A Welcome from Commissioner Chester

I am excited to share with you the first edition of a new monthly e-newsletter on educator evaluation in Massachusetts. Our goal at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is to provide outstanding customer service. With this new e-newsletter, we intend to keep you informed about the implementation of the new educator evaluation framework. Each month, the e-newsletter will include key information and resources, including announcements of trainings and other professional development opportunities, reminders about upcoming events and deadlines, and news and stories of innovative practices used by school and district leaders across the Commonwealth to adopt and implement the new educator evaluation system.

The new educator evaluation system is one of the most important reform initiatives we are undertaking, with the potential to drive improvements in both educator development and student learning. Done well, for the vast majority of our educators this new framework will be about growth and development – and not about employment decisions. Districts cannot afford to pause or sit back and wait to see how the statewide implementation unfolds. I expect the next few years of implementation to reflect a development trajectory – our implementation this year will be less sophisticated than in future years as we learn what works. With each passing year, I expect that the new educator evaluation framework will contribute to more savvy instructional programs and accelerated improvement in achievement.

We see you as an invaluable partner in the development and implementation of this new framework. Please know that you can count on the Department to be active and engaged in the challenging but critical work ahead. I look forward to working with you and learning from you going forward.

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

New Resources Available

- **Guide to Role Specific Indicators.** Released as a supplement to Part III: Guide to Rubrics and Model Rubrics for Superintendent, Principal and Teacher, this appendix discusses ways districts use role-specific indicators or other strategies to support the evaluation of educators in specific roles.

- **Evaluation E-Forms.** All evaluation forms included in Model System documents are now available on our Resources page as individual forms that can be completed electronically.

- **Teacher Training Workshop 4: Gathering Evidence.** The Gathering Evidence workshop is now available on the Educator Evaluation website. This workshop reviews the three types of evidence required in an evaluation, and provides tips and strategies for determining high quality artifacts of practice and measures of student learning.

Do you have highlights or success stories about your work to adopt the new evaluation framework that you would like to share? To submit your story, please send an email to EducatorEvaluation@doe.mass.edu (Type “Newsletter Spotlight” in the subject line).
**RTTT District Implementation Launch**

In September 2012, over 225 Race-to-the-Top districts and charters schools around the Commonwealth joined the state’s Level 4 schools and 11 Early Adopter districts in implementing the new educator evaluation framework. With this state-wide launch, Massachusetts joins states like Georgia, Delaware, Indiana and North Carolina in an exciting effort to improve educator effectiveness and prepare all students to succeed in the world that awaits them after high school.

To date, over 199 districts and charter schools have submitted their evaluation systems to ESE for review. Many have chosen to implement the ESE Model System for Educator Evaluation, which includes Model rubrics as well as protocols for educator evaluations. A significant number of districts have also chosen to adapt components of the Model System in order to meet individual needs of their educators or pilot innovative strategies related to supervision and evaluation. Finally, a small group of districts and charter schools have decided to revise their existing evaluation system to meet the regulatory requirements for evaluating educators, which will provide yet another opportunity to learn about and strengthen existing practices related to supervision and evaluation. ESE welcomes feedback on the roll-out of these new systems from all educators at EducatorEvaluation@doe.mass.edu.

**Educator Evaluation Training Programs**

In partnership with American Institutes for Research and with feedback from teachers and evaluators, ESE has developed two evaluation training programs: Training Modules for Evaluators and School Leadership Teams, and Training Workshops for Teachers and Specialized Instructional Support Personnel.

**Training Modules for Evaluators & School Leadership Teams:** Each training module is 2-3 hours in length and includes knowledge-building and interactive learning activities for evaluators and school leadership teams. Modules can be delivered at a discounted rate by ESE-approved vendors. Districts may choose to partner together and work with regional facilitators, or identify in-house trainers to deliver these modules.

**Training Workshops for Teachers:** The teacher training workshop series includes a 1-hour Orientation and four 1-hour workshops that address rubrics, the self-assessment process, and S.M.A.R.T. goal development. The Orientation and Workshops 1-3 are required training for all educators without evaluator responsibilities, which will include the majority of classroom teachers, as well as instructional support personnel such as school nurses, guidance counselors, school psychologists, and others.

