



# **The Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation**

## **Part II: School-Level Planning and Implementation Guide**

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January 2012 (Updated December 2015)

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Commissioner

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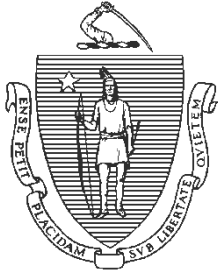


# Contents

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<b>A Letter from the Commissioner .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Overview .....</b>	<b>3</b>
The Opportunity .....	3
The Purpose of this Guide .....	4
Educator Evaluation Framework.....	5
Priorities for Implementing the Framework .....	7
The Model System .....	9
Using This Guide.....	10
<b>Step 1: Self-Assessment &amp; Goal Proposal .....</b>	<b>14</b>
Overview .....	14
Time Frame.....	14
What Is Required in the Regulations? .....	15
Getting Started .....	16
Recommended Actions for Self-Assessment & Goal Proposal .....	20
Common Questions on Goal Proposal .....	21
Key Components to Establishing and Sustaining Effective Teacher Teams.....	22
<b>Step 2: Goal Setting &amp; Plan Development .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Overview .....	23
Timeframe .....	23
What Is Required in the Regulations? .....	24
Getting Started .....	25
Recommended Actions for Goal Setting & Plan Development.....	28
Suggestions for Refining Goals and Developing Plans .....	29
Evaluating Educators Serving in Multiple Roles .....	30
Alignment between Educator Plans and Individual Professional Development Plans .....	31
<b>Step 3: Implementation of the Plan .....</b>	<b>32</b>
Overview .....	32
Timeframe .....	32
What Is Required in the Regulations? .....	33
Getting Started .....	34
Recommended Actions for Implementation of the Plan.....	38
Strategies and Suggestions for Observations .....	39

<b>Step 4: Formative Assessment &amp; Evaluation</b> .....	<b>40</b>
Overview .....	40
Timeframe .....	40
What Is Required in the Regulations? .....	41
Getting Started .....	42
Recommended Actions for Formative Assessment & Evaluation .....	45
Formative Conference Process .....	46
Changing the Educator Plan after a Formative Assessment or Evaluation .....	47
<b>Step 5: Summative Evaluation</b> .....	<b>48</b>
Overview .....	48
Timeframe .....	48
What Is Required in the Regulations? .....	49
Getting Started .....	50
Recommended Actions for Summative Evaluation.....	52
Moving Forward .....	53
<b>References</b> .....	<b>54</b>
<b>Appendix A: Forms for Educator Evaluation</b> .....	<b>A-1</b>
<b>Appendix B: Setting S.M.A.R.T. Goals</b> .....	<b>B-1</b>



## A Letter from the Commissioner

# Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.  
Commissioner

December 1, 2015

Dear Educators and other interested Stakeholders,

I am pleased to re-issue Part I of the Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation. In June 2011, when the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adopted regulations to improve student learning by overhauling educator evaluation in the Commonwealth, staff here at the Department began working closely with stakeholders to develop the Model System called for in the regulations. With the help of thoughtful suggestions and candid feedback from a wide range of stakeholders, we developed the ESE Model System for Educator Evaluation, comprised of eight components:

- I. District-Level Planning and Implementation Guide
- II. School-Level Planning and Implementation Guide
- III. Guide to Rubrics and Model Rubrics for Superintendent, Administrator and Teacher
- IV. Model Collective Bargaining Contract Language
- V. Implementation Guide for Principal Evaluation
- VI. Implementation Guide for Superintendent Evaluation
- VII. Rating Educator Impact on Student Learning Using District-Determined Measures of Student Learning
- VIII. Using Staff and Student Feedback in the Evaluation Process

Originally released in January 2012, the following Part I has been updated to reflect revised timelines and new resources to support effective implementation.

I remain excited by the promise of Massachusetts' educator evaluation regulations. Thoughtfully and strategically implemented, they are supporting analytical conversation about teaching and leading that is strengthening professional practice and improving student learning. At the same time, the regulations are providing educators with the opportunity to take charge of their own growth and development by setting individual and group goals related to student learning.

The Members of the State Board and I know that improvement in the quality and effectiveness of educator evaluation happens only when the Department does the hard work "with the field," not "to the field." To that end, we at the Department are constantly learning with the field. We will continue to revise and improve the Model System and related implementation guides and resources based on what we learn with the field. To help us do that, please do not hesitate to send your comments, questions and suggestions to us at [EducatorEvaluation@doe.mass.edu](mailto:EducatorEvaluation@doe.mass.edu), and visit the Educator Evaluation webpage at [www.doe.mass.edu/eeval/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/eeval/). We regularly update the page with new resources and tools.

Please know that you can count on ESE to be an active, engaged partner in the work ahead.

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.  
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

# The Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation

The Model System is a comprehensive educator evaluation system designed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), pursuant to the educator evaluation regulations, 603 CMR 35.00. The following eight-part series was developed to support effective implementation of the regulations by districts and schools across the Commonwealth.

## **Part I: District-Level Planning and Implementation Guide**

This Guide takes district leaders – school committees, superintendents and union leaders - through factors to consider as they decide whether to adopt or adapt the Model System or revise their own evaluation systems to meet the educator evaluation regulation. The Guide describes the rubrics, tools, resources and model contract language ESE has developed, and describes the system of support ESE is offering. It outlines reporting requirements, as well as the process ESE uses to review district evaluation systems for superintendents, principals, teachers and other licensed staff. Finally, the Guide identifies ways in which district leaders can support effective educator evaluation implementation in the schools.

## **Part II: School-Level Planning and Implementation Guide**

This Guide is designed to support administrators and teachers as they implement teacher evaluations at the school level. The Guide introduces and explains the requirements of the regulation and the principles and priorities that underlie them. It offers guidance, strategies, templates and examples that will support effective implementation of each of the five components of the evaluation cycle: self-assessment; goal setting and educator plan development; plan implementation and evidence collection; formative assessment/evaluation; and summative evaluation.

## **Part III: Guide to Rubrics and Model Rubrics for Superintendent, Administrator, and Teacher**

The Guide presents the ESE Model Rubrics and explains their use. The Guide also outlines the process for adapting them to specific educator roles and responsibilities.

## **Part IV: Model Collective Bargaining Contract Language**

This section contains the Model Contract that is consistent with the regulations, with model language for teacher and principal evaluation, as well as model language for the Student Impact Rating and district-determined measures (DDMs) and the implementation of student and staff feedback.

## **Part V: Implementation Guide for Principal Evaluation**

This section details the model process for principal evaluation and includes relevant documents and forms for recording goals, evidence and ratings. The Guide includes resources that principals and superintendents may find helpful, including a school visit protocol.

## **Part VI: Implementation Guide for Superintendent Evaluation**

This section details the model process for superintendent evaluation and includes relevant documents and a form for recording goals, evidence and ratings. The Guide includes resources that school committees and superintendents may find helpful, including a model for effective goal setting.

## **Part VII: Rating Educator Impact on Student Learning Using District-Determined Measures of Student Learning**

The Guide contains information for districts on identifying and using district-determined measures of student learning, growth and achievement, and determining ratings of High, Moderate or Low for educator impact on student learning.

## **Part VIII: Using Staff and Student Feedback in the Evaluation Process**

This Guide includes directions for districts on incorporating student and staff feedback into the educator evaluation process, as well as ESE Model Surveys for students and staff.

## Overview

### The Opportunity

On June 28, 2011 the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adopted new regulations to guide the evaluation of all educators serving in positions requiring a license—teachers, principals, superintendents, and other administrators<sup>1</sup>. The regulations are designed first and foremost to promote leaders' and teachers' growth and development. They place student learning at the center of the process using multiple measures of student learning. Every district in the Commonwealth is implementing evaluation processes and procedures that are consistent with the regulations.

The new regulatory framework for educator evaluation required changes in culture and practice in many schools and districts. Members of the Task Force that crafted recommendations for the regulations found that in many schools in the Commonwealth—and nationwide—the educator evaluation process was ineffective.<sup>2</sup> Too often, they found, the process was divorced from student learning and was superficial, ritualistic and passive, experienced by many as something “done to them.” Fewer than half of teachers and administrators polled described their own experience of evaluation as a process that contributed to their professional growth and development. The new regulations are designed to change all this when well implemented. Each educator takes a leading role in shaping his/her professional growth and development.

