PST and CAP Info Session Q&A Summary

From 10/1 Info Session with Ed Prep Personnel

Question	Answer
[Asking a representative of the SO to verify that the SP meets SO requirements on the CAP form] puts the SO in the role of evaluating SP practice. Do you have guidance as to best practice for that?	The expectation that SOs ensure that supervising practitioners are qualified to fulfill the role has not changed. In selecting an educator to be a supervising practitioner, you are committing to ensuring that they are meeting all requirements in the program approval criteria, and that if they do not meet one or more requirements, that the SO will fill in the gaps on an individual level. The questions about the supervising practitioner on the CAP Form are the same as the expectations in the updated criteria and/or in regulations. Please note that you can identify a different SO representative (such as the FBE Coordinator) to answer these questions if you feel they are more well-positioned to do so than your program supervisor.
Is the observation form required? Or, if you are using the CAP Online Platform, will it mimic that updated format?	The CAP Observation Form is required; however, you can use the CAP observation in the paper format, on your own virtual/electronic system, or on the CAP online platform.
If we generally plan to do in person observations but have appreciated the option of rarely doing a virtual observation (such as when the program supervisor was recovering from Covid), do we need to submit a sample video, etc.? I think in the past two years we did a virtual observation for just two candidates.	Unfortunately, yes, in this situation where it is impossible to do an in-person observation on a certain date, there is no option to do a virtual observation. If you are planning to do any virtual observations for CAP, you must submit those required documents to us.
Have the student feedback surveys been updated? Are they available? Are there questions that align to the new required elements?	The student feedback surveys have not been updated yet. We are working with our Standards of Effective Teaching team to determine next steps for those updates because they also impact the educator evaluation process.
If you use the CAP Online Platform as the method for completing the form, is there a way to download it and save it for our own program records?	We are working on adding that feature with the other updates to the online platform this year.

Can an SO modify or change the observation form as long as the components of the required observation form are kept?	Yes. As long as all of the components are included, you can add to the observation form and/or use it in a different format.
If we are using the CAP Online Platform with the new PSTs, do we need to indicate on well structured lessons and meeting diverse needs that the feedback is in relation to inclusive ed and collaboration on student learning and well-being?	It may be helpful for candidates to indicate when the information for the new Essential Elements is being entered, but for our records you do not need to indicate this.
Will there be a new advisory on candidate record keeping in light of all the changes to the CAP and PSTs?	The Candidate Record Retention Advisory is still relevant. The same information is expected to be kept in the updated version versus the old version. We can change date on our document to make clear those expectations have not changed.
Can you provide more guidance on what would be included in the implementation plan. Do you want to know how we will address gaps?	We are really looking for high level of what it will look like when your SO ramps up to fully implementing CAP. It could look a few ways. Some SOs have said want to start with faculty to get comfortable with the PSTs and integrating them into coursework, while some of have wanted to start piloting with candidates right away. Any approach is fine, as long as you will be prepared to fully implement by school year 2025-2026.
If a program completes all required observations in person and includes an additional virtual observation, is the attestation required?	No, the attestation and the sample video are only if the required observations are being conducted virtually.
Any comments about updates to the CAP Online Platform?	CAP Online Platform currently going through updates, which requires a lot of time and capacity from the IT team. Changes will go into effect after the July 15 submission deadline of 2025.
Only the 'cover forms' of CAP (offline) are used for Reading Specialist. Will this form change in light of the new CAP guidelines.	Specialist teacher programs are not required to use CAP, but they are required to use the CAP Form. This requirement is remaining the same.
When is the statement regarding virtual observations due? Is there a template?	There is no template and no set due date for the attestation and the sample video for virtual observations. However, they must be submitted and approved before virtual observations occur.

Do the requirements regarding virtual observations extend to Specialist programs?	Specialist programs are not required to do CAP nor subject to specific requirements associated with CAP, including the stipulations for virtual observations. Please note that specialist programs do need to have a performance assessment that the sponsoring organization has identified which ensures candidates' readiness for the licensure role.
If we attended today's session, should we plan to attend the other webinars as well?	The content of other info sessions will be very repetitive of this one. The exception is the faculty session, which will go into detail about the updates to the PSTs. Otherwise, there won't be any information in the other sessions that was not discussed today.
Is there any talk about increasing PDPs for SPs giving the added work?	We are already offering the maximum number of PDPs possible we can give an individual. We are interested in additional ways we can incentivize those in the SP role. We're open to suggestions on how to do this.
Can you talk a little bit more about PST implementation for Reading Specialist programs? A lot of PSTs may be covered through the candidates' initial teaching licensure program.	For Reading Specialist programs, there is a regulatory prerequisite that they hold an Initial Teacher license ([603 CMR 7.07 (2))](). For Instructional Technology Specialists, candidates must also have a teacher license and at least one year of employment as a teacher or another role. Given that these candidates should have demonstrated the PSTs to earn their Initial license*, Specialist Teacher programs are not required to follow the PST Guidelines. These programs are not assessed on [INS Criterion 3](), which addresses the PSTs. It is the expectation, in regulations and in INS Criterion 6 (The program(s) of study embeds field-based experiences such that candidates have opportunities to observe, apply, and reflect on evidence-based practices, including anti-racist and culturally and linguistically sustaining leadership practices.), that the evidence-based practices in the PSTs are being interwoven in candidates' coursework and field-based experiences so that they can deepen those skills as they apply to Specialist Teacher roles. How this looks in implementation will vary from organization to organization.

