Overview
There have been some important shifts in the work of educator preparation in Massachusetts over the last few years; this ranges from heightened expectations and more rigorous accountability mechanisms for Sponsoring Organizations to more intentional standard and assessment alignment for the candidates they are preparing. All of this is in support of the state’s belief that preparation can and should prepare educators to be effective on day one in the role. All of the initiatives launched in response to this goal introduce new and additional opportunities for districts to engage as partners with providers in a deeper, more effective way. In fact, it necessitates it. This advisory was created to serve two purposes:

1) Provide PK-12 leaders with information about the current pipeline of recent completers employed in their district
2) Outline things to consider and potential next steps for districts interested in influencing and shaping this pipeline more strategically.

Background
There are over 75 approved preparation providers (Sponsoring Organizations) in the state. Together, these providers prepare an average of 6,000 educators a year, with approximately 65% being employed in a MA public school the following year. Providers range in type and size, including both public and private institutions of higher education, collaboratives, non-profits, and districts/charter schools. Regardless of the type of organization, all providers must meet the same standards for approval and undergo the same processes of review. It is through this process of review that the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) has been able to require providers to engage more deeply with the PK-12 sector which they serve. Below are the five criteria that all providers must demonstrate evidence of meeting in order to maintain and receive approval in the state:

1. Sponsoring Organization responds to the needs of PK-12 districts/schools.
2. PK-12 partners make contributions that inform Sponsoring Organization’s continuous improvement efforts.
3. Partnerships improve experience for preparation candidates.
4. Partnerships positively impact the outcomes of PK-12 students.
5. Sponsoring Organization evaluates partnerships on an ongoing basis, sustains those that are effective, and takes steps to improve those that are not.

As is evident above, providers are now increasingly accountable for initiating, sustaining, and measuring partnerships with PK-12 schools/districts. The other side of the coin, however, is that in order for a partnership to be truly impactful and worthwhile it requires the full commitment of not just the provider, but of schools and districts themselves.

Moving from a transactional arrangement to one that is mutually beneficial and impactful will require providers and districts to engage in more substantial conversations about their individual needs and invest in one another’s ultimate performance. It is our hope that these conversations can be informed by many of the new data linkages that now make clearer the connection between preparation and employment. Providers and districts have access to an increasingly robust set of data that currently includes:

- Demographic data of completers
- Employment of preparation completers by district
- Retention of preparation completers in districts
- Evaluation ratings of completers once employed
- Surveys of completers and hiring principals
District-Specific Pipeline Data
Using Edwin Analytics, ESE has been able to compile data designed to give districts a sense of the preparation to employment pipeline in the district. The chart below shows the number of individuals employed in your district for the 2013-2014 academic year that also completed a MA preparation program in either 2011-2012 or 2012-2013.

If you would like to see your district pipeline data, please email us at edprep@doe.mass.edu. Please title the email “District Pipeline Data Request.”

Important Data Caveats & Future analyses
• Data linkages between preparation and employment are relatively new. The connecting point is the ESE-assigned MEPID. There may be gaps in some organization’s data depending on when they fully transitioned to the MEPID system.
• The number of individual educators may be either new hires or existing employees. For instance, someone may have been employed in your district under a preliminary and then completed a prep program for their initial licensure or they may have completed a program leading to professional licensure. Both will show up in your total above.
• This is just a two-year snapshot. Without question, there are other people in your district prepared by these providers (especially if you consider the long-time relationship many providers have in the district). Future analyses → ESE data goes back to 2010-2011 program completers. We could also run the data for different employment years (e.g., 2012-2013). 2014-2015 employment data is being released this spring.
• The data above is inclusive of all program types including administrative licensure areas and professional programs. Future analyses → run reports for particular program types/areas
• Data includes ANYONE employed in the district. Future analyses → run reports by role (e.g. aides, instructional coach, co-teacher, long-term substitute, etc.)
• Given the reporting limitations, in order to pull together this information the data was calculated manually from several reports. ESE is working to build functionality within Edwin Analytics that will allow us to more efficiently report on this information for all districts. Please be mindful of this in requesting additional analyses from ESE so that we can ensure that the time spent compiling data will be used to strengthen partnerships.
Questions to Consider

1. There is a lot of national data, which holds true in MA as well, that candidates seek and obtain employment within 20-30 miles of where they were prepared (in fact, in MA it’s more like a 15-mile radius). Use this map to look at the providers in your area. Is there someone in your catchment area that is not pipelining into your district? Is there someone far outside your catchment area that is?

