Focus Indicators

FOR LEADING IN
2024-2025

The *Focus Indicators* are a subset of Indicators from the Model School-Level Administrator Rubric that represent high-leverage practices for supporting students' academic and social-emotional needs and promoting a culturally and linguistically sustaining school environment.

By prioritizing a subset of Indicators, districts can establish shared expectations and supports for practice in key areas and better focus and streamline the evaluation process. Educators and evaluators can use this resource alongside the Educator Evaluation Implementation Resources to guide goal-setting, evidence-collection, feedback, support, and professional learning around high-priority practices.

FOCUS INDICATORS
CLICK ON AN INDICATOR TO GET STARTED

I-B **Instruction**

I-D **Evaluation**

II-A **Environment**

II-B **HR Management & Development**

III-C **Sharing Responsibility**

IV-C **Continuous Learning**

EDUCATIONAL VISION

The Focus Indicators reflect a commitment to high-quality teaching and learning for **all students**.

Our vision is that all students in Massachusetts, particularly students from historically underserved groups and communities, will have **equitable opportunities to excel** in all content areas across all grades.

Culturally and linguistically sustaining classroom and school practices will support students to thrive by creating affirming environments where students have **a sense of belonging**, **engage in deeper learning**, and are held to **high expectations with targeted support**.
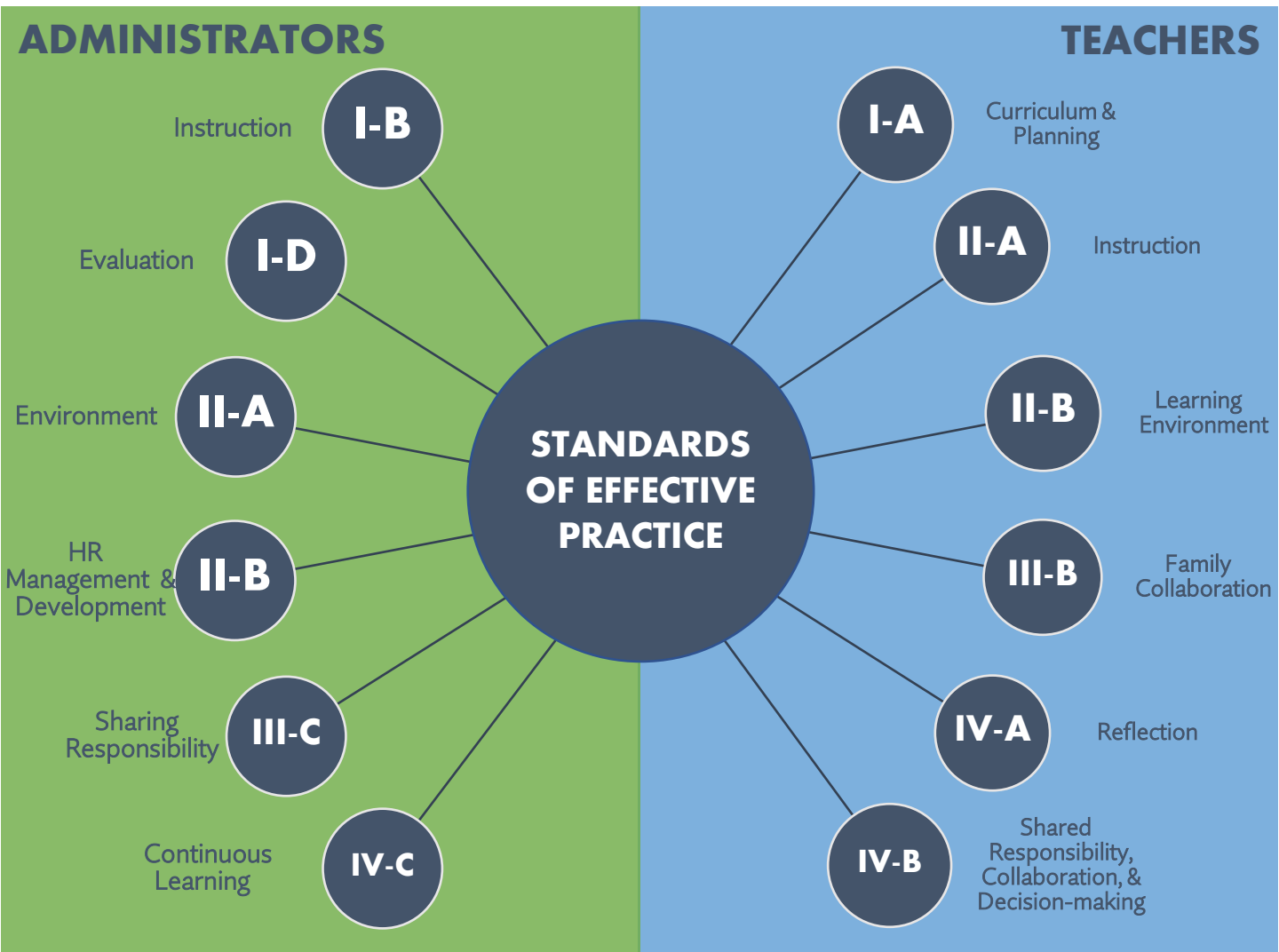
EACH INDICATOR PAGE FEATURES:

