Spotlight: Professional Standards for Teachers

PST Guidelines

Guidelines for the Professional Standards for Teachers were released in January. The Professional Standards for Teachers (PSTs) define the pedagogical and other professional knowledge and skills required of all teachers. These PSTs and indicators are used by Sponsoring Organizations in designing their teacher preparation programs and in preparing their teacher candidates.

Guidelines are designed to orient stakeholders (teacher candidates, Sponsoring Organization administrators, faculty, and Supervising Practitioners) to the updated/revised PSTs and indicators, and to explain what they mean for stakeholders’ work across the Commonwealth. The PSTs and indicators are aligned to the Massachusetts’ Educator Evaluation Framework.

Outlined in the Guidelines you will find:

- Indicators differentiated by expected levels of practice;
- Discussion of intersecting initiatives;
- Specific guidance for various audiences (e.g. supervising practitioners, faculty, etc.); as well as,
- A timeline for implementation.

The Guidelines, as well as the updated PST Matrix, are posted on the Ed Prep Website on the Resources page at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources.html.

PST Alignment Working Groups

In support of the work organizations will need to do in order to align both coursework and field-based experiences with the new PSTs, ESE is sponsoring a set of working groups. With the support of NIET, organizations will collaborate around with one another and other national leaders to make program improvements in support of increasingly well-prepared educators. Sixty organizations in the state are participating and will be convened 3 times over the course of the next few months.

All organizations will be required to submit an action plan to ESE by July 31st, 2015 outlining the steps being taken towards full implementation of the PSTs. The action plan will be released following an overview webinar hosted on March 19th @ 3:00pm.

Teacher Performance Assessment

In February 2014, the Department convened a Teacher Performance Assessment Task Force made up of stakeholders working in K-12 schools and preparation programs across the state to provide a recommendation to ESE and the Commissioner on a teacher performance assessment in Massachusetts. Based in part on the considerations from the Task Force, Massachusetts decided to develop its own performance assessment for teacher candidates. ESE is now working with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) and stakeholders to develop the new pre-service Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA) along with a series of resources to support implementation and prepare for a fall 2015 pilot.

We have been working with stakeholders across the Commonwealth over the last three months by conducting interviews and focus groups, and convening an advisory committee to provide feedback on the design and implementation elements of the new TPA. This will continue as we work to get pilot materials to all teacher preparation programs in advance of the 2015-2016 academic year.

The goals for the new TPA are to measure teacher candidates’ practice across a range of key indicators as outlined in the Guidelines for the Professional Standards for Teachers and support them in improving their practice based on the results.
Field Feedback Survey Response

ESE conducted a survey of Sponsoring Organizations in May 2014 to assess the effectiveness of the work of the Educator Preparation Team during the 2013-2014 academic year. The survey was designed to collect data that would drive the Ed Prep Team’s efforts at continuous improvement and aimed to:

1. Assess the engagement and interactions with the field
2. Improve the quality of our interactions with the field
3. Inform effective planning for future Ed Prep work
4. Gauge the depth of impact that key ESE initiatives have had on the field

Data from the survey was compiled and analyzed with support from the Office of Planning and Research at ESE. The Office of Planning and Research prepared a report support of the Ed Prep Team’s desire to make public and transparent the work and efforts of the team.

The Ed Prep Team has prepared a summary in which key data is highlighted along with actions the team has taken in response to those results. The response summary can be found at www.doe.mass.edu/edprep.

The survey for the 2014-2015 school year will be administered in June 2015.

Formal Review Information Sessions

Save the Date!

The Ed Prep team will host two information sessions this spring about the formal review process. These info sessions are open to anyone who would like to learn more about the current program review process, specifically those individuals whose programs are up for review in the next few years. For your convenience, there will be one session hosted in Worcester and one session in Malden. Dates are below:

   Wednesday April 1, 2015 (Worcester, MA)
   Friday May 1, 2015 (Malden, MA)

The full invitation containing times. Locations and the registration link is forthcoming.

Ed Prep Inbox

This spring the Ed Prep Team is conducting nine formal review site visits; as a result, members of the team will be out of the office frequently. As we continue to focus on the successful implementation of these reviews, we will be extending our typical response time (24-48 hours) on inquiries to the edprep@doe.mass.edu inbox to 3-4 business days. Please plan accordingly and recognize that we will continue to work to answer questions accurately and expeditiously.

We encourage all providers to consult with the resources available at www.doe.mass.edu/edprep as a first step in seeking guidance.
**SEI Endorsements**

Endorsing for SEI in the Early ID System is a two-step process. When you submit the candidate for Initial licensure and SEI endorsement, it submits them for program completion, but saves them for their SEI endorsement. You then need to complete step 2 which means searching for candidates in SEI and then endorse them by hitting submit.

1. In ELAR, go to the Step 4: Submit Program Completers page.
2. Enter the program completion month and year.
3. Under Status, choose All to find enrollees who have been saved and submitted.
4. Click search.
5. If the candidate’s status for the SEI Endorsement says “Program Completer- Saved” that means you completed the first step, but not the second. At this point, you must:
   a. Under program name, select the correct SEI endorsement and completion date.
   b. Verify all information, and then hit submit.