- Every educator assesses his/her own performance and proposes one or more challenging goals for improving his/her own practice. A formal process for reflection and self-assessment creates the foundation of a new opportunity for educators to chart their own course for professional growth and development.
- Every educator uses a rubric that offers a detailed picture of practice at four levels of performance. District-wide rubrics set the stage for both deep reflection and the rich dialogue about practice that our profession seeks.
- Every educator also considers her/his students' needs using a wide range of ways to assess student growth and proposes one or more challenging goals for improving student learning. Every educator monitors progress carefully and analyzes the impact of his/her hard work.
- Every educator is expected to consider team goals, a clear indication of the value the process places on both collaboration and accountability.
- Every educator compiles and presents evidence and conclusions about their performance and progress on his/her goals, ensuring that the educator voice is critical to the process.

These and other features of the educator evaluation framework hold great promise for improving educator practice, school climate and student learning. To turn promise into reality, every educator—and the teams they work with—needs to be supported to do this work effectively and efficiently.

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<sup>1</sup> For the full text of the regulations, see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr35.html>.

<sup>2</sup> For the full report of the Task Force, see Building a Breakthrough Framework for Educator Evaluation in the Commonwealth, submitted by the Massachusetts Task Force on the Evaluation of Teachers and Administrators, March 2011 available at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/breakthroughframework.pdf>.

## Overview

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The Task Force envisioned ESE playing an active role in that support, expecting ESE to develop a model to support districts to implement its “breakthrough framework.” The regulations therefore called on ESE to develop a “model system” which it 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 shall include tools, guidance, rubrics, and contract language developed by the Department that satisfy the requirements of (this regulation).”<sup>3</sup> This guide and its companions are the first components of the Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation (hereafter referred to as “the ESE Model System”).

## The Purpose of this Guide

While most of the development of local evaluation systems is the responsibility of district leadership teams in collaboration with unions and school committees, the majority of *implementation* efforts are undertaken by teachers, principals, and other school staff.

This guide is intended to support school-level leadership teams, evaluators, and educators<sup>4</sup> as they determine their level of readiness, plan for implementation, and implement the MA educator evaluation framework. In addition, the guide prepares school leadership teams of educators and administrators to assume a key role in design and implementation, empowering the teams to offer informed expertise and critical insight as to considerations vital to success at the school-level. District leadership should *also* read this guide to get a clear understanding of the task that schools are undertaking and the supports the district need to provide to foster effective implementation.

This guide will:

- introduce the requirements of the regulations as well as the principles and the priorities that underlie the educator evaluation framework;
- outline the steps and resources that are necessary for all schools;
- recommend specific action steps;
- highlight considerations for preparing, planning, and implementation; and
- introduce relevant components of and tools from the ESE Model System.

Each section of the guide contains information that is relevant to all school staff. Within each section, some parts may focus more heavily on the responsibilities of evaluators; some focus on the responsibilities of educator teams and individuals; and some focus on the responsibilities of school leadership teams of teachers and administrators that collaborate to plan, implement, and monitor evaluation efforts. For example, reading this guide will help the school leadership team identify strategies for rigorous yet practical implementation, create and/or tailor professional development for school staff, and develop systems and processes that will support and streamline evaluation efforts.

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<sup>3</sup> See CMR 603 35.02 at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr35.html>

<sup>4</sup> “Educator” is used in this guide to refer to classroom teachers and specialized instructional support personnel (educators who teach or counsel individual or small groups of students through consultation with the regular classroom teacher, such as school nurses, guidance or adjustment counselors, speech and language pathologists, and some special education teachers). “Educator” also refers to administrators when they are engaged in “being evaluated” as distinct from a role of “Evaluator.”



## Overview

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The primary—although not exclusive—focus of this guide is on evaluation of classroom teachers and specialized instructional support personnel (SISP). This is not because evaluating department heads, assistant principals, and other school-level administrators is not important, but because there are many more classroom teachers and SISP than there are administrators. That said, much of what is written in this guide will apply to evaluating school-level administrators, noting, of course, that collective bargaining will determine details in each district.

Early lessons from the field have been incorporated throughout the guide, as have critical insights from state associations, union leaders, and other partners.

## Educator Evaluation Framework

In August 2010, BESE convened the Massachusetts Task Force on the Evaluation of Teachers and Administrators to develop recommendations for revised evaluation regulations. Six months later, the Task Force issued a report recommending a “Breakthrough Framework.”

In June 2011, BESE adopted new educator evaluation regulations consistent with the Task Force recommendations. In the regulations are five key design features put forth in the Task Force report:

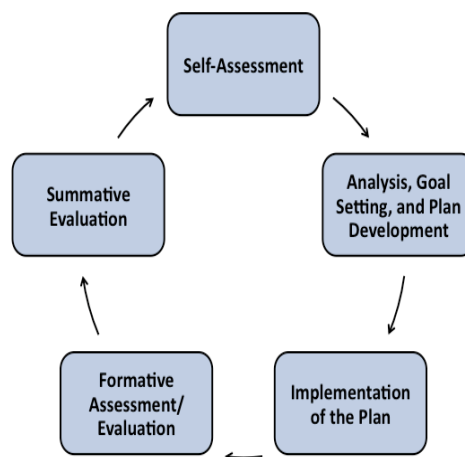
1. **Statewide Standards and Indicators for Effective Administrative Leadership and Teaching Practice.** The Task Force proposed a set of Standards and Indicators intended to promote a statewide understanding about what effective teaching and administrative practice looks like. The process included an extensive comparison of relevant state and national standards. According to the report, “They serve as the spine of the new evaluation Framework, and will do so in the evaluation systems that districts adopt.” The regulations define Standards and Indicators for Effective Teaching Practice and for Administrative Leadership Practice ([603 CMR 35.03](#) and [603 CMR 35.04](#)). Detailed information about the Standards and Indicators can be found in Part III of the ESE Model System.
2. **Three Categories of Evidence.** To assess educator performance on the Standards and Indicators, the Task Force called for three categories of evidence to be used in every district’s educator evaluation system. The regulations describe: multiple measures of student learning, growth, and achievement<sup>5</sup>; judgments based on observation and artifacts of professional practice, including unannounced observations of practice of any duration; and additional evidence relevant to one or more Performance Standards, including student feedback as a source of evidence when evaluating teachers, and staff feedback as a source of evidence when evaluating administrators ([603 CMR 35.07\(1\)](#)).
3. **Statewide Performance Rating Scale.** The performance of every educator is rated against the Performance Standards described above. All educators earn one of four ratings: Exemplary, Proficient, Needs Improvement, or Unsatisfactory. Each rating has a specific meaning:

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<sup>5</sup> The final regulations approved by BESE include a more explicit focus on student learning, adding a rating of educator impact on student learning. Beginning in 2014-15, districts will use “district-determined measures of student learning which must be comparable across grade or subject district-wide” to determine impact. This is distinct from the use of multiple measures as a category of evidence to rate educator performance. Also starting in 2014-15, additional evidence relevant to one or more performance Standards will include student feedback, and will include staff feedback with respect to administrators.

## Overview

- *Exemplary* performance represents a level of performance that exceeds the already high standard of Proficient. A rating of Exemplary is reserved for performance on an Indicator or Standard that is of such a high level that it could serve as a model. Few educators are expected to earn Exemplary ratings on more than a handful of Indicators.
- *Proficient* performance is understood to be fully satisfactory. This is the rigorous expected level of performance; demanding, but attainable.
- *Needs Improvement* indicates performance that is below the requirements of a Standard but is not considered to be Unsatisfactory at the time. Improvement is necessary and expected.
- *Unsatisfactory* performance is merited when performance has not significantly improved following a rating of Needs Improvement, or performance is consistently below the requirements of a standard and is considered inadequate, or both.



4. **Five-Step Evaluation Cycle.** This Implementation Guide is organized around the 5-Step Evaluation Cycle required for all educators, a centerpiece of the regulations designed to have all educators play a more active, engaged role in their professional growth and development.