1. **Standard and Indicator** Description

2. **Key Practices**, adapted from elements associated with the Focus Indicator

3. **Focus Points for Feedback, Collaboration, and Support** provide examples of specific practices within the context of this school year

4. **Supportive Resources**

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Overview

The Focus Indicators highlight high priority, culturally and linguistically sustaining practices for teaching and leading in SY2024-25. Because teachers and administrators depend on one another to be effective in meeting the needs of every student, the Focus Indicators for teachers and administrators are complimentary.

ADMINISTRATORS

- Instruction — I-B
- Evaluation — I-D
- Environment — II-A
- HR Management & Development — II-B
- Sharing Responsibility — III-C
- Continuous Learning — IV-C

STANDARDS OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

TEACHERS

- I-A — Curriculum & Planning
- II-A — Instruction
- II-B — Learning Environment
- III-B — Family Collaboration
- IV-A — Reflection
- IV-B — Shared Responsibility, Collaboration, & Decision-making

GENERAL RESOURCES

DESE's Educational Vision and Catalog of Aligned Supports

Supports and Resources for Educator Evaluation Implementation

Supporting Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices

Massachusetts Blueprint for English Learner Success

Deeper Learning

MA Tools for Schools

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I-B Instruction

Ensures that instructional practices and pedagogy are evidence-based and culturally and linguistically sustaining, so that all students engage in the complex thinking and ideas of the lesson.

KEY PRACTICES

Establishes and communicates a clear vision for instruction grounded in culturally and linguistically sustaining practices for all students	**Supports educators to uphold high expectations for all students to meet or exceed grade-level standards**	**Provides professional learning, feedback, and support for educators on the use of evidence-based, engaging, inclusive, and critical instruction**

FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:

► Consistently communicating to the school community that standards-aligned, culturally and linguistically sustaining instruction using high-quality materials is essential for equity

► Ensuring that instructional practices across all settings and disciplines utilize evidence-based practices to provide equitable opportunities, supports, and scaffolds for grade-level learning

► Supporting educators' skillful use and implementation of high-quality instructional materials to provide culturally and linguistically sustaining instruction

► Providing professional learning, feedback, and support on specific strategies for engaging all students as active learners of meaningful, standards-aligned and grade-appropriate content

► Providing professional learning, feedback, and support on the use of appropriate inclusive practices, such as tiered supports, technology, scaffolded instruction, and Universal Design for Learning principles

► Providing professional learning, feedback, and support to educators to develop students' abilities to think critically, ask questions, and analyze sources, perspectives, and biases in order to deepen learning and make connections between the content and real-world problems and events (e.g., issues of identity, equity, power, and justice)

► Supporting teachers to use multilingual students' native language(s) to support instruction, such as through cognates and translanguaging practices

► Distributing feedback and coaching responsibilities to ensure that teachers receive regular and meaningful feedback

► Seeking out the perspective and feedback of all students and families and incorporating those voices into decision-making about school-wide instructional practices

RESOURCES

Deeper Learning

MASS Literacy

Next Generation ESL Toolkit

Universal Design for Learning Guidelines | *CAST*

Translanguaging | *WIDA*

Ready for Rigor Framework | *Zaretta Hammond*

The Opportunity Myth | *TNTP*

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I-D **Evaluation**

Provides effective and timely supervision and evaluation in alignment with state regulations and contract provisions

KEY PRACTICE

Provides effective, timely, and meaningful supervision and evaluation in support of developing and recognizing culturally and linguistically sustaining practices schoolwide.

FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:

► Collaborating with educators to develop, monitor, and reflect on challenging, measurable, and equity-centered goals

► Providing high-quality (specific, actionable, timely) feedback based on multiple sources of evidence, including regular observations, student feedback, and student learning measures

► Identifying priority Indicators or elements aligned to district/school goals to focus and streamline evidence collection

► Supporting educators to collect and reflect on student and family feedback to inform goal-setting and adjustments to practice

► Investing in relationship-building and communication with educators to co-create systems for meaningful observation and feedback

► Allocating evaluator responsibilities to a wider pool of people such as other school administrators or teacher leaders in order to ensure that each educator has opportunity to receive ongoing support and feedback on their practice

► Calibrating with other evaluators on a regular basis to strengthen a shared understanding of effective practices and high-quality feedback

► Ensuring that performance ratings are based on a comprehensive and holistic evaluation of practice using multiple sources of evidence

► Collecting feedback from educators on their perceptions of and experiences with the evaluation system

► Continuously reflecting on and mitigating biases that may impact judgments

► Planning and implementing professional development aligned to needs identified through the evaluation process

RESOURCES

MA Model System for Educator Evaluation | DESE

Educator Evaluation Implementation Resources | DESE

Evaluator Calibration | DESE

OPTIC | *TeachForward*

Teacher Evaluation as Cultural Practice: A Framework for Equity and Excellence | *María del Carmen Salazar and Jessica Lerner*

II-A Environment

Develops and executes effective plans, procedures, routines, and operational systems that support all students to thrive academically and social-emotionally.

KEY PRACTICES

Fosters a positive, inclusive, and equitable school culture and climate.	**Establishes operational systems, procedures, and routines that ensure a safe and supportive learning environment for all.**	**Establishes systems and structures to support effective communication and collaboration among educators.**

FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:

► Building positive, caring relationships with students, family members, and staff to ensure that school community members feel respected, supported, and a sense of belonging in the school community

► Establishing transparent and consistent school-wide routines, policies, and systems that respect and affirm students' backgrounds, identities, and intellect

► Providing staff with relevant learning opportunities and resources to support them in developing culturally and linguistically sustaining practices and promoting a culture that affirms individual differences

► Consistently examining policies, procedures, and systems to identify and eliminate bias or systemic barriers to inclusive and culturally and linguistically responsive practice, including policies and practices that reinforce white dominant culture and/or disproportionately impact Black, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous, and multiracial students

► Implementing effective systems for attendance, student entry, dismissal, meals, class transitions, assemblies, and recess

► Partnering with and supporting custodial/maintenance workers, transportation staff, clerical and administrative assistants, food service workers, and other staff effectively.

► Ensuring that all physical spaces are safe, accessible, welcoming, and honor and celebrate the diversity and achievements of the school community

► Developing age-appropriate and culturally and linguistically responsive social emotional competencies in students (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making)

► Preventing and addressing bullying and other unsafe behaviors with timely responses and restorative practices

► Fostering and utilizing partnerships with outside agencies and organizations to address student needs in a proactive and systematic way

► Collecting feedback from staff to check in on their well-being and assess their needs, and providing resources to support staff with their mental health and well-being while offering flexibility and empathy

RESOURCES

Safe and Supportive Schools | DESE

Supporting Student Engagement, Learning, Well-being and Safety | DESE

SEL Guide | DESE

Rethinking Discipline | DESE

Supporting Student Resilience and Well-Being with Trauma-Informed Care: Educator Self-Assessment & Planning Tool | *Center for Great Teachers & Leaders*

Fundamentals of SEL | CASEL

II-B # Human Resources Management & Development

Implements a cohesive approach to recruitment, hiring, induction, development, and career growth in support of a diverse and effective workforce.

KEY PRACTICES

Leads an inclusive process to recruit and hire diverse and effective educators	**Provides educators with access to, and monitors the impact of, differentiated professional learning opportunities**

FOCUS FOR FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT:

► Leading anti-bias recruitment and hiring processes for a variety of educator roles and responsibilities to meet student learning needs, including the development of student teacher, paraprofessional, and emergency/provisionally licensed teacher pipelines

► Including a diverse group of family members, students, and staff in recruitment and hiring processes

► Prioritizing recruitment, hiring, and development practices that ensure access and ongoing support to Black, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous, and multiracial educators

► Examining existing HR policies and procedures to identify and eliminate bias

► Prioritizing a robust induction and mentoring program that provides direct, ongoing support to new educators, differentiated based on their preparation experience (i.e., educators on emergency and provisional licenses may benefit from additional hours of coaching and opportunities to observe more veteran teachers)

