
In Fall 2012, a research team led by SRI International, an independent non-profit organization, launched a multi-year study of Massachusetts’ new educator evaluation model. Preliminary findings from implementation year 1 are now available (Research Brief: Early Implementation of the MA Educator Evaluation Framework) and indicate areas of strength and progress, as well as areas of challenge. ESE is working to respond to these findings as we continue our support to districts. ESE’s responses to key findings are below.

✓ The majority of educators expressed generally positive views of the new evaluation system and reported that the new system has significant advantages over past evaluation practices. This finding is integral to the long-term success of the new evaluation model. In order to ensure that districts continue to move toward evaluation practices that promote professional growth and improve student learning, ESE will maintain its commitment to working with educators to build confidence in and find success with the MA evaluation system.

✓ Educators had mixed views of the fairness of the new system. This finding echoes educator concerns related to evaluator capacity, specifically evaluators’ ability to conduct evaluations accurately and thoroughly. Existing and upcoming resources will assist districts in helping evaluators to do this work well:
  ▪ Distributed Leadership: The ESE Model System includes strategies for distributing leadership around the evaluation process, including (1) the identification of “supervising evaluators” (see Model Collective Bargaining language); and (2) adoption of a Peer Assistance & Review model (see Part I: District-Level Planning & Implementation Guide).
  ▪ Role-Specific Supports: ESE encourages districts to explore Role Specific Indicators to augment the model rubrics, as well as rubric supports specific to school business administrators, nurses, and school counselors.
  ▪ Comprehensive Evaluator Training: ESE has pre-approved four vendors to provide high quality evaluator training and coaching (see Category B vendors). Upcoming: ESE resource on evaluator calibration.
  ▪ Implementation Timeline: ESE extended the implementation timeframe related to DDMs and the integration of student and staff feedback in order to give districts more time to do this work well.

✓ Labor-management relations based on collaborative resolution of implementation issues enhanced the rollout of the new evaluation system. ESE will be releasing model contract language related to DDMs (Winter 2014) and student and staff feedback (Spring 2014) to assist with the collective bargaining process.

✓ Educators are still working to integrate the new evaluation system with other district reform initiatives... Districts are currently devoting time and resources to multiple, concurrent reform efforts of critical importance to our students. ESE’s goal is to help educators identify and facilitate synergies across initiatives, such that implementation of all initiatives is more effective and efficient. To that end:
- ESE released a guide for using current assessments as a starting point for DDMs that features the Curriculum Embedded Performance Assessments included in ESE’s Model Curriculum Units.
- ESE has published Quick Reference Guides on the integration of educator evaluation and the 2011 MA curriculum frameworks and professional development.
- In Fall 2013, ESE launched the first Professional Practice Innovation Grant to support practices that integrate implementation of educator evaluation with the revised MA curriculum frameworks. Upcoming: December 2013 winners will share best practices at the 2014 Educator Evaluation Spring Convening, and ESE will open the grant a second time in February 2014.

✓ Administrators and school staff reported that they understood the components of the evaluation cycle; both groups, however, wanted more training and guidance on goal-setting and evidence collection.

- To assist educators in the goal setting process, ESE has released training modules and workshops, as well as a suggested protocol for developing S.M.A.R.T. goal statements. Upcoming: ESE will be publishing example S.M.A.R.T. goals in Spring 2014 for all roles and responsibilities. To contribute your own S.M.A.R.T. goal(s), please email EducatorEvaluation@doe.mass.edu.
- ESE has published tips and guidance related to strategic evidence collection in Part II: School-Level Planning & Implementation Guide, as well as the FAQ resource. Training modules and workshops related to evidence collection are also available.