Under the regulations, evaluation begins with a Self-Assessment and concludes with a Summative Evaluation and a rating of the educator's impact on student learning<sup>6</sup>. It also is a continuous improvement process in which evidence from the Summative Evaluation becomes important information for the educator's next Self-Assessment and subsequent goal setting.

5. **Four Educator Plans.** The Task Force prioritized differentiating evaluation by both career stage and performance. The regulations define four different Educator Plans. The following three plans apply only to "Experienced" educators defined as a teacher with Professional Teacher Status (PTS) or an administrator with more than three years in an administrative position in the school district:

- The *Self-Directed Growth Plan* applies to educators rated Proficient or Exemplary and is developed by the educator. Educators with a Moderate or High Student Impact Rating are on a two-year plan; educators with a Low Student Impact Rating are on a one-year plan.
- The *Directed Growth Plan* applies to educators rated Needs Improvement and is a plan of one school year or less, developed by the educator and the evaluator.
- The *Improvement Plan* applies to educators rated Unsatisfactory and is a plan of no less than 30 calendar days and no longer than one school year, developed by the evaluator.

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<sup>6</sup> The first Ratings of Impact on Student Learning will be implemented in 2015-16.

## Overview

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Few new educators are expected to be Proficient on every Indicator or even every Standard in their first years of practice. Therefore, the fourth plan applies to teachers without Professional Teacher Status, an administrator in the first three years in a district, or an educator in a new assignment (at the discretion of an evaluator):

- The *Developing Educator Plan* is developed by the educator and the evaluator and is for one school year or less.

## Priorities for Implementing the Framework

“Simply put, poor evaluation practices are a missed opportunity for promoting better leading, better teaching, better learning, and better schools.”

This statement by the Task Force highlights the underlying principles of these regulations: the purpose of evaluation is to promote student learning by providing educators with feedback for improvement and enhanced opportunities for professional growth. To achieve this, all educators must maintain a focus on creating the conditions that can realize this vision. This requires an approach that is both thoughtful and strategic so that evaluation can be seized as an opportunity.

Approaching educator evaluation thoughtfully and strategically requires attention to **coherence**, **connection**, **collaboration** and **conversation**. Attending to each will help create the synergy needed to ensure that the new educator evaluation system will achieve its twin goals of supporting educator growth and student achievement.

### Coherence

**Create coherence and leverage opportunities to reinforce it.** Without explicit linkage to other priorities and on-going work, the educator evaluation system will be both perceived and undertaken as an “add on” that is disconnected from daily practice and big picture goals for the school and district, limiting opportunities for feedback and growth. Linking the data analysis, self-assessment, goal setting, and evidence collection activities required for educator evaluation to key activities already underway in the school is one way to build this coherence.

For example, all schools and districts are implementing the 2011 MA Frameworks in Mathematics and English Language Arts. Team goal setting in the evaluation cycle can be used to advance this work: teacher teams can share the common professional practice goal of learning “backwards design” principles and applying them to design together a unit that aligns with the Frameworks. Department, grade level and/or faculty meetings can provide opportunity to share and critique models.

Similarly, a school may be revamping parent-teacher conferences. In this case, the evidence collection component of the evaluation cycle—for both evaluators and educators—could focus on collecting and analyzing data about the implementation and impact of this change in practice. At one faculty meeting, Indicators for Standard III (Parent & Community Engagement) can be “unpacked” and new expectations for the conferences developed; at a later one, faculty can share their experiences and the feedback they solicited in order to refine the practice for the future.

## Overview

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### Connection

**Connect individual educator goals to school and district priorities.** Connecting individual educator goals to larger school and district priorities is critical to effective implementation. Strong vertical alignment between individual, team, school and district goals will accelerate progress on the goals. For example, when a district is determined to build a strong tiered system of support in mathematics, it makes sense to ask individuals and their teams to focus self-assessment and goal setting on areas most closely associated with that work. When the benchmarks of progress detailed in Educator Plans are connected to the benchmarks in school and district improvement plans, their achievement will reinforce and accelerate progress. As important, when individual educators and teams are having trouble meeting their benchmarks, stakeholders will have a signal that school and district plans may need review.

### Collaboration

**Support teacher and administrator teams to collaborate throughout the cycle.** Grade-level, department and other teams can use the steps in the evaluation cycle to help focus their work and learn from one another more systematically, thus enhancing opportunities for professional growth and feedback for improvement. “Unpacking” several specific Indicators and elements together as part of the self-assessment process can lead to identifying models and agreeing on team goals. Analyzing Formative Assessments or other student learning data together will sharpen each member’s insights and can lead to decisions to refine the action steps for the student learning goals. Similarly, team members can share individual professional practice goals and make plans to develop model lessons or units and observe each other’s classes.

### Conversation

**Engage everyone in on-going conversation about improving practice.** Creating a shared understanding of effective practice is not limited to teams, however. Encouraging reflection and dialogue among teams, individuals, colleagues, and school leaders around the rubrics, student data, and teaching strategies is at the heart of the educator evaluation process. Create time and space for those conversations throughout the evaluation cycle—during common planning time, faculty meetings, and professional development sessions—and in classrooms, hallways and faculty rooms. On-going, focused conversations about practice following frequent, short classroom visits are essential. So, too, are conversations in well-structured faculty and team meetings and through review and analysis of products and practices. All of these conversations will help create a shared vision of effective practice, a critical ingredient for nearly every strong and improving school.

### The Model System

To assist districts and schools, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) released on January 10, 2012 the first components of a comprehensive Model System for Educator Evaluation as required in the educator evaluation regulations. School committees and school districts can adopt the Model System, adapt the Model System, or revise their own evaluation system to align with the regulations. The Model System is aligned with the state's educator evaluation regulations and the Model System's rubrics meet the rigor "consistent with these principles in the regulations" (in [603 CMR 35:06](#)).

The regulations call for districts to phase in components of the evaluation system over several years:

- **Phase I:** summative ratings based on attainment of goals and performance against the four Standards defined in the educator evaluation regulations.

**Phase II:** use feedback from students and (for administrators) staff as evidence in the evaluation process (2014-15 school year).

**Phase III:** rating educator impact on student learning gains based on trends and patterns for multiple measures of student learning gains (2015-16 school year).

This guide introduces the Model System at the school-level, familiarizing the reader with the tools that are available to support implementation including forms and rubrics.

Further detail on adopting or adapting the Model System or revising a district's currently existing system to align with the new regulations can be found in the Model System Part I: District-Level Planning and Implementation Guide.

### Using This Guide

The *School-Level Planning and Implementation Guide* is designed to both outline requirements from the regulations and offer recommendations and suggestions for implementation. The regulations describe the mandatory parameters of the evaluation Framework; the local evaluation system, however, is collectively bargained. When this guide provides suggestions related to implementation details subject to collective bargaining, they are just that – suggestions. Those suggestions are intended to support schools to strategically and effectively implement the Framework. They are based on research, best practices in other states, and learning from the Massachusetts districts and schools that have begun implementation.

This guide is intended to be a useful tool regardless of whether or not the district chooses to adopt the Model System. It will also offer specific connections to the Model System for districts who do adopt.

The guide is divided into five major sections that correspond to the five steps of the cycle (self-assessment and goal proposal; goal setting and plan development; implementation of the plan; Formative Assessment/evaluation; and Summative Evaluation). Each of the five sections is organized as follows:

- **Overview** – describes the step of the cycle
- **Timeframe** – describes window in which step occurs during a typical school year/evaluation cycle
- **What is Required in the Regulations?** – outlines the specific regulatory requirements for the step
- **Getting Started** – this section includes:
  - **Conditions for Readiness** – describe school-wide knowledge, capacity, and information that will increase the readiness of educators and evaluators to effectively implement the step;
  - **Considerations for Planning** – highlights key logistics and practical considerations for implementation that will help school leadership teams, educators, and evaluators plan;
  - **Suggested Resources** – lists concrete documents or pieces of information needed for successful implementation of the step; and
  - **Tools from the Model System** – lists the tools available from ESE
- **Recommended Actions** – table of specific steps educators, teams, evaluators, and/or school leadership teams should take. These tables are organized by who carries out each step, and notes issues to consider based on both research and lessons learned from early implementers of the regulations
- One or more **Step-Specific Topics** to provide in-depth guidance on particular considerations or recommendations that warrant further detail or clarification, such as Conducting Observations

At the end of the Guide, you will find resources in the **Appendices** including forms from the Model System and other resources that are referenced throughout the Guide.

