



EDUCATOR EVALUATION

Model Rubric

December 2018

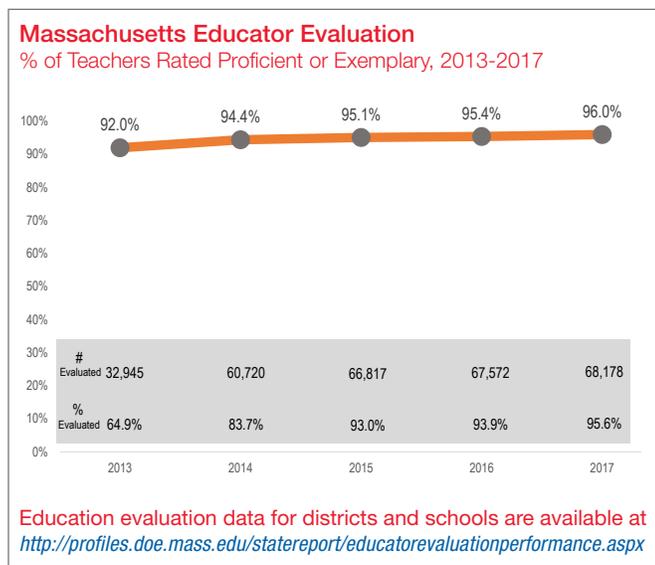
The current system for educator evaluation in Massachusetts was established in 2011 to meet requirements of the Race to the Top federal grant program. The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) approved new regulations to implement these requirements for the evaluation of all educators. Consequently, when the Race to the Top grant funding ended, the Massachusetts regulations continued to remain in effect.

However, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), approved by Congress in 2015, contains a provision that prohibits the US Secretary of Education from “mandating, directing or controlling ... the development of any teacher, principal or other school leader evaluation system...” While the current MA educator evaluation system was created to comply with federal requirements, those requirements no longer exist. The BESE and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) have the authority to review the existing system and to make any changes needed to address issues of burden, value and misuse that educators have identified.

Implementation of the Educator Evaluation Framework

The implementation of the system was phased in starting in 2013. The chart below shows how many teachers were evaluated in each of the past five years, the percentage of teachers evaluated and the percentage of teachers who have been rated “Proficient” or “Exemplary” by their evaluators.

- Since 2012-13, the number of teachers who have been evaluated annually has doubled, with almost 70,000 teachers, representing 96% of all teachers, now being evaluated under this system.
- In 2016-17, 96% of teachers were rated “Exemplary” or “Proficient.” This figure has been quite consistent since 2012-13, with small increases occurring each year.



Model System — Revisions to the Model Rubric

The Educator Evaluation regulations adopted by the BESE in 2012 included the development of a model system, defined as “the comprehensive educator evaluation system, designed and updated as needed by the Department, as an exemplar for use by districts.” The model system included rubrics for various educator roles to describe “characteristics of practice or artifacts at different levels of performance.” Districts may use either the rubric provided by the department or a comparably rigorous and comprehensive rubric.

In 2016, the DESE determined that the model rubric needed revision and initiated the Rubric Refinement Project to address its concerns. DESE identified the following goals:

- Streamline content
- Clarify descriptors
- Align to teaching and leading

After piloting the updated rubric in seven districts in 2017, a final version was released in August 2018. No regulatory changes were needed for DESE to refine the model rubric. More information is available at: www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/sprating/rubricproject/

The Education Evaluation regulations (603 CMR 35.00), MGL Chapter 150E and Chapter 71, Section 38G all make it clear that

- The district’s selection of a rubric used in the teacher evaluation system is a mandatory subject of collective bargaining.

- DESE does not have the authority to require a district to use any particular rubric.
- Districts are not required to use the updated rubric.
- Under the Massachusetts General Laws, the procedures of the evaluation system must be bargained by school districts and teacher unions, and DESE does not have approval authority over the negotiated result.
- DESE FAQs explain that there is no requirement to use the updated rubric or reconsider the rubric that districts are currently using.
- Although DESE’s regulations established a “review” process that the DESE implemented when the evaluation regulations were first approved, it is not planning to “review” changes to the evaluation systems agreed to at the local level.

Changes to the Model Rubric

There are at least four areas where the rubric makes significant changes:

1. Revises the descriptors for the Exemplary category, replacing “is able to model this practice” with “models this practice for others.” The rubric includes an explanation that “modeling” can be informal, but, arguably these changes could make it more difficult for an individual to be rated Exemplary.
2. Adds language about social and emotional learning to some indicators.
3. Changes the attendance language in Standard 4, Indicator F-2 – changed from “rarely absent” to “adheres to district attendance policies.”
4. Adds a placeholder for the Student Learning Indicator in Standard 2.

A Student Learning Indicator (SLI) in Standard 2 replaced the Student Impact Rating based on DDMs; DDMs were eliminated via regulatory changes approved in January 2017. In March 2017, DESE distributed a memo stating that it did not plan to add the indicator to the model rubric since the indicator is based on student behavior and would be putting out “guidance” on how it could be used.

However, in the final version of the model rubric, DESE added the new indicator to the rubric and described how it is intended to be used in the evaluation system. The rubric does not include descriptors for this indicator; however, DESE may yet issue guidance on the use of the SLI. Including the student learning indicator in the evaluation system is a subject of collective bargaining.

Additional Information

Relevant regulations include:

603 CMR 35.08

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr35.html?section=08>

603 CMR 35.10 (1)

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr35.html?section=10>



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