SPOTLIGHT: Supporting Robust Preparation/PK-12 Partnerships

In recent years, ESE has taken steps to encourage providers to increase engagement, responsiveness, and the depth of partnerships with PK-12 schools and districts. This includes holding providers accountable for several criteria related to partnerships as well as adopting the 2014 Professional Standards for Teachers which align expectations in preparation with those used during employment.

While these initiatives have served as important catalysts, ESE hopes to begin a second phase of work to further support the development of deep and interactive partnerships between providers and districts in Massachusetts. Namely, with additional resources provided through the Elevate Preparation: Impact Children (EPIC) grant ESE has proposed to:

- Facilitate regional convenings of districts and providers on a bi-annual basis
- Providing direct support to districts in leveraging preparation as a key strategy in their human capital pipeline
- Pilot replicable, scalable models of induction in two high-needs districts

We’ve have already begun to lay important foundations for this work. Earlier this fall, over 200 educators participated in ESE’s first joint meeting between preparation providers and districts focused on Developing Effective Mentors and Supervising Practitioners. These sessions brought together district and program administrators around common work: updated Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring and the newly developed Candidate Assessment of Performance, both of which necessitate that high-quality feedback be provided to novice teachers. A full summary of the takeaways from these meetings as well as some ideas generated during the meeting for ongoing partnership will be out in February 2016.

Additionally, ESE has had several conversations with specific district leaders who are growing increasingly attentive to the pipeline of talent into their schools. In support of this, we have created an advisory that helps districts put their available data about the preparation/employment pipeline into perspective. One group of districts in particular (see Overview on Preparation & Equity PLNs attached to the email) are exploring the ways in which strong partnerships with preparation providers may help to address equity gaps that currently exist in their schools. We encourage all providers to review these materials and take advantage of the opportunities they present.

More information about supporting the induction effort as well as a Save the Date for the spring Partnership Consortium meetings will be out in early February.
During the 2015-2016 academic year, we’re dedicating an entire section of our quarterly Newsletter to updates and resources in support of the successful pilot and implementation of the Candidate Assessment of Performance (CAP).

The Candidate Assessment of Performance (CAP) pilot is up and running! During the 2015-2016 academic year, ESE expects Sponsoring Organizations to begin preparing for full implementation of CAP by piloting CAP with at least 10 candidates in one or more programs. In support of the CAP pilot, ESE has provided resources that are all posted on the website.

**CAP Office Hours**
In October, over 80 participants from 46 Sponsoring Organizations across MA attended three Office Hours sessions to ask questions face-to-face. Key Takeaways and updated FAQs based on the Office Hours are now posted on the website. Please send any questions to edprep@doe.mass.edu.

**CAP Workshop: Using the Rubric**
As ESE continues to support the implementation of CAP, we are excited to announce our second set of train-the-trainer resources. This set of workshop materials focuses on using the rubric through activities designed to help support calibration conversations among Program Supervisors and Supervising Practitioners. The workshop materials include a PowerPoint, a Facilitator’s Guide, and a Handout Packet.

**Data Collection Excel File**
As part of the CAP pilot, ESE is collecting formative and summative ratings for each candidate. Sponsoring Organizations will be responsible for completing the Excel file for all 2015-16 CAP Pilot participants. We request one worksheet for all your candidates that participate in the pilot for fall and/or spring in one complete submission by May 30, 2016. The only exception is for SO’s who are participating in the CAP Online Platform Pilot: because we are able to extract data from the platform, you will not need to report data for these candidates via the Excel file. Organizations may submit completed files to edprep@doe.mass.edu.

**CAP Online Platform**
As we shared in the November CAP update memo, ESE has developed an online platform that includes access to all CAP forms and aims to streamline the communication around the CAP process. The web-based online platform provides a portal for candidates, Program Supervisors, and Supervising Practitioners to complete, share and access CAP materials in real time, including a communication window. We have a group of SO’s and participants who will be piloting this platform this spring. We will be posting additional information regarding the platform in early 2016 on the CAP resources page of the website.
Coming Soon: Informal Reviews

The informal review process allows Sponsoring Organizations to develop and put forth for approval new programs and to receive this review outside of the seven-year, formal approval cycle. Through informal reviews, new organizations are also able to seek approval as an authorized provider in the Commonwealth.