## Overview

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As promising practices emerge and useful feedback and suggestions are collected, ESE will continue to engage representatives of state associations in developing guidance and resources, including these organizations with whom we have been working as we developed the Model System (in alphabetical order):

- American Federation of Teachers-Massachusetts (AFT-MA)
- Education Personnel Advisory Council (EPAC)
- Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC)
- Massachusetts School Counselors Association (MASCA)
- Massachusetts Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (MASCD)
- Massachusetts Association of School Personnel Administrators (MASPA)
- Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS)
- Massachusetts Association of Vocational Administrators (MAVA)
- Massachusetts Elementary School Principals Association (MESPA)
- Massachusetts School Nurses Organization (MSNO)
- Massachusetts Secondary School Principals Association (MSSAA)
- Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA)
- Massachusetts Vocational Association (MVA)

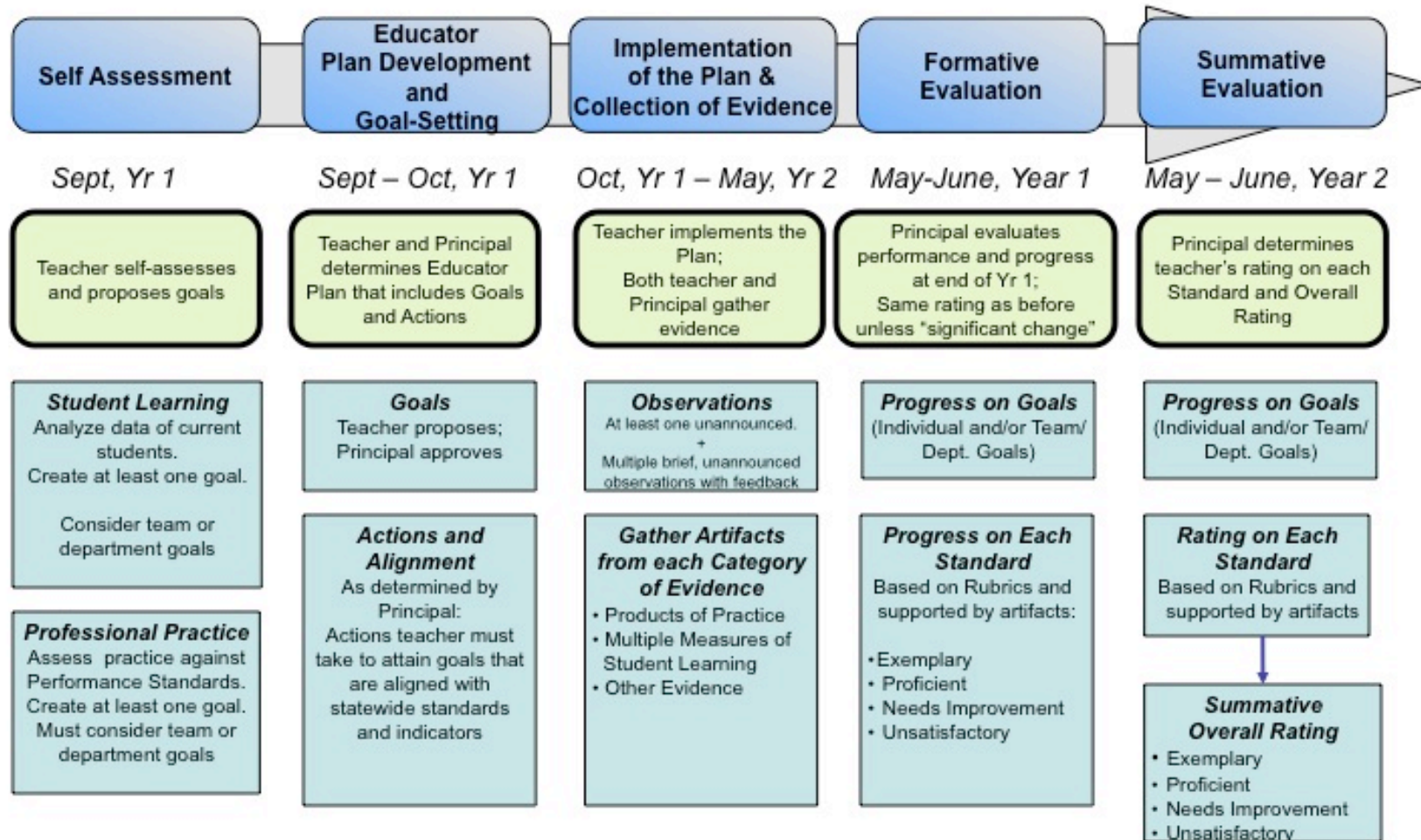




## Educator Evaluation: Two-Year Cycle

### Proficient and Exemplary Educators with Professional Teacher Status

January 2012

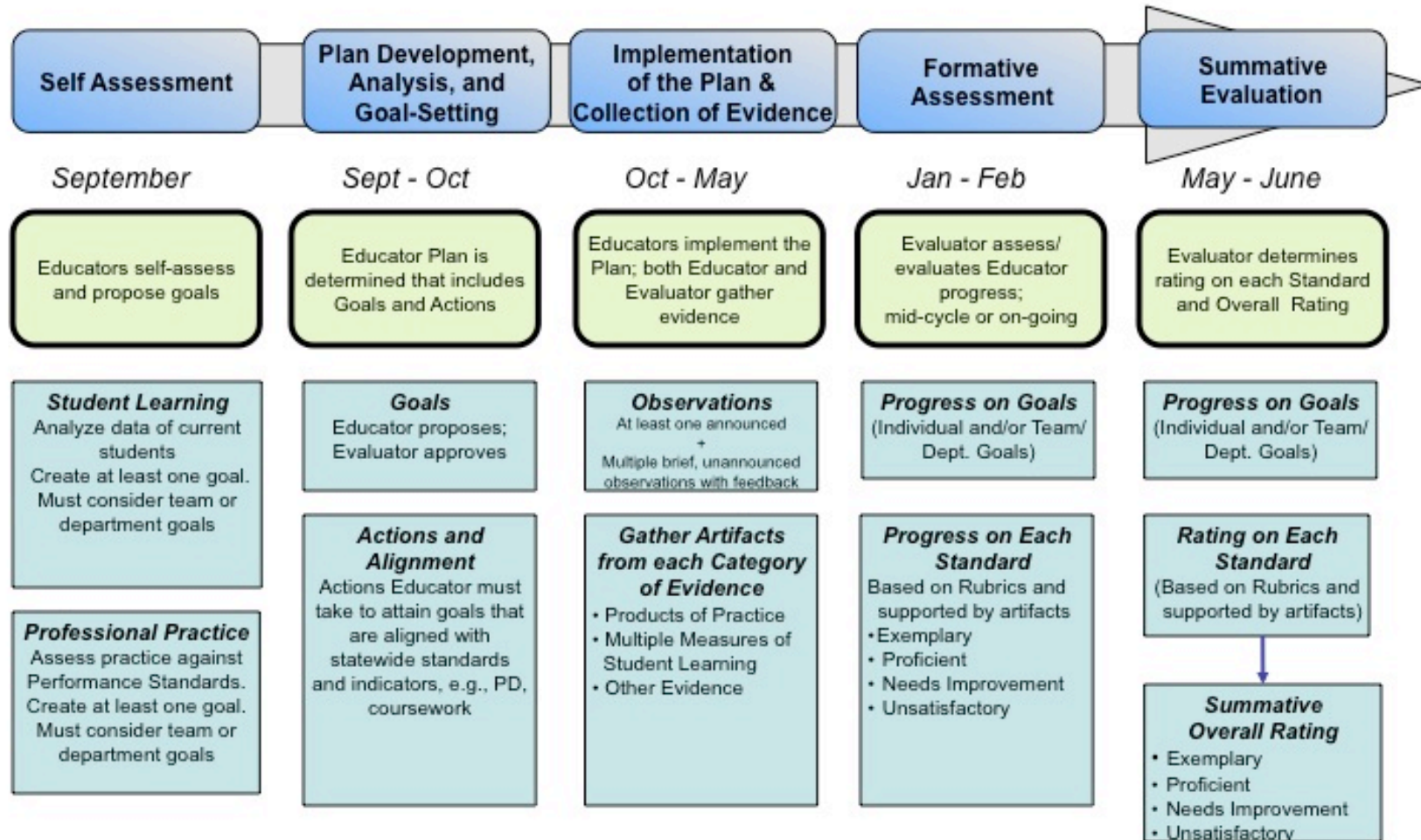






## Educator Evaluation: Annual Cycle

### Struggling Educators and Educators without Professional Teacher Status



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## Step 1: Self-Assessment & Goal Proposal