**Approved Vendors**

ESE has pre-approved vendors to support preparation for and implementation of the new educator evaluation framework in Race to the Top districts. Vendors have been approved to provide services in the following three categories:

- **Category A:** Training Module Delivery.
- **Category B:** Comprehensive Evaluator Training.
- **Category C:** Technical Assistance Providers.

*Category A and B services from ESE-approved vendors are subsidized by ESE.

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**Mark Your Calendar**

**Getting Started Workshops for non-Race to the Top Districts**

**REGISTER NOW!!!** ESE will be presenting six Getting Started Workshops for non-Race to the Top districts on the new educator evaluation framework from February 25th through March 13th. Featuring guest speakers from districts currently implementing the new framework, each workshop will provide district and school leadership teams with important information on the 5-Step Cycle of evaluation, implementation tips and strategies, and key reporting requirements.

Interested participants may register for any of the six Getting Started workshops here:

- Berkshire (Lenox HS), Feb. 25th, 8:30-11:30am
- Central (Fitchburg HS), Feb. 26th, 2pm-5pm
- Northeast (Andover, West MS), March 5th, 3pm-6pm
- Pioneer Valley, (Minnechaug Reg. HS), March 6th, 3pm-6pm
- Greater Boston (Malden HS), March 7th, 3pm-6pm
- Southeast (Attleboro, Brennan MS), March 13th, 1pm-4pm

Want to share an upcoming event? Submit events to EducatorEvaluation@doe.mass.edu, please include "Newsletter Mark Your Calendar" in the subject line.

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**Staff and Student Feedback**

**Did you know?**

Student perception surveys are one of the best predictors of student learning, and can be more closely correlated with student achievement than even observations. Researchers have concluded that students provide accurate and helpful information for improving classroom instruction. The Massachusetts Task Force on the Evaluation of Teachers and Administrators found these findings compelling and recommended the inclusion of student and staff feedback as a category of evidence in the evaluation of Massachusetts educators.

Beginning in the 2013-2014 school year, student and staff feedback will be a required category of evidence in educators’ and administrators’ evaluations, respectively (603 CMR 35.07 c (2)(3)). ESE will be releasing model survey instruments for both student and staff feedback, as well as guidance on their use in evaluations by July 2013.

The Educator Evaluation Team is in the process of collecting input from interested stakeholders on the use of student and staff feedback. We welcome you to share your thoughts with us by emailing EducatorEvaluation@doe.mass.edu.
Frequently Asked Questions

1. Does ESE plan to release additional rubrics for SPED teachers, counselors, nurses, or other specialists?

ESE strove to highlight commonalities across educators by only developing four Model rubrics. ESE does not plan to create additional rubrics. For more information please see the recently released Guide to Role Specific Indicators.

2. How do I submit my district’s evaluation system for ESE review?

Race to the Top districts must submit the agreed-upon system and other modified materials, such as rubrics, to ContractAgreements@doe.mass.edu for ESE review. If possible, please submit materials in tracked changes; otherwise, please provide a cover letter identifying the nature and location of the changes in the documents. If you’ve decided to revise an existing evaluation system to meet the regulatory requirements, please submit your agreement and related materials with revisions clearly identified. If you have agreed to adopt the Model System with no changes, simply notify ESE at ContractAgreements@doe.mass.edu.

Questions or Comments are always welcome at EducatorEvaluation@doe.mass.edu

Contact the Educator Evaluation Team

Claire Abbott, Training Modules & Workshops, Implementation Support
Kathryn Gabriele, Staff & Student Feedback
Kat Johnston, Communications, Peer Assistance & Review, Implementation Support
Simone Lynch, Assistant Director, Office of Educator Policy, Preparation and Leadership
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The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is committed to preparing all students for success in the world that awaits them after high school. Whether you are a student, parent, educator, community leader, taxpayer, or other stakeholder interested in education, we invite you to join us in this endeavor.

We are guided by this mission...

"To strengthen the Commonwealth’s public education system so that every student is prepared to succeed in postsecondary education, compete in the global economy, and understand the rights and responsibilities of American citizens, and in so doing, to close all proficiency gaps."

And by these goals...

- Strengthen curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Improve educator effectiveness
- Turn around the lowest performing districts and schools
- Use data and technology to support student performance