As we celebrate the end of one year and look ahead to 2015-16, many educators are already thinking about their next Self-Assessment. As Step 1 of the 5-Step Cycle, Self-Assessment empowers educators to shape their evaluation by reflecting on strengths and accomplishments, areas on which they might want to focus, and supports they will need to accomplish their goals. Using the prior summative evaluation as a jumping off point, Self-Assessment often starts at the end of one year as educators reflect on their practice, and continues into the beginning of the next year as educators analyze data for their new students. Educators are then poised to propose at least two goals for their upcoming evaluation cycle.

This month’s Spotlight profiles two educators from Revere Public Schools: ELA middle school teacher Shauntelle McKain and 3rd grade teacher Brian Stanley, as they reflect on their progress this year and begin their self-assessments for 2015-16.

Shauntelle McKain. The first thing I do when I approach my self-assessment is think about how I feel about my practice as a whole. That could include my instruction, the classroom environment, and parent involvement—basically the various essentials to my practice. Based on these, I think about a professional practice goal for next year. For example, my professional practice goal this year was about peer observations with a focus on differentiated instruction. I wanted to see how my peers differentiated their instruction in order to increase student understanding and content rigor. This could shape my goal for next year, as I think about how to enact differentiation strategies based on what I learned from colleagues. I am also reflecting on what I’ve accomplished with my students this year to inform my student learning goal for next year. I am looking at data from District-Determined Measures, ANET assessments, essays, class discussions, formative assessments, and classwork. All of this information helps me figure out where to focus for next year. I am looking at data from District-Determined Measures, ANET assessments, essays, class discussions, formative assessments, and classwork. All of this information helps me figure out where to focus for next year. Whether they are writing a college essay or on a state exam, this skill is certainly important.

Continued on page 2
Innovative Approaches to Understanding Student Learning

The Professional Practice Innovation Grant (PPI) was designed to support districts in the implementation of educator evaluation and the MA Curriculum Frameworks. Two of the six grant recipients, Braintree and Worcester, worked to implement new assessment practices that are aligned to the shifts in the Curriculum Frameworks and can be used to assess student learning for the purposes of educator evaluation.

Braintree developed an innovative approach to using rubrics that provides both students and educators with important feedback. The Curriculum Frameworks stress the importance of developing students’ conceptual understanding of math content. To support this, students are using math journals to explain their thinking when solving challenging problems. At the beginning of the year, students use a brief, four line rubric to self-assess questions such as “Did I answer the question?” Each line is answered with a simple yes or no. Students complete the rubric first which provides them with the opportunity to reflect on their own learning. The teacher then completes the rubric to check for students’ understanding and make adjustments to practice. As the student masters the rubric, additional lines are added allowing students to demonstrate growth, even at an individualized rate. Braintree has expanded this innovative approach to other subject areas including science journals.

Continued on next page
Worcester brought together educators to discuss how student learning was being assessed across multiple content areas based on the Curriculum Frameworks. The district identified verbs used across multiple assessments such as “communicate” or “demonstrate”. Educators then developed common rubrics to define those verbs to promote a shared understanding of student learning across grades, content areas, and schools. For example, a student might “demonstrate” a math concept by annotating an answer to a problem or, “demonstrate” the ability to formulate a written argument in English by providing textual evidence. Going forward, educators in Worcester can use these common definitions to create assessments with clear expectations for student practices.

Look for resources from these PPI grant winners on our Example Assessments webpage this summer.

ESE’s Spring Convening:
Building Momentum,
Sharing Success

On May 27th and 28th, 750 educators from across the state came together to share promising practices that support our shared goal of all students having access to effective teachers and leaders. Participants included teachers, school administrators, district leaders, local union and association leaders, and representatives from educator preparation programs.

Presented by the implementation experts—teachers and leaders in local districts—breakout session topics spanned the educator continuum—from pre-service performance assessments, induction and mentoring, collecting evidence for evaluation, professional development, to using data to improve systems and programs.

Thank you to all the participants and presenters who made ESE’s 2015 Spring Convening a huge success!

Materials are being added to ESE’s Spring Convening webpage.

You can view participants’ reactions and photos by searching for #SpringConvening2015 on Twitter.

On the left, check out a photo Commissioner Chester and Board member David Roach took in front of our “Teach. Lead. Inspire” banner.