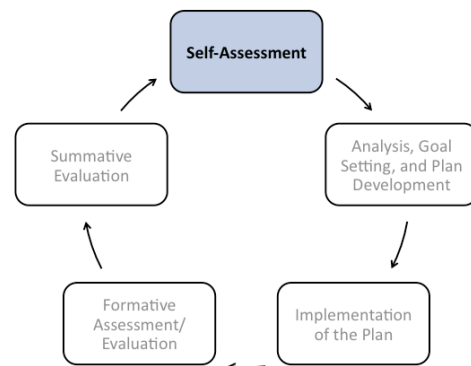
### Overview

The first step of the Educator Evaluation cycle is self-assessment and goal proposal. The key actions are for educators to analyze student data, reflect on their performance, and to propose a minimum of one student learning goal and one professional practice goal individually and/or in teams.

This is a critical moment for educators to take ownership of the process. A guiding principle for the Task Force was that evaluation should be done *with* educators, not *to* them. In the words of a Kindergarten teacher in the Boston Public Schools, “Teachers need to take ownership of this process in order for it to be most meaningful.” Embracing the self-assessment process empowers educators to shape the conversation by stating what *they* think their strengths are, the areas on which they want to focus, and what support they need. An educator’s position is made more powerful when backed by specific evidence, clear alignment with school and district priorities and initiatives, and strong use of team goals.

### Time Frame

In the first year of implementation, self-assessment should take place as early as possible in the school year, leaving most of the year for educators to work toward their goals. The time it takes to complete this step might range from two to six weeks, depending on the extent to which team or department goals are included and how quickly those groups of educators can meet to analyze student data and propose collective goals.



In subsequent years of implementation, the self-assessment step should be informed by the Summative Evaluation. Given a typical one or two year cycle, most Summative Evaluations will occur at the end of a school year—therefore, self-assessment may start at the end of one year as educators reflect on their performance and continue through the beginning of the next year as educators analyze data for their new students.

## Step 1: Self-Assessment & Goal Proposal

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### What Is Required in the Regulations?

The regulations on educator evaluation require that educators conduct a self-assessment addressing the Performance Standards and Indicators defined in [603 CMR 35.03](#) or [35.04](#), and any additional local standards established through collective bargaining or included in individual employment contracts as per [603 CMR 35.06\(2\)](#). During this phase of the evaluation cycle, each educator is responsible for gathering and providing to the evaluator information on his or her performance, which is to include:

- an analysis of evidence of student learning, growth, and achievement for students under the educator's responsibility;
- an assessment of practice against Performance Standards; and
- proposed goals to pursue to improve practice and student learning, growth, and achievement, which include
  - a minimum of one individual or team **professional practice goal** to improve the educator's professional practice tied to one or more statewide Standards and Indicators defined in 603 CMR 35.00 and any additional local performance standards, and
  - a minimum of one individual or team **student learning goal** to improve the learning, growth and achievement of the students under the educator's responsibility.

The educator provides this information to the evaluator in the form of a self-assessment at the point of goal setting and plan development.

## Step 1: Self-Assessment & Goal Proposal

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### Getting Started

The purpose of the section below is to help educators, evaluators, and school leadership teams get started with Step 1: Self-Assessment and Goal Proposal. The educator being evaluated is responsible for much of the action in this step. Educators' ability to effectively engage in this step should be supported by evaluators and school leadership teams through increasing school-wide "readiness," careful planning, and the provision of key resources and tools.

### Conditions for Readiness

- **Clear understanding of school and district priorities and goals.** When sitting down to self-assess, the amount of information to consider may feel overwhelming. It is critical that educators prioritize within their analysis of data and self-assessment on performance rubrics. The school leadership team and evaluators can support educators by establishing and communicating a tightly focused vision of priorities and goals. When sharing school and district priorities and goals, school leaders and evaluators may want to explicitly link them to the [Standards and Indicators of Effective Teaching Practice](#) and to specific data sources that are priorities for analysis. For example, knowledge of a school priority to increase parent engagement prompts educators to engage in more intensive reflection on Standard III (Family and Community Engagement). Likewise, a school-wide goal of increasing reading comprehension scores may guide educators to look more closely at the sources of reading comprehension data that are relevant to their respective roles. Arming educators with this knowledge early on in the process empowers them to dive into conversations about rubrics and student data with the confidence that they know where and when to sharpen and intensify their focus.
- **Knowledge of school and district initiatives.** While many educators are likely to already have knowledge of these initiatives—especially if school leadership has effectively communicated school and district priorities and goals—new staff may not be aware of existing and planned initiatives. In order to create **coherence** across the variety of initiatives that are being or will be implemented, educators must know not only the scope but also the order of priority for implementation. This knowledge will enable educators to connect the work that they already need to do to support effective implementation of such initiatives with their individual or team goals. For example, a team of 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers who want to improve their skill in backward mapping for unit design may choose to collaborate to develop unit plans for the curriculum Frameworks.
- **School-wide ability to analyze and interpret data.** The ability to effectively analyze and draw appropriate conclusions from data is likely to vary. Creating strong goals that are likely to accelerate student learning is dependent on data analysis that considers patterns and trends across groups of students, the variety of factors that contribute to performance (such as attendance, social and emotional needs, or past interventions), growth, and early evidence of struggle. While the school leadership team should provide formal professional development for staff, there should also be opportunities for teams to support each other as they work to analyze data together. Special education staff and professional support personnel such as counselors, school psychologists, and school nurses have specialized knowledge to contribute that will support educators during data analysis—it may be helpful to have them meet with teams or share their insights during faculty meetings early in the year.

## Step 1: Self-Assessment & Goal Proposal

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- **Ability to develop and monitor S.M.A.R.T. goals.** Goal proposal is a key moment for educators to take ownership of their own evaluations. If proposed goals lack “S.M.A.R.T.” qualities (Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Rigorous and Realistic, and Tracked), they will be difficult to implement and monitor. If the evaluator does not provide adequate support to the educator when refining the goal, the Educator Plan is likely to be created based on a weak goal. Early implementers of the evaluation Framework found that “S.M.A.R.T.er” goals readily translate into an Educator Plan, while weaker goals are difficult to translate into a focused plan of action. If planned activities are not well connected to the goal, and the goal lacks measurable and/or timely benchmarks, it decreases the likelihood that the educator will be able to monitor progress, adjust practice, and attain the goal. (See [Appendix B: Setting S.M.A.R.T. goals](#))
  
- **Knowledge of planned professional development and available resources.** As individuals and teams prepare to propose goals, they should be aware of supports that are available through the school and district. As many schools plan formal professional development opportunities far in advance, it will benefit educators to know the timing and purpose of planned activities. Further, educators will be able to propose stronger goals if they have a sense of what options are realistic for support from the school, such as how much common planning time teams will have throughout the year to work toward shared goals or whether they will have opportunities to observe or be observed by peers. Organizing and sharing this information with the staff will also support the school leadership team and evaluators in developing a cohesive plan for professional development and educator support as they move into the next phase of finalizing goals and developing Educator Plans including planned activities.