ESE accepts requests for informal reviews beginning February 1st through May 31st annually. ESE does not accept requests for informal review of programs within a two-year window leading up to or after an organization's formal review. The informal review typically occurs over the course of a 3-6 month time period.

The full set of resources for the 2016 cycle of informal reviews will be released in January 2016. For more information, see the Toolkit website.

News Items & Updates

Updated Review Expectations & Resources

Following the conclusion of the first implementation of the revised review process, ESE has taken steps to revise our guidance and further clarify expectations. In mid-November, we released an update to the Program Approval Guidelines which contained, among other things, a revised set of criteria governing expectations for providers. With the goals in mind of transparency, support, and clear expectations, ESE developed the current Guidelines based on feedback from preparation programs and lessons learned from previous review cohorts.

Fort both criteria and the Guidelines, there were no major shifts in policy reflected in the updates. There are several features, however, worth noting:

- Updated Program Approval Determinations (pg. 38): In order to create further differentiation in the review, there are now 5 possible outcomes for a review, ranging from Approval with Distinction to Probationary Approval and Not Approved.
- Replaced the Effectiveness Indicators with the revised criteria list. This list now contains fewer and more focused criteria upon which programs are evaluated.

We encourage all organizations to continue to use these documents to inform your continuous improvement efforts. Formal reviews from the cohorts of 2014-15 and 2015-16 will continue to be guided by the previous versions of these resources, which will remain available on the ed prep website.

Reviewer Recruitment

ESE will accept applications for the 2016-2017 cohort of Ed Prep reviewers until 2/24/16. Reviewers analyze and evaluate evidence of educator preparation program effectiveness. Reviews have been successful so far largely due to the skilled and committed professionals who have been selected as Reviewers. Find details on the Reviewer website.

Applications are due Wednesday, February 24th, 2016.

Last year, less than 50% of the applications came from the group of providers in our state. In order to have a well-balanced cohort, we are asking for your additional support this year.

We hope you can help recruit:

- Apply yourself!
- Share this opportunity with educators with PK-12 or ed prep experience. Flier and other resources available on the website.
- Nominate specific people to apply through this online form.
Ed Prep Data Collection, Dissemination & Use
This section of the Ed Prep Newsletter is dedicated to communicating about the systems and supports in place to ensure that Sponsoring Organizations, ESE, and public stakeholders have access to timely and impactful data about preparation in the Commonwealth.

Early ID
System enhancements to the Early ID system launched successfully. As mentioned in our summer newsletter, key updates like simplified SEI endorsement and easier data entry were designed to support sponsoring organizations in gathering and reporting data. In-person training sessions for the system upgrades were well received, and a User Guide and video tutorials are now available online.

Formal Review Culminating Report
ESE is glad to announce the upcoming release of the 2014-2015 Formal Review Report. The report will present aggregated results from the first year of fully implementing a new evidence-based review process with the nine organizations evaluated this past year. Each annual report will elucidate strengths and areas for improvement of the organizations evaluated, and synthesize efficacy data collected about ESE’s implementation of the review process. The report will be out in January.

Online Profiles Updated
ESE’s online profiles for sponsoring organizations have been updated to include employment information from the 2014-15 school year. We are completing updates to Edwin, and more data will be added soon.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is committed to preparing all students for success in the world that awaits them after high school. Whether you are a student, parent, educator, community leader, taxpayer, or other stakeholder interested in education, we invite you to join us in this endeavor.

We are guided by this mission..."To strengthen the Commonwealth's public education system so that every student is prepared to succeed in postsecondary education, compete in the global economy, and understand the rights and responsibilities of American citizens, and in so doing, to close all proficiency gaps."

And by these goals...
- Strengthen curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Improve educator effectiveness
- Turn around the lowest performing districts and schools
- Use data and technology to support student performance

To receive the quarterly Educator Preparation Newsletter in your inbox, please send an email to: EdPrep@doe.mass.edu