	*For Instructional Technology Specialist candidates who hold a Provisional teacher license, SOs may want to provide additional guidance or support in the PSTs.

From 10/7 Info Session with Program Supervisors

Question	Answer
Should we collect CVs or resumes from the SPs to have on file to attest to their qualifications?	DESE does not expect SOs to collect supervising practitioner CVs or resumes. During Formal Reviews, DESE will review a sample of candidate files to confirm whether attestations are complete. DESE may also ask what systems the SO has in place to verify that qualifications are met and support candidates for any identified gap(s).
Are we asking for SP, 3 years on an initial license?	Yes, this is a regulatory requirement and is still in place.
Are 2 SPs allowed? Would be helpful to have that be possible in CAP Online Platform.	In a case where there is a split practicum, it likely makes sense to have two SPs. In the CAP Guidelines, there is no requirement that a candidate only have one supervising practitioner. As for the CAP Online Platform, we are working through CAP edits, and we will put it as a suggestion to allow for two SPs.

On the CAP forms, please note that as long as major elements are kept, sponsoring organizations can make any modifications to the forms that they see fit. |
| When will the CAP Online Platform be updated? | After the next CAP submission date, which is July 15, 2025. |
| Should the SP not be informed that we are confirming or asking about their credentials and skills sets? | There is no expectation that SPs are not being informed about the SO's determination on the four qualifications.

The four qualifications are that (1) the SP has received summative evaluation of proficient or higher, (2) that they model evidence based practices, including anti-racist and culturally and linguistically sustaining practices, (3) that they effectively and equitably support candidates from all races, ethnicities, identity groups, and backgrounds, and (4) that they commit to meeting the program's expectations of the role, |

	which they would know. The SP will of course know the answers to numbers one and four. For the middle two qualifications, it is recommended that the SP be part of transparent conversations about whether or not the SO has determined that they meet these expectations and whether the candidate is in need of additional support because of gaps. If the SP is not meeting those expectations, it would make sense that they would know that.
Will there be info sent out about the Communities of Practice sessions?	Yes. Dates for Communities of Practice have not been finalized. However, if you are interested in facilitating a Community of Practice, please complete an application to do so. We expect that this opportunity will come with a stipend.
Is there a requirement for Program Supervisors to have minimum qualifications (ex. at least the 3 years experience)? Or a particular license?	There are no regulatory requirements for Program Supervisors. The 2023 Guidelines for Educator Preparation Program Approval state that Program Supervisors should be able to: - collaborate with and support the Supervising Practitioner in meeting the Sponsoring Organization's expectations; - support candidates to make explicit connections between coursework and fieldwork; - provide candidates with high-quality feedback and evaluation that prepares them to be effective, anti-racist, and culturally and linguistically sustaining educators; and - effectively and equitably support candidates of all races, ethnicities, identity groups, and backgrounds.
Can SPs qualifications be waived if they don't have 3 years on their initial but have been vetted by the sponsoring organization?	As is outlined in Appendix J of the 2023 Guidelines for Educator Preparation Program Approval, a Sponsoring Organization has the authority to waive Supervising Practitioner regulatory requirements, including number of years under the Initial license, when appropriate for a specific candidate. Waivers are designed to exempt individual candidates from certain requirements based on extenuating circumstances; they are not a mechanism for lowering the expectations required to complete an approved program. A

	sponsoring organization may not design a program dependent upon a waiver; each decision to issue a waiver must be made on a case-by-case basis with individual documentation and rationale. In each decision to issue a waiver, a sponsoring organization should weigh the benefits of waiving a requirement against the value of that requirement in relation to ensuring that a candidate is ready to make a positive impact on PK-12 students in Massachusetts.
Will DESE update the "look fors" pertaining to the specific changes in the PST's?	We are planning to update the Look Fors in the PSTs. This will be shared in our upcoming documents list.
Under the formative and summative assessments, is DESE going to change consistency, quality and scope?	Quality, Scope, and Consistency will not be changed. While there are no major changes, we will release a QRG with further information, including about how they will be defined.

