

Educator Evaluation and the use of the Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS)

The following information about the state's Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS) may be helpful as districts continue to rollout educator evaluation systems aligned to the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework.

What is the EWIS?

The Department first released the Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS) data for grades 1-12 in the 2012-13 school year. The Department created the EWIS in direct response to educators' requests for early indicator data across multiple grade levels. The EWIS is a *tool to systematically identify students that may need additional attention in order to reach an upcoming academic goal* (expected student outcome). The EWIS was developed by looking at the actual outcomes of Massachusetts students in prior years and statistically validating a wide range of student level data to best predict whether our current students are on track to meet upcoming academic goals.

The Massachusetts EWIS is for grade levels 1 through 12 and is connected to relevant academic goals throughout the academic trajectory.

Massachusetts EWIS Grade Level Groupings and Associated Academic Goals

Age Groups	Grade Levels	Academic Goals <i>Expected student outcomes for each Age Group</i>
Early Elementary	1, 2,3	Reading by the end of third grade: <i>Proficient or advanced on 3rd grade English language arts MCAS</i>
Late Elementary	4, 5, 6	Middle school ready: <i>Proficient or advanced on 6th grade ELA and Mathematics MCAS</i>
Middle Grades	7, 8, 9	High school ready: <i>Passing grades on all 9th grade courses</i>
High School	10, 11, 12	High school graduation: <i>Completing all local and state graduation requirements</i>

The EWIS is a resource for educators to use in conjunction with other data and sources of information to better target student supports and interventions. Schools can use information from the EWIS to support students who are at risk of not meeting an expected academic goal with both school-wide strategies and targeted interventions. Districts and schools can also use EWIS data to examine school-level patterns over time in order to address systemic issues that may impede a student's ability to meet academic goals.

Massachusetts EWIS Student Risk Levels

<i>Indicates that, based on data from last school year, the student is...</i>	
Low risk	Likely to reach the upcoming academic goal: <i>Approximately 10% of low risk students miss the upcoming goal</i> <u>Example:</u> A 2 nd grade student identified as low risk in EWIS is currently predicted to be likely to reach the goals of proficient or advanced on the 3 rd grade ELA MCAS
Moderate risk	Moderately at risk for not reaching the upcoming academic goal: <i>Approximately 40% of moderate risk students miss the upcoming goal</i> <u>Example:</u> An 11 th grade student identified as moderate risk in EWIS is currently predicted to be moderately at risk of missing the academic goal of graduating from high school.
High risk	At risk for not reaching the upcoming academic goal: <i>Approximately 77% of high-risk students miss the upcoming goal</i> <u>Example:</u> A 7 th grade student identified as high risk in EWIS is currently predicted to be at high risk of missing the academic goal of passing all grade 9 courses.

EWIS data are available through Edwin Analytics, a free tool that is available to all public school districts in the state. There are three EWIS reports available: 1) Student List (EW601), 2) District View (EW301), and 3) Graphical View that includes longitudinal trends (EW302). All reports may be filtered to look at a particular school, grade level, and/or student population type.

In addition to three existing EWIS reports, new classroom-level reports will be available in Edwin Analytics in fall 2013 that will show student EWIS risk levels along with other types of student data (e.g. MCAS item analysis).

EWIS data are updated at the beginning of every school year, based on student information from the prior school year. Access to the EWIS reports in Edwin Analytics is granted through your district's [directory administrator](#). The [Edwin website](#) includes more information about the EWIS, including video tutorials and technical documentation.

How might EWIS data be used in the context of educator evaluation?

Because the EWIS is a prediction tool and not an accountability metric, it is inappropriate to use changes in EWIS student risk levels (low, moderate, and high) as a way to measure student learning, growth, or achievement for educator evaluation purposes. Many of the indicators included in the EWIS risk model are not instructionally sensitive. Instead, consider the following ways to potentially incorporate EWIS data with your educator evaluation implementation:

Self-assessment. The centerpiece of the new educator evaluation framework is the five-step evaluation cycle that culminates in a Summative Performance Rating. In Step 1, Self-Assessment, educators analyze student data and reflect on prior performance and

educator practice. EWIS data will be available around the beginning of September each year, making it a very timely and appropriate tool to incorporate into the self-assessment process. Educators are encouraged to review EWIS data as an additional source of information about their students. While the EWIS by itself is not a diagnostic tool, it does provide a wealth of information that can be used in conjunction with other data sources in order to interpret and understand student symptoms and underlying student needs. The Student List report in Edwin Analytics provides the risk levels for all current students, as well as the data (e.g., attendance, Special Education level, MCAS results, course performance) that were used to determine students' EWIS risk levels. The Student List report also provides students' prior year EWIS risk level.

Identification of a target population. In Step 2 of the five-step cycle, Goal Setting and Plan Development, educators use the results of their self-assessments to develop at least one student learning goal and one professional practice goal. Often, educators will identify a subgroup of students to target with their student learning goals. EWIS data provides a method of identifying a target population based on multiple pieces of data instead of a single factor (e.g., special education level of need, ELL status, low income) alone. For example, an administrator might develop a student learning goal aimed at improving fluency across all second grade students with high EWIS risk levels or a high school teacher might craft a student learning goal aimed at improving writing skills across all students with high and moderate EWIS risk levels. Note that while using EWIS risk levels may be an appropriate and powerful way of identifying target populations, change in EWIS risk level is not an appropriate basis for a student learning goal, since goals must focus on instructional outcomes.

Classroom context for evaluators. The educator evaluation framework calls for evaluators to use professional judgment after considering a vast evidentiary base to determine an educator's Summative Performance Rating. Reviewing an educators' students' EWIS data may provide an evaluator with valuable information about the make-up of an educator's classes, possibly providing additional context as the evaluator makes a judgment about overall educator performance.