Step-by-step resources for endorsing candidates are available at http://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/earlyID/.

**Informal Review**

The informal review process allows currently approved Sponsoring Organizations to develop and put forth new programs. It also affords interested parties the opportunity to apply to become a Sponsoring Organization in Massachusetts. For additional background on the informal review process, see the Guidelines for Program Approval.

The Informal Review window opened on Sunday February 1st and remain open until Sunday May 31st. The Informal Review Toolkit is now available on the Ed Prep website and was built in order to provide an overview of the informal review process along with corresponding resources. Please note: Needs Assessments must be received no later than Friday, April 17th to be consider during this cycle.

**Needs Assessment Advisory**

The needs assessment component of the Informal and Formal Review process ensures that ESE and the Sponsoring Organization only engage in a review where there is demonstrated need. The burden of demonstrating need for specific programs is on the organization. ESE has released a Needs Assessment Advisory to support you in preparing a successful needs assessment.
State Annual Report

This year’s state annual reporting window will open March 18th. Certified reports are due Thursday, April 30th. The data collection, both in terms of type and process, remains unchanged from last year’s reporting cycle. Support resources can be found at http://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/sar/. In advance of the reporting window, ESE suggests that you:

- Begin completing with the SAR Title II Worksheet. This worksheet will support efficient data entry and will serve as a back-up should errors arise in ELAR.
- Verify your enrollment and completion data for the 2013-2014 year. We will extract your data directly from Early ID, there will be no need for you to re-enter this data.

Edwin Resource Page

Edwin Analytics is a powerful reporting and data analysis tool that gives educator preparation programs access to unprecedented information about candidates and completers for purposes of continuous improvement. The data Edwin provides can help sponsoring organizations make informed decisions about how they can improve upon their work to ensure candidates are ready to support the success of all students. In response to requests from the field, the Ed Prep Team has created an Edwin Resources webpage where tutorials, guides, templates and more can be accessed moving forward.

Data Wise: A Word from the Field

Everyone’s interested in data-driven improvement, but where to begin? Since last June, teams from Endicott College and UMass Boston have been sifting through reams of data and rallying their faculties to pursue ambitious goals through a pilot of Data Wise, a program to help schools and organizations improve through data inquiry. Sara Quay, Dean of Endicott’s School of Education, shares how their programs have benefited from the journey so far.

Are your teacher candidates prepared to be highly effective P-12 teachers? How do you know? Last summer, Endicott's School of Education dug deep into its data using Harvard's 8-Step Data Wise process and came up with some surprising answers.

The Data Wise approach changed the way we view program assessment and improvement. First, we learned to ground our discussions in data rather than making assumptions or inferences about our program’s effectiveness, and to make our data “visible” through graphs and charts.

Following the Data Wise process, we were able to use that data to identify a “learner-centered problem” our students were struggling with – gleaned from the PPA, our graduates’ teacher evaluation results, and a variety of surveys – in their journey to becoming a teacher. From there, we were able to detect – from course syllabi, observations, surveys, and focus groups – a corresponding “problem of practice” in our own instruction that underlies...
the learner-centered problem.

With this rich convergence of data, we created action plans and specific methods for assessing our progress in making program changes.

At Endicott, this first cycle of program improvement using Data Wise led us to address how prepared our graduates are to use data to inform instruction, a key element of the teacher evaluation as well as the forthcoming pre-service teacher performance instrument.

We will continue to use Data Wise as the primary tool in our efforts to prepare highly effective teachers for the Commonwealth.

Interested to learn more? The Endicott team will share their discoveries at the MACTE Spring Conference April 17th.

Watch for this year’s application for a new round of organizations to take advantage of Data Wise – coming soon.

TeachLive Opportunity

Through a competitive bid, ESE chose TeachLive to work with us on piloting ten TeachLive sites in Massachusetts. The TLE TeachLivE™ Lab is a mixed-reality teaching environment based out of the University of Central Florida designed to support teacher practice in classroom management, pedagogy and content.

Working with TeachLive, we have the opportunity for up to ten preparation program providers in Massachusetts to receive:

- A TeachLive classroom simulator
- 40 hours of simulation
- 2 hours of consultation for instructional design for simulation
- 3 hours of simulation for dissemination of your work in your community
- 3 paid registrations for TeachLive conference in Orlando, Florida on June 4th & 5th

As part of this pilot, faculty at organizations (up to 10) across Massachusetts will identify gaps in existing teacher preparation that can be closed through the effective use of simulation.

To learn more and interact with the TeachLive avatars via Skype, sign up for a 30-minute live online demo between March 31 and April 4, 2015 at. We have 30 demo slots available, so sign-up soon!

If you are interested in this opportunity, please speak with the designated contact person for ESE within your organization. All contacts received an email with full details on March 17, 2015. Applications are due April 18th.