### Considerations for Planning

*This section highlights key logistics and practical considerations for implementation that will help school leadership teams and evaluators plan.*

- **Early access to baseline data.** The logistics of accessing data can prevent educators from engaging in meaningful and thorough self-assessment early in the year. School leadership can support educators by working to ensure that data is accessible early in the year, particularly for new students. During conversations with the staff about evaluation in the opening weeks of school, school leaders and evaluators may want to communicate how they want educators to proceed with analyzing student data if, for example, they only have data for two-thirds of their class, or if student schedules are not finalized yet. Finally, both individuals and teams need access to data for the students under their responsibility—team data may need to be disaggregated (or aggregated) for effective analysis.
  
- **Communicating priorities, goals, initiatives, and planned professional development opportunities and resources.** Set the stage through faculty and/or team meetings in the opening days and weeks of the school year (the typical start point for most evaluation cycles). Educators should know the school priorities, goals, and planned professional development prior to being asked to commence self-assessment and goal proposal. Many districts, for example, collaborate with the school staff to identify specific “priority” Indicators or elements on which to self-assess, giving them clear direction with regard to how to focus their analysis according to the school’s priorities and goals. While this does not mean that the other Standards and Indicators would be ignored over the course of the year, it tightens and intensifies the vision for district- or school-wide improvement, helping to ensure educator and team alignment with school efforts.

## Step 1: Self-Assessment & Goal Proposal

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- **Time for teams to collaborate.** “Self” assessment has a clear connotation of an individual activity—so why are teams emphasized in this step, and what role should teams play in self-assessment and goal proposal?

Reflecting on one’s performance is, in most respects, a private exercise and should be honored as such. There are important roles for teams to play in self-assessment, however, which will strengthen and add meaning to the process.

1. Teams should work together over time to “unpack the rubric,” engaging in discussion around topics such as distinctions between performance levels, alignment between performance Standards and school goals, or the definitions of certain Indicators. Such conversations serve to deepen the professional culture around improving practice and contribute to a shared sense of educator empowerment and ownership of their professional growth. School leadership should start the conversation with educators as they share the locally bargained performance rubric, engaging the faculty as a whole in discussions of the rubrics and which Indicators or elements might be a focus for the year. (See [Part III of the Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation](#), “Guide to Rubrics and Model Rubrics for Superintendent, Administrator, and Teacher,” for more information on rubrics.)
2. Teams should analyze student data together to mutually strengthen and reinforce one another’s skills and deepen their understanding of the data (Bernhardt, 2004).
3. Teams may propose shared goals to collectively pursue<sup>7</sup>.
4. Team time should be used to explore ways in which members can contribute to one another’s growth and provide feedback for improvement throughout the year.

For educators to have adequate opportunities to engage in this kind of activity, school leaders should plan in advance to ensure that time is set aside for teams to meet in the opening days and weeks of the school year.

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<sup>7</sup> Note that team goals may not be appropriate for all educators. For example, new teachers may be focusing on induction goals, and struggling educators will have goals focusing on areas for improvement. Evaluators should also be sensitive to issues that may arise, including confidentiality, if teams include an individual with an Educator Plan that is less than a year (which would indicate a previous rating of Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory). For example, a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade team may include three teachers on two-year Self-Directed Growth Plans; one teacher on a one-year Directed Growth Plan; and one teacher on an Improvement Plan. In that scenario, the evaluator should consider whether it is appropriate for all of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers to participate in a team goal. All Improvement Plan goals will have to target the areas in urgent need of improvement, whereas the teacher on the Directed Growth Plan may be able to more easily tackle both the team goal and individual goals for improvement. If a shared goal is proposed by that team, it should include benchmarks that will be available prior to both the Formative Assessment and the Summative Evaluation for the teacher on the Improvement Plan and the teacher on the Directed Growth Plan.



## Step 1: Self-Assessment & Goal Proposal

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### **Suggested Resources**

*In order to create coherence across existing or planned initiatives, align individual and team goals with school and district goals and priorities, and promote collaboration and conversation, it is critical that educators have clear and easy access to certain types of information. The “Suggested Resources” section lists several concrete resources that will support educators to engage in self-assessment and goal proposal thoughtfully and effectively.*

- Copies of district and school improvement plans and/or goals
- Dates and intended outcomes of planned professional development opportunities
- Specific information on new initiatives that are being implemented or continued from previous years, such as the implementation of a new curriculum
- Growth and achievement data for past and current or incoming students
- Performance rubric on which educators will self-assess
- Copy of collective bargaining agreement and/or other evaluation requirements

### **Tools from the Model System**

*For districts that have chosen to adopt the ESE Model System, the following tools are available to support implementation:*

- Guidance on Rubrics and Model Rubrics (see the Model System [Part III: Guide to Rubrics and Model Rubrics for Superintendent, Administrator, and Teacher](#))
- [Self-Assessment Form](#) (see Appendix A)
- [Goal Setting Form](#) (see Appendix A)
- [Setting S.M.A.R.T. goals](#) (see Appendix B)

## Step 1: Self-Assessment & Goal Proposal

### Recommended Actions for Self-Assessment & Goal Proposal

Recommended Action	Individual Educator	Team	Evaluator/ School Leadership	Notes
Communicate school and district priorities and goals, existing and planned initiatives, planned professional development, and other opportunities for support			✓	Clear communication will strengthen <b>connection</b> and <b>coherence</b> , enabling educators to propose tightly aligned goals and realistic supports
Communicate expectations for completion of self-assessment			✓	Exact dates are not regulated and may be set through collective bargaining (Model Collective Bargaining Language can be found in Part IV of the Model System)
Identify teams who will collaborate to “unpack the rubric,” analyze student learning, and propose goals		✓	✓	Teams may be organized around department, grade level, or students for whom the team shares responsibility
Assemble and review student learning data for students currently under the responsibility of the team or educator	✓	✓	✓	To save time, evaluators may want to participate in team discussion and goal development
Identify student strengths and areas to target for growth	✓	✓		Educators will analyze trends and patterns in data for past students while reflecting on performance; goals are for current students
Review performance standards on the district or ESE rubric	✓	✓	✓	All rubrics must include the Standards and Indicators for Effective Teaching Practice defined in <a href="#">603 CMR 35.03</a>
Identify professional practices that teams need to engage in to attain student learning goals		✓		Team professional practice goals should be aligned with team student learning goals where they exist as well as performance standards on rubrics
Identify educator performance areas of strength and areas for growth	✓			Educators may choose to rate themselves on the rubric but are not required to submit ratings; they are only required to provide “an assessment of practice against Performance Standards” ( <a href="#">603 CMR 35.06(2)(a)</a> )
Propose a minimum of one student learning goal and one professional practice goal	✓	✓		Goals may be individual and/or at the team level



## Step 1: Self-Assessment & Goal Proposal

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### Common Questions on Goal Proposal

*The section below reflects questions frequently raised by early implementers of the regulations.*

- *Why are team goals a priority?*

The regulations require that both educators and evaluators consider team goals; goals can be individual, team, or a combination of both. Setting grade level, department, or other team goals—both for student learning and professional practice—promotes alignment and coherence, focuses effort, and fosters professional collaboration and cooperation, thus enhancing opportunities for professional growth. Team goals also ease the evaluator’s burden of assessing and supporting a high volume of individual educators’ goals. Team goals can also propose a common outcome and measure, but identify differentiated responsibilities and actions for members.

- *What’s the difference between a student learning goal and a professional practice goal?*

The educator evaluation framework prioritizes both student learning and educator professional growth; therefore, the regulations require a minimum of at least one student learning goal and one professional practice goal. In reality, professional practice is typically closely entwined with student learning which can make it difficult to distinguish between these two different kinds of goals.

Student learning goals are driven by the needs of the students for whom an educator or team has responsibility. On the first day of school, a given classroom of students has a range of learning needs. For example, 40% of the students in a 6<sup>th</sup> grade class may be reading three years below grade level. Any teacher that steps into that classroom faces the same array of student learning needs. Student data shapes and informs student learning goals.

