with MA’s Standards of Effective Teaching and Administrative Leadership Practice, and are designed to give educators concrete information about areas of strength, as well as areas where they can improve. These surveys will be optional tools for MA districts to consider as they decide which feedback collection strategies to pursue in the upcoming year.

ESE hopes to provide student surveys appropriate for different grade spans: K-2, 3-5, and 6-12. However, ESE will not release a K-2 survey unless the pilot analyses strongly support its use and ability to provide meaningful information to K-2 educators.

The survey development process has involved two rounds of piloting in several MA districts: the first in February and the second earlier this month. The pilot process has helped ESE better understand the types of survey items that students and staff are most confident responding to and teachers and administrators find most useful. Colleen Mucha, principal of West Brookfield Elementary School in Quaboag Regional School District, sums up how her teachers responded to the pilot surveys: "I am so pleased at how the teachers have really reflected upon the student responses. I have even seen some positive changes in practice since the results came. I think this is a very good sign for the potential impact of these surveys."

You can learn more about the use of student and staff feedback and our pilot project on our [Student and Staff Feedback webpage](#), which includes a two-page Quick Reference Guide, sample pilot survey items, and research on using feedback in evaluation processes.
### Purpose
Beginning in the 2014–2015 school year, districts will start collecting feedback from students and staff for use in educator evaluation. ESE is charged with recommending and supporting a feasible, sustainable, cost effective way for districts to collect and report back feedback to educators in a manner that can inform and improve educator effectiveness. To that end, ESE is developing model student and staff feedback surveys for optional use by MA districts beginning next year. The ESE model surveys are designed in accordance with the following criteria:

- Items are aligned to observable practices within the Standards and Indicators of Effective Teaching Practice (student survey) and Effective Administrative Leadership Practice (staff survey).
- Survey information provides educators with actionable information to improve their practice.
- Items are developmentally appropriate and accessible to students.

Model surveys for classroom teachers and school-level administrators will be published by July 2014.

### Instrument Development
Pilot student surveys about classroom teachers were developed for students in three grade spans: grades K-2, grades 3-5, and grades 6-12. Items were based on observable practices related to Curriculum, Planning & Assessment (Standard I) and Teaching All Students (Standard II). Items were first developed for the G6-G12 survey; K-G2 and G3-G5 items were derived from G6-G12 items. The pilot staff survey was developed for school staff to provide feedback to school leaders on observable administrative leadership practices related to Instructional Leadership (Standard I),Management & Operations (Standard II), and Professional Culture (Standard VI). Publicly available items were considered for inclusion in both surveys.

Through two pilot administrations, individual survey items as well as the instruments in their entirety were evaluated in accordance with four criteria: Reliability, Content Validity, Utility, and Accessibility. A partial credit Rasch model was used to assess the performance of individual items across respondents; expert reviewers evaluated item meaning and utility; and student feedback informed item accessibility (see Stakeholder Engagement).

### Pilot Sample & Implementation Schedule
Eight districts and one collaborative volunteered to participate in the ESE Model Survey Pilot: six districts and one collaborative piloted the student surveys (n=19,255 across Pilots 1 and 2) and seven districts piloted the staff survey (n=1,559 across Pilots 1 and 2). Data indicate that samples were reasonably representative of the student and staff population in Massachusetts at each grade span.

- Auburn Public Schools
- Boston Public Schools
- Greater Lawrence Technical School
- Lincoln Public Schools
- Malden Public Schools
- Norwell Public Schools
- Quaboag Regional SD
- South Coast Education Collaborative
- Westport Public Schools

- Pilot Administration #1: February 3rd – 14th
- Item Analysis & Refinement: February/March
- Pilot Administration #2: March 31st – April 11th
- Item Analysis & Refinement: April—June

### Stakeholder Engagement
Approximately 900 items were developed for the pilot surveys, the majority of which were evaluated by a diverse set of stakeholder groups across several forums:

- **Expert Reviewers**: teams of educators, including PreK-12 teachers, school administrators, and district leaders were convened ten times in Fall 2013, Winter 2014 and Spring 2014 to review and provide feedback on pilot survey items and feedback guidance. (content validity & utility)
- **Cognitive Interviews**: select students in grades K-12 engaged in individual and small-group interviews in Spring 2014. (item accessibility)
- **Pilot District Educator Feedback**: educators in pilot districts provided feedback on survey forms, individual items, and overall guidance through ESE site-visits and post-administration online feedback forms. (content validity, utility and accessibility)
- **Statewide Educator Input**: educators across the state were invited to respond to an item feedback survey in May 2014. (item utility)

---

1 Districts are not required to use ESE model feedback surveys.
### Student Feedback: YEAR 1 STRATEGIC PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION WORKSHEET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confirm district-level approach to feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct a needs assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a team(s) to identify feedback instruments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirm feedback instruments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective Bargaining</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>