► Providing professional learning opportunities aligned to educators' goals, strengths, and areas for growth

► Creating opportunities for teacher-led professional learning

► Ensuring equitable access to teacher leadership opportunities for effective educators, such as serving as a Supervising Practitioner or mentor

► Supporting flexibly-designed staffing structures that leverage specific teachers' skills and competencies (e.g. co-teaching, differentiated roles, strategic student assignment) to meet student learning needs

► Ensuring professional development supports educators to skillfully implement high-quality instructional materials using culturally and linguistically sustaining practices

► Establishing and sustaining regular, collaborative settings for small groups of educators to plan, assess, and share best practices

RESOURCES

MA Guide to Building Supportive Talent Systems for Educators

Professional Learning Partner Guide | *Rivet Education*

High Quality Mentoring & Induction Practices | *New Teacher Center*

Principal Induction and Mentoring | *DESE*

MA Teacher Diversification Guidebook | *DESE & TNTP*

III-B Sharing Responsibility

Continuously collaborates with families to support student learning and development both at home and at school.

KEY PRACTICES

Partners with families to support students' learning and well-being.

Works to ensure that all families understand and have opportunities to inform district and school-based policies and resources that support student learning and well-being

FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:

► Welcoming, encouraging, and providing regular opportunities and resources for all families to be active partners in the district and school community

► Leveraging families' cultural and linguistic knowledge and expertise to support student learning

► Using disaggregated data to determine whether families are being equitably and effectively engaged and adjusting practice accordingly

► Establishing a system to proactively and regularly collect feedback from families about factors affecting student learning and engagement and working with staff and families to identify and remove barriers to families' involvement

► Engaging in dialogue with families about what students are learning in the classroom and expectations for student success

► Identifying, and seeking feedback on, strategies and resources for supporting student learning and growth in and out of the school

► Supporting families to engage with policies, resources, and routines such as parent teacher organizations, school-site councils, parent advisory councils (e.g., ELPAC and SEPAC), child study/intervention teams, IEP referral processes, ESL supports, and student attendance policies

► Setting clear expectations regarding how specialized support staff should partner with families in accessing support services within and outside of school, and monitors adherence to these policies

RESOURCES

Strengthening Partnerships: A Framework for Prenatal through Young Adulthood Family Engagement in Massachusetts | *Massachusetts Family Engagement Coalition*

Family Guides to the Curriculum Frameworks | DESE

MA Family. School, and Community Partnership Fundamentals Self-Assessment | *DESE*

Family Portal | *DESE*

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IV-D Continuous Learning

Develops and nurtures a culture in which staff members are reflective about their practice and use student data, current research, best practices and theory to continuously adapt instruction and achieve improved results. Models these behaviors in the administrator's own practice.

KEY PRACTICE

Develops a culture of continuous, data-focused, growth-oriented reflection and adjustments to practice.

FOCUS FEEDBACK, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORT ON:

► Setting expectations and ensuring that systems are in place for educators to reflect on the effectiveness of their instruction and how their identities, biases, and practices impact student learning and well-being

► Modeling, supporting, and promoting personal anti-racist work that addresses one's own explicit and implicit biases, blind spots, and behaviors

► Supporting all educators to contribute to the development of an antiracist school/district culture, including actively dismantling barriers that prevent Black, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous, and Multiracial educators from being supported and successful

► Seeking out the perspectives, feedback, and voices of every demographic represented in the school community and incorporating those voices into decision-making

► Regularly reviewing disciplinary, attendance, engagement, and academic progress data, including grading, to identify and quickly address potentially biased policies and practices

► Working with educators to ensure that curricula and instructional materials promote understanding of the strengths and cultures of Black, Indigenous and People of Color, explicitly address systemic racism, and include authentic opportunities to help students make meaning of and process inequities in their world and communities

► Designing, implementing, and monitoring ongoing professional learning for all educators that builds educators' critical consciousness and results in improved outcomes and experiences especially for Black, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous and multiracial students

RESOURCES

Supporting Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices

LEA Equity Activity Guide | DESE

Data Equity Pause Protocol | *DESE & TNTP*

Data Equity Walk Toolkit | *The Education Trust*

Culturally Responsive Social-Emotional Competency Development | DESE

The Principal's Guide to Building Culturally Responsive Schools | *National Association of Elementary School Principals*