Professional practice goals are distinguished in two primary ways: first, the manner in which a teacher is able to support student progress toward learning goals may vary by teacher. A novice teacher is likely to have a different professional focus than a veteran teacher in support of improving the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students’ reading skills. Second, professional practice goals should support the learning of the teacher—an opportunity to deepen or acquire a skill or knowledge of content, pedagogy, or professional leadership, for example. Individual teacher practice and learning shapes and informs professional practice goals.

- *My students have such different needs – how do I pick just one or two goals to focus on?*

Given the complex array of needs of individual students—let alone classrooms, grades, or a whole school—it is critical that educators prioritize when proposing goals. As noted earlier, one source of guidance is district and school goals and priorities. Another source of guidance is the analysis of educator performance: an educator’s strengths and areas for growth can also inform the selection of student learning goals. For example, a middle school special education teacher may have a history of success in improving the reading comprehension of her students, but may be challenged by students who are increasingly struggling with non-fiction writing. Reading comprehension and writing skills are both important student needs, but in this case, it would make more sense to propose a goal on non-fiction writing to ensure the educator’s focus and the evaluator’s support in this area.

## Step 1: Self-Assessment & Goal Proposal

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### Key Components to Establishing and Sustaining Effective Teacher Teams

Effective collaboration by teacher teams can have a significant impact on improved teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Saunders et al., 2009). However, simply having time to collaborate does not necessarily result in student achievement gains; teacher teams that experience actual achievement gains as a result of their work are those that focus almost entirely on teaching and learning (Vescio, et al., 2008). Building the conditions to sustain and support effective teacher teams should be a priority for all school leadership. According to findings from a 5-year study of teacher teams in Title 1 schools, there are five key components for establishing and sustaining effective teacher teams.

**Teams that have common instructional responsibilities.** When teachers have shared responsibility for students or have common instructional responsibilities—either within a grade or content area—they are able to collaborate more effectively around shared student learning problems and work to identify instructional solutions that draw from their collective expertise.

**Stable settings dedicated to instructional collaboration.** The biggest challenge to effective teacher teams is not lack of motivation or a desire to work together, but rather the inability to secure stable, protected time on a regular basis to get together and focus on student learning. Research indicates that teacher teams need at least 2 to 3 hours every month to sustain rigorous, focused collaboration around student learning. Establishing, protecting, and sustaining regular times to meet is critical for effective teacher collaboration (Gallimore et al., 2009).

**Perseverance.** Teacher teams are only as effective as their students. The best teacher teams are those that stick with a goal until their students meet key performance indicators related to that goal. Once teachers see first-hand the product of their efforts, they are less likely to assume “I planned and taught the lesson, but they didn’t get it,” and more likely to adopt the assumption, “you haven’t taught until they’ve learned” (Gallimore et al., 2009).

**Protocols that guide—but do not prescribe—collaboration.** Not only do protocols help guide collaboration, they create recurring opportunities for every teacher to contribute their knowledge, experience, and creativity.

**Trained peer facilitators.** Having a designated, trained peer facilitator helps teams stay focused, work through protocols, and stick to a problem or challenge until it is solved. The presence of a peer facilitator also distributes leadership more effectively by giving teachers opportunities to exercise instructional leadership, and by freeing up instructional coaches and content experts to focus their assistance on content rather than act as team leaders (McDougall et al., 2007).

Together, these five components of establishing effective teacher teams build a foundation for focused, productive collaboration around instruction driven by real improvements to student achievement.

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## Step 2: Goal Setting & Plan Development

### Overview

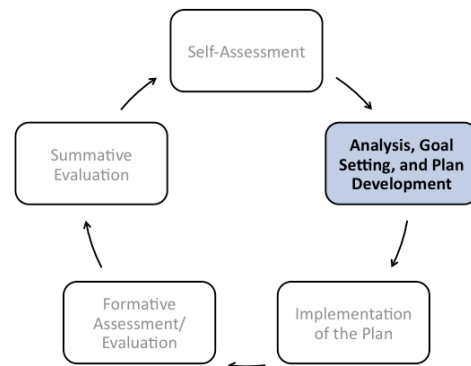
The second step of the evaluation cycle for continuous improvement is goal setting and plan development. The key actions are for educators to share their self-assessments and proposed goals with evaluators; for evaluators to work with teams and individuals to refine proposed goals as needed; and for educators and evaluators to develop Educator Plans that identify activities and supports that will drive improvement and progress toward goal attainment.

Each Educator Plan should: create a clear path for action that will support the educator's and/or team's professional growth and improvement; align with school and district goals; and leverage existing professional development and expertise from within the school to ensure access to timely supports and feedback for improvement. Even with well-written individual Educator Plans, however, successful implementation relies on a strong school-wide plan for professional development.

Schools that effectively develop and support Educator Plans will demonstrate that school leadership is committed to giving educators the agreed-upon supports. Collectively, the Educator Plans will shape the professional development and other supports that empower educators to successfully work toward goals that they have identified and prioritized, while continuing to advance school-wide performance.

### Timeframe

Goal refinement and plan development should take place early in the school year to prepare educators for engaging in the actions and activities to which they have committed. Completing the Educator Plan early in the school year will also allow educators to maximize the use of supports identified in the plan. While the dates may depend on local bargaining and on the timeframe for self-assessment, a good rule of thumb is to finalize all Educator Plans by mid- to late October. Finally, note that observations and evidence collection do not rely on the completion of Educator Plans and may begin concurrent with this step, although educators and evaluators will have a clearer focus once the Plan is completed.



## Step 2: Goal Setting & Plan Development

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### What Is Required in the Regulations?

The regulations on educator evaluation require that each educator have an Educator Plan as per [603 CMR 35.06\(3\)](#).

An Educator Plan outlines a course of action that an educator will take to pursue goals. Educator Plans must include a minimum of one individual or team goal to improve the educator's professional practice tied to one or more Performance Standards and a minimum of one individual or team goal to improve the learning, growth, and achievement of the students under the educators' responsibility. Evaluators have final authority over goals.

The Plan must outline actions that educators will take in order to attain these goals, including but not limited to professional development activities, self-study, and coursework, as well as other supports and resources for completing these actions.

Educator Plans must be aligned with Statewide Standards and Indicators defined in 603 CMR 35.00 and any additional local performance standards; they must be consistent with school and district goals; they must be designed to provide educators with feedback for improvement, professional growth, and leadership; they must be designed to ensure educator effectiveness and overall system accountability.

There are four types of Educator Plan. The type, duration, and developer of each Plan is established according to status and performance as follows:

- **Developing Educator Plan** (developed by the educator and the evaluator)  
This plan is for an administrator with less than three years experience in a district; an educator without Professional Teacher Status (PTS); or an educator in a new assignment (at the discretion of the evaluator). This plan is for one school year or less.
- **Self-Directed Growth Plan** (developed by the educator)  
This plan is for an "experienced" educator (defined as an administrator with more than three years in an administrative position in the school district or a teacher with Professional Teacher Status) with an Exemplary or Proficient performance rating on the previous Summative Evaluation. When the Rating of Impact on Student Learning is implemented (beginning in 2013-14), educators with a Moderate or High Rating of Impact will be on a two-year plan; educators with a Low Impact Rating will be on a one-year plan.
- **Directed Growth Plan** (developed by the educator and the evaluator)  
This plan is for an experienced educator rated as Needs Improvement on the previous Summative Evaluation. This plan is for one school year or less.
- **Improvement Plan** (developed by the evaluator )  
This plan is for an experienced educator rated as Unsatisfactory on the previous Summative Evaluation. This plan is for no less than 30 calendar days and no longer than one school year.

## Step 2: Goal Setting & Plan Development

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### Getting Started

The purpose of the section below is to help educators, evaluators, and school leadership teams get started with the development of Educator Plans, including the refinement of goals and identification of educator action steps and supports and resources the school will provide.

The responsibility for developing Educator Plans is typically shared between educators and evaluators. School leadership and evaluators play a unique role, however, in strategic planning for support.

