

Fact Sheet

The Education Commonwealth Project works to challenge and expand the way student learning and school quality are assessed, advancing an approach to measurement and accountability that is valid, democratic, and equitable. ECP supports schools and communities with free and open-source tools, and broadly seeks to foster state- and national-level change.



The Problem:

School and district accountability systems are overly reliant on a single set of high-stakes standardized tests. State tests reflect student demographics (e.g. race, income, language, and disability) more than actual student learning and school quality. And state tests do not assess the characteristics of a high school graduate that families, colleges, and businesses most desire.



ECP Offers Solutions:

School Quality Measures: Stakeholders identify what is most important to know about school quality. Multiple measures provide a robust picture of school strengths and areas for improvement.

Performance Assessments: Teachers lead the design of curriculum-embedded performance assessments and the scoring of student work. Students demonstrate what they know and can do through real-world application.

ECP will provide no-cost assistance to Massachusetts public schools and districts interested in SQM or PA work. ECP also allows schools and districts to move at their own pace and customize their pathway.

School Quality Measures

School Quality Measures is a suite of tools that help districts holistically assess strengths and weaknesses using a range of data sources, including student and teacher surveys.

The SQM team supports all members of the district community as they work to assemble a fuller and more accurate portrait of their schools.

How it works:

1. District administers student and teacher perception surveys.
2. ECP collects administrative data and cleans survey data.
3. ECP produces data dashboard.
4. District and ECP work together to analyze data and decide how to use it for school improvement and strategic planning.
5. Districts have the option of choosing any parts of this process.

Total time required: 4-6 weeks

Performance Assessments

Performance Assessments are standards-aligned, curriculum-embedded tasks that measure students' deeper learning of content and skills.

Performance assessments offer an authentic picture of what students know and can do, assessing learning through the use of meaningful projects designed by educators. The PA team provides examples of high quality performance assessments, a toolkit of protocols, and training for teams of teachers to develop their own valid assessments.

How it works:

1. District identifies a team of 4-6 teachers plus one building leader.
2. ECP provides 2 days of training to design performance assessments.
3. Teachers develop their performance assessments.
4. ECP provides 1 day of training to revise performance assessments.
5. Teachers administer and score their performance assessments.
6. ECP provides 1 day of training in double-blind scoring.

Total time required: 4 days of professional development