From 10/17 Session with Supervising Practitioners and PK-12 District Partners

Question	DESE Response
Wondering about the family engagement aspect. I know you have drop-in session. Lots of our partners have very strong feelings and prohibitions about TCs communicating directly with families. Not allowed to at all. In some cases prevent TCs from IEP meetings. Given that, how can candidates demonstrate proficiency? Could it be practice rather than demonstrate so it could be shown by role plays etc.?	This question came up a lot in public comment on Guidelines. First, part of way we selected III-C rather than III-A is that collaboration is more expansive that communication. Not limited to parent-teacher conferences, emails etc. We hope that NAFSCE drop-in session will help to flesh out what that may look like in practice. What may candidates do, what evidence to look for etc. Also, we are in the process of writing an advisory for PK-12 districts naming DESE's expectations, rationale, and recommendations for shifts to policies on video recording, viewing IEPs etc. Will need to be reviewed by legal so likely not released for a few months. Some of misunderstanding is that candidates are still learning and can have the SP around. For example, and SP could have candidate draft email but SP still sends. We feel that it's very important Collaboration on Student Learning and Well-Being to be an

	Essential Element and at the Demonstrate level. We've gotten feedback on the importance of this from candidates who felt ill-prepared, districts who need educators to have these skills, etc. We are committed to having an Essential Element in this standard *and* providing support to both prep and districts to ensure realistic to have in place. We know it may take time for everyone to get there, and we are using this year to communicate shift.
I am struggling to find things on the website. Will things be posted in a central location on your website?	Currently all materials are being posted to the PST and CAP Guidelines webpage. This includes Guidelines and forms. Implementation support materials are also posted. This year, we are going to have an external vendor compiling all DESE resources, those developed by Communities of Practice, and examples from SOs into a single hub. Anticipate this being posted by June 2025.
I wondered if there were Goal Setting exemplars somewhere on the DESE website. If so, would you provide the link.	Currently, there aren't any goal-setting exemplars posted to the website, but the updated CAP Handbook, which will be released in the coming weeks, will include an updated version of the goal-setting and development form. The Communities of Practice will also create exemplars that we will post in the spring.

From 10/25 Session with Faculty and Department Heads

Question	Response
When you say opportunities [to be exposed or practice an Element at the Practice level] - is there a minimum number of opportunities you are thinking of?	No, we are not prescriptive about the number of opportunities.
This came up at our MACTE call about identifying the universities that are already piloting this year so we can learn from their mistakes. Are their opportunities to create a shared library or set of resources? Heard about a library of resources from MACTE's end but didn't know if there was going to be something from DESE's end too.	In the Implementation Plan template, SOs could note if they will be engaging in significant implementation this year. About 1/3 of plans so far indicated yet. SOs that are doing significant implementation will have the opportunity to discuss ideas and troubleshoot together. Conversations from this group will also likely inform further guidance from DESE such as quick reference guides.

	We also have an external vendor who is coming on to compile resources created by DESE, other communities of practice, and specific SOs into a CAP Resouces Hub.
What guidance would you provide SO's to resolve the inherent conflict between the Curriculum literacy Shift from *Creating* to Evaluating and Implementing and the meeting the standard II-A-3 Inclusive Instruction - Accommodates and supports individual differences in all students' learning needs? As most TC's are given the curriculum to teach during their practicum but also being asked to create both novel lessons and new materials to meet the growing disparities of student 'readiness' for the grade level materials in classrooms. As all teachers must do in all classrooms daily.	This is actually a very common misconception of our expectations for curriculum literacy. What you named is exactly what we expect candidates to do: taking district-provided curriculum and making shifts to differentiate, make them culturally responsive, and ensure all students can access it. The difference is that rather than the starting point being a blank page, they start with the grade-level expectations. Obviously, students need different things to get there. We want candidates to look at material and students in front of them to decide what needs to be adjusted. Best practice is not creating a scope and sequence from scratch or cobbling things together from Teacher Pay Teachers etc. Candidates are not expected to be curriculum experts – instead, they need to be able to critically examine curricula and then translate them to the students in front of them. At the same time, we are supporting districts to both select high-quality instructional materials and work on effective implementation, including professional learning for educators using the materials.
I am curious how we are expected to make shifts in time for AY 26 if we don't see examples until June 2025 -faculty are not obligated to work and will not be available to make changes to their courses and fieldwork. Any major shifts in our courses also have to be approved by CAP, which have to be in by Feb for a Fall semester course. Will this be 'our best effort' at implementation with a revision expected for the next academic year?	The expectation is not that you are only using examples from the CAP Resources Hub to create changes in coursework. We hope that the examples are helpful, especially for CAP implementation and specifically CAP evidence. The examples will be less useful for changes to coursework based on the broader PSTs. Changes will of course be your "best effort" for now, and revisions are welcomed on an ongoing basis. If you dig into Formal Review Toolkit and in particular Targeted Submission Worksheets you will see that we are asking about what you are learning and any adjustments you are making. We know some things will work right away, but that this process will also involve a lot of continuous improvement. We want us to tell your story about how you are learning, getting better, and creating increasingly equitable experiences and outcomes for candidates. None of us are doing this work perfectly.

What may be some examples of proficiency of Reflective Practice as it gets into mindsets that can be hard to see? Would this be the CAP Self-Reflection form, journal writing, artifacts? Some of this may be hard to see in the scope of CAP during one semester.	This will be something that one of the Communities of Practice will pay particular attention to. All of the examples you gave could potentially be strong sources of evidence for demonstrating Reflective Practice. All of these would fall into the category of candidate artifacts. Reflective Practice could also be demonstrated in a variety of other sources of evidence, including student feedback or progress toward the candidate's professional practice goal.