Using a Common Language: Aligning Teachers’ Experiences in Preparation Programs and the Classroom

Educator Preparation providers are in the midst of redesigning programs in support of the 2014 Professional Standards for Teachers – these are the same standards used as part of the Educator Evaluation Framework. This is an important effort to more effectively align educator preparation with demands of the classroom and the needs of students, schools, and districts. Preparation program providers may be looking to solicit input from schools and districts to explore ways to enhance the quality of field-based experiences for educator candidates and supervisors. The investment of time and energy now from schools and districts is likely to have a significant impact on the quality of the educator workforce for years to come.
New Resources from External Study of the MA Educator Evaluation Framework

The following new resources will soon be available from SRI International’s ongoing study of educator evaluation implementation in Massachusetts. All resources will be posted on our Implementation Study webpage.

- **Case Study Brief Series**
  - Issue 1: Promising Approaches to the Development and Implementation of District-Determined Measures
  - Issue 2: Using Evaluation Data in Human Resources Decision-Making

- **Artifact Brief Series**
  - Issue 1: Professional Development to Support Evidence Collection (Brockton PS)
  - Issue 2: Guidance for Developing and Supporting Educator Plans (Lawrence PS)

New Guidance Around the Use of MCAS-Alt in Educator Evaluation

ESE has produced a suggested process for using the MCAS Alternate Assessment in educator evaluation. Because the MCAS-Alt is a highly individualized, portfolio-based assessment, the suggested process relies on a team-based approach to establish parameters for growth for each student.

While using the MCAS-Alt is not a required component of educator evaluation, districts may be inclined to use the measure because it:

- builds upon work many educators are already doing;
- promotes a shared vision for the inclusion of students with disabilities in instruction aligned to the MA Curriculum Frameworks; and
- increases the knowledge base of evaluators about the work of these educators.

Districts have also expressed interest in using the process as a model for collecting evidence of student growth in other individualized contexts. For more information, email EducatorEvaluation@doe.mass.edu.

Upcoming Resource! “On Track with Evaluator Capacity” from ESE’s Professional Learning Network for Supporting Evaluator Capacity

During the 2014-15 school year, ESE partnered with eight districts to address the challenge of evaluator capacity. These districts designed and implemented new initiatives, and conducted cross-site visits to learn and empower each other. Some initiatives promoted a culture of growth, others focused on improving the efficiency of their evaluation systems and the quality of their observations and feedback. This resource guide offers dynamic case studies, highlights best practices and artifacts that will help generate ideas in your schools and districts, and offers communications planning informed by the work of the Education Delivery Institute. Look for it in early July on the educator evaluation webpage.
We are seeking teachers and principals who are interested in learning more about policy at the state level and giving feedback on policy while it is in development. Learn more and apply by Monday, July 27th, at 9am.

Teachers should apply here.

Principals should apply here.

“The Teacher Advisory Cabinet has given teachers the unique opportunity to play a key role in education at the state level. As a special educator, it is refreshing to have a voice in decisions that impact all students. It has also given me the opportunity to have open discussions and share ideas with some of the most brilliant and accomplished educators in our state. I am able to take that information back to my district to help them make decisions that directly impact what is happening in our classrooms.” - Tim Tichacek, Teacher, Dighton-Rehoboth

“Serving on the Principal Advisory Cabinet provided tremendous opportunity to collaborate with colleagues from around the state, provide input to ESE on a variety of topics, and gain a greater understanding of the purpose of ESE initiatives. ESE listened to and implemented thoughts that were generated at the Cabinet. Overall, the experience served as beneficial professional development and supported my leadership back in my district.” – Tricia Puglisi, Principal, Manchester Essex

Upcoming Resource! Teacher Leadership Website

Look out for the new Teacher Leadership Resource Page. Content will be added throughout the summer to create a one-stop resource featuring useful case studies, effective strategies, tools, and links.

- Learn about the value of teacher leadership in building a collaborative school culture and improving teaching and learning from a brief written by members of ESE’s Teacher and Principal Advisory Cabinets.
- Read what districts are doing to advance school and district priorities through identifying effective teachers and providing them with leadership roles.
- Discover solutions for overcoming common challenges associated with implementing teacher leadership roles (funding, time, training and support, school culture, etc.) that can be applied in your school or district.

Questions or Comments are Always Welcome at EducatorEvaluation@doe.mass.edu

Contact the Educator Evaluation Team

Claire Abbott, Evaluation Training Program, Implementation Support, Student and Staff Feedback
Susan Berglund, Evaluation Liaison to Level 3 and Level 4 Districts
Matt Holloway, Evaluation Training Program, Evaluator Capacity, Student and Staff Feedback
Kat Johnston, Teacher Leadership, Communications, Implementation Support
Simone Lynch, Assistant Director, Center for Educator Effectiveness
Ron Noble, Educator Evaluation Manager
Craig Waterman, District-Determined Measures, Evaluator Capacity