# Collecting Student Feedback in CAP

## Introduction

Student feedback is an important and required source of evidence within the Candidate Assessment of Performance (CAP). It provides valuable insight into how students experience a candidate’s instruction and supports both formative learning and summative evaluation. When thoughtfully collected and analyzed, student feedback helps candidates reflect on their teaching practice and make informed adjustments that promote student learning and engagement.

Importantly, student feedback must be used as one of the required sources of evidence for at least one Essential Element in CAP. This requirement ensures that candidates meaningfully incorporate student voice into their professional learning and supervising practitioners and program supervisors consider this evidence in performance evaluations.

## Collecting Student Feedback

It is recommended that candidates collect student feedback during the second half of the practicum experience. By this time, students are more likely to have experienced enough of the candidate’s teaching to provide meaningful feedback.

Feedback can be collected in various formats. It is recommended that candidates use surveys for students in grades 3–12 and structured discussion protocols for students in grades K–2 or for students who require alternative forms of communication. These formats can be adapted based on student needs, grade level, or instructional context. Sponsoring organizations and candidates may also use or revise existing tools to best align with their specific learning environments.

Please note, DESE previously provided student feedback surveys for the 2019 CAP. These instruments are now outdated and do not reflect the current Essential Elements in CAP. Candidates may use them as a starting point, but they must be modified to ensure alignment with the updated expectations for effective teaching. DESE encourages sponsoring organizations to support candidates with the modification of existing student feedback surveys to the 2024 Essential Elements.

## Why Student Feedback Matters

Student feedback offers a unique and valuable perspective on the candidate’s instructional practice. It highlights the impact of the candidate’s teaching from the student’s point of view and can identify strengths as well as areas for improvement. For preparation programs and supervisors, this feedback adds depth and dimension to the overall evaluation of a candidate’s performance, complementing classroom observations and instructional artifacts.

Feedback aligned with the Essential Elements provides candidates with a direct connection between student perceptions and the specific teaching competencies they are expected to demonstrate. It also promotes reflective habits that are essential for effective, learner-centered educators.

## Documenting Student Feedback

All student feedback must be documented using the required [Student Feedback Form](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/teachers-guide/student-feedback-form.docx) provided by DESE. This form ensures that feedback is recorded in a consistent and complete manner. Candidates should attach the feedback instrument they used and provide a summary of the results. They are also expected to complete a written reflection that addresses how they interpret the feedback and what instructional changes they plan to make in response. Administration details should also be documented, including the method of administration (survey or discussion), any accommodations provided, and steps taken to ensure confidentiality and student comfort.

## Analyzing Student Feedback

After collecting feedback, candidates should take time to review and reflect on the responses and record their reflection on page two of the [Student Feedback Form](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/teachers-guide/student-feedback-form.docx). This reflection should include identifying themes, connecting feedback to their instructional decisions, and considering steps they can take to improve their practice. The student feedback can inform discussions with supervisors and be referenced in CAP reflections or formative assessments.

Feedback should be interpreted thoughtfully and in context. Not all student responses will reflect instructional realities accurately, but patterns across multiple responses can provide meaningful guidance for growth.

## Final Note

Student feedback is a required and essential part of CAP. While the structure and timing of collection may vary based on grade level and context, the process should be intentional, inclusive, and aligned with the Essential Elements. Candidates, supervisors, and sponsoring organizations should work together to ensure that feedback tools are relevant, that analysis is reflective, and that documentation is complete. Meaningful student feedback not only fulfills a program requirement—it also builds the foundation for continuous improvement and responsive teaching practice.