2. Preparation providers rely very heavily on districts for student teaching placements. Teachers/Administrators in your building who serve as supervising practitioners invest significant time and energy in supporting the development of these novice educators and in training them in alignment with district practices. You are likely already investing a huge amount of capital into these educators, are you capitalizing on it in the long term? In fact, there is emerging research that suggests student teaching placements play a huge role in determining eventual employment. From the state perspective, we see very few districts at the central office level (principals tend to do this more frequently in their buildings) leveraging student teaching placements into strategic recruitment and hiring efforts. Possible considerations:
   - In agreeing to student teaching placements with a provider, give preference to organizations who can supply the type of candidate you are looking for – either in terms of license area, teaching ability or the diversity of candidates, etc.
   - Collect information at the district level about the student teachers working in your schools (including race/ethnicity). Connect with principals about individual student teacher performance during the placements and then recruit actively from this pool when it comes time to hiring.
   - Set expectations for providers placing in your district relative to what you want candidates to be able to know/do before entering into the classroom. The state has set these expectations to align with the Ed Eval Framework but you could certainly be more specific and clear about the needs of your district relative to goals around cultural proficiency, classroom management, etc.
   - You might even establish a screening mechanism, interview process, or other protocol for identifying student teachers being placed in your district that links to employment. For instance, asking the question prior to placement: “Where do you hope to secure employment after completing your program?” or “Share an experience that demonstrates your ability to be culturally responsive.”
   - Consider adopting a cohort approach to student teaching placements. There is some indication that the level of collaboration in a building has an impact on candidate effectiveness once employed. In addition to the benefit for candidates, having several supervising practitioners in one building also provides valuable support and increased opportunities for their own professional learning in taking that role on.

3. Are you relying largely on a single provider or are there several providers contributing to the pipeline? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each? For instance, a single provider may make it easier to coordinate and invest in the partnership such that programming is designed to directly meet your needs. This level of engagement becomes more challenging relative to district capacity when working with several providers, but it may be worth it if you’re getting something different from each provider or one alone is unable to fill the entire need. Regardless of whether you are working with one provider or several, partnerships are often the strongest when there is a single point of contact responsible for communicating across organizations.
4. Look at the provider’s total number of completers and the average rate of employment in MA. Are there missed opportunities to capture potential candidates in your district that are being employed elsewhere? For instance, if a provider completes 200 candidates a year but only 3 are employed in your district, there is likely room to capitalize more fully on that talent pipeline. This is especially true if the provider is placing more than 3 candidates in your district (see #2 above).

5. Quantity and diversity are just part of the equation. What do you know about the quality and consistency of the candidates produced by the providers supplying your pipeline? There are now additional linkages that help both providers and districts make informed decisions about quality preparation. These should be part of your decision to partner with a provider. Creating a pipeline without attention to the quality of candidates coming in may have long-term ramifications for your district. For instance, you might consider:
   - Establishing data sharing agreements as a condition of the partnership. You each have important parts of the puzzle and it makes sense to come together, especially around measures of student learning.
   - Examine the trends/distribution in evaluation ratings of teachers sorted by provider (see Edwin Report EV901). This is a report only districts have access to because of the individual teacher data provided.
   - Ask about their recent approval status and any findings issued by the state.

6. Keep in mind that Massachusetts has an incredibly competitive provider environment, especially in the Metro Boston area. There are more than 75 providers in our relatively small state. This means you will need to be strategic about who you partner with and have conversations with them about the other districts that they may also be partnering with. It is more than likely that you will be one of at least a few other providers who that organization partners with.

Suggested Next Steps

- Identify a single point-of-contact for educator preparation issues in your district. Make this a priority for the individual overseeing this work; set goals and performance measures for successfully managing partnerships with providers in your area.
- Find out the schools and teachers that are currently hosting student teachers in their buildings. Create a mechanism for collecting this information regularly. This can be valuable information for a central office to have and is a good starting point in more firmly establishing your pipeline.
- Use the ESE Public Profiles (Search under Educator Preparation Providers) to find out more about the specific providers pipelining into your district. The Profiles includes data such as: list of programs, demographic data, employment, retention (broken down by program). Later this spring, it will also include evaluation ratings in the aggregate.
- Access Edwin Analytics Report EV901 (only districts have access) to see how individual staff perform on their most recent educator evaluation linked to the most recently completed preparation program.
- Talk with your priority partners. Share data and be up front and explicit about your needs. Be ready and willing to make investments in the partnership as well.

For more specific information or additional support in these efforts, contact edprep@doe.mass.edu.