### Conditions for Readiness

*This section describes school-wide knowledge, capacity, and information that will increase the readiness of educators and evaluators to effectively implement this step. If schools find that these conditions do not exist, that should not delay implementation. However, strengthening these underlying conditions will increase the likelihood of success. Leadership may need to adjust their communication and professional development strategies and/or add tasks to their implementation plan.*

- **Knowledge of needed support.** Thoughtful self-assessment should give educators a clear idea of their strengths and areas in which they want to grow. This phase provides an opportunity for educators to articulate the supports and resources that will accelerate their professional growth and offer opportunities for feedback for improvement. In addition to formal professional development, team conversation during the self-assessment step may have sparked valuable insights for how the various strengths of team members can be leveraged to provide peer mentoring, coaching, or modeling in support of goal attainment and educator growth. This knowledge will prepare educators on a *Self-Directed Growth Plan* to individually develop their Educator Plan; prepare educators on a *Directed Growth Plan* or *Developing Educator Plan* to work with their evaluator to jointly develop their Educator Plan; and prepare educators on an *Improvement Plan* to articulate the supports they need to their evaluator as the evaluator develops the Educator Plan.
- **Knowledge of available support.** Just as educators must know what they need, evaluators must know what they can give. Both evaluators and educators being evaluated will benefit from a clear understanding of what supports are available and realistic. Fiscal and logistical constraints can impede the implementation of seemingly strong Educator Plans and goals. For example, how much common planning time will be available for teams collaborating on unit design? Will individuals have opportunities to observe their peers—and if so, with what frequency? Identifying and communicating the parameters around available support will enable all parties to plan more strategically. As Educator Plans are developed, alignment with district and school priorities and goals continues to be critical; schools need to maintain their focus on goals and activities that hold the greatest promise for advancing the school's stated priorities.
- **Clearly defined evaluation team.** Districts may make different choices regarding the use of school leadership, Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) if locally negotiated, and district support in the evaluation process. If there is more than one evaluator at a school, however, the members of the evaluation team must have a common understanding of who will be contributing and what their roles are. Further, educators should know who their primary evaluator is, who else will be contributing, and in what capacity.

## Step 2: Goal Setting & Plan Development

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### Considerations for Planning

*This section highlights key logistics and practical considerations for implementation that will help school leadership teams and evaluators plan.*

- **System for developing a cohesive plan of sustainable and feasible support.** School leadership must have a system in place for collecting, organizing, and reviewing self-assessments and proposed goals as they are submitted to ensure that they can develop a cohesive plan for supporting educators that is realistic and “doable.” School leaders and evaluators should consider the format for submission—does the school or district have a technology platform that can be leveraged for easily reviewing across all of the proposed goals, or are educators submitting on paper? Who should be part of the process, such as department heads or grade level leads? What confidentiality issues should be considered at this stage? Taking the time to identify answers to these questions and outline a system in advance of beginning to develop Educator Plans will enable the school to move more efficiently through this process and increase the likeliness of a successful implementation.
- **Communication across evaluation team.** Evaluators within a school (or across a district if each school has only one evaluator) should consider how they will communicate during this process. It is a critical time for evaluators to sharpen their skills at supporting staff to set S.M.A.R.T. goals and to develop a sound plan of committed support to educators. In addition, patterns and trends in the supports that educators identify as high-priority to their growth is a valuable source of information to school and district leadership as they plan professional development opportunities and strategies. Research has found that when professional development opportunities are aligned with teacher goals, professional development is more effective at changing teacher practice (Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon & Birman, 2002; Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi & Gallagher, 2007).
- **Meeting with teams and individuals.** Evaluators should set aside time to meet with teams prior to meeting with individual educators to the extent possible. These meetings are an opportunity to finalize goals and agree upon planned activities and supports for multiple educators. If the majority of educators have team goals, this may eliminate the need to have individual conferences with many educators, unless the educator or evaluator requests an individual conference.
- **Customizing for differences in roles and responsibilities.** This is a key moment for considering distinctions in the roles and responsibilities of educators. While the vast majority of educators are likely to be evaluated against the same Performance Rubric, the emphasis on and prioritization of Indicators and elements may be customized. Consider, for example, the Expectations Indicator<sup>8</sup>: “Plans and implements lessons that set clear and high expectations and make knowledge accessible for all students.” Making knowledge accessible is critical for educators who work with students who are English language learners (ELLs) or have disabilities (or are ELLs with disabilities). Although most educators have responsibility for at least some ELLs or special education students, this Indicator may be more heavily emphasized for educators who, for example, primarily teach students with IEPs, especially those whose disabilities require modifications to the curriculum and/or instruction.

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<sup>8</sup> Indicator D within Standard II, Teaching All Students from the *Standards and Indicators for Effective Teaching Practice* as defined in [603 CMR 35.03](#)

## Step 2: Goal Setting & Plan Development

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### *Suggested Resources*

The “Suggested Resources” section lists several concrete resources that will support educators and evaluators develop strong Educator Plans.

- Copies of district and school improvement plans and/or goals
- Dates and intended outcomes of planned professional development opportunities
- Specific information on new initiatives that are being implemented or continued from previous years, such as the implementation of a new curriculum
- Copy of collective bargaining agreement and/or other evaluation requirements
- Completed self-assessment, including proposed goals
- Statewide Standards and Indicators as defined in [603 CMR 35.03](#) and [35.04](#) and any additional local performance standards

### *Tools from the Model System*

For districts that have chosen to adopt the ESE Model System for Educator Evaluation, the following tools are available to support implementation:

- [Standards and Indicators for Effective Teaching Practice: Teacher Rubric](#) (see Part III of the Model System)
- [S.M.A.R.T. goal setting](#) (see Appendix B)
- [Evaluation Tracking Sheet](#) (see Appendix A)
- [Goal Setting Form](#) (see Appendix A)
- [Educator Plan Form](#) (see Appendix A)<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> An Educator Plan Form with updates to allow educators to track Professional Development Points (PDPs) is also available: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/eeval/resources/evalforms/EdPlanForm-PDPs.pdf>.



## Step 2: Goal Setting & Plan Development

### Recommended Actions for Goal Setting & Plan Development

Recommended Action	Individual Educator	Team	Evaluator/ School Leadership	Notes
Review professional development that is already planned for the school year	✓	✓	✓	<i>Depending on proposed goals, educators may incorporate pre-planned professional development into Educator Plan</i>
Evaluator schedules time with teams and educators to review self-assessments and refine goals			✓	<i>Evaluator may want to meet with teams prior to individuals, as individuals on a team will have a shared goal</i>
Evaluator meets with teams and individual educators to review and finalize proposed goals	✓	✓	✓	<i>Team and individual goals shall be consistent with school and district goals, according to the regulations</i>
Evaluator and educators work together to plan activities that will support attainment of goals	✓	✓	✓	<i>Evaluators may want to develop a system for tracking all of the support and resources that they agree to offer educators to ensure capacity</i>
Record final goals and actions the educator must take to attain these goals			✓	<i>Evaluator retains final authority over goals to be included on Educator Plans</i>



## Step 2: Goal Setting & Plan Development

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### Suggestions for Refining Goals and Developing Plans

- Teams and/or individual educators and evaluators may **jointly review available data** from student performance measures and other relevant sources when finalizing goals. The conversation about the data during the goal setting process should serve as an opportunity to develop a shared understanding between educator and evaluator that the goal is:
  - linked directly to the school's priorities;
  - rigorous but realistic; and
  - clearly measurable by sources of evidence that are either currently being collected or have plans to be collected that year.
- Conversations between educator and evaluator about the goals and planned activities for the year should identify which **sources of evidence** (to determine both progress toward meeting the goals and ratings of performance against the Standards) will be collected and by whom. This will serve as an opportunity to clarify on the front-end if a plan is in place to sufficiently collect all the evidence necessary. If it appears that there are gaps in the evidence being collected, it is important to work together to determine how the educator and evaluator can develop a clear plan to share the work of collecting evidence.
- Assessing evidence of progress toward goals requires measurement methods that are logically linked to action steps. These measures may be distinct from student assessments as they will be focused on evidence of educator actions. Boston Public Schools have suggested the following strategies for measuring progress towards goals:
  - Using a specified rubric to evaluate an agreed-upon action, such as a lesson plan.
  - An agreed-upon method for recording the frequency of a particular teacher practice or student behavior (i.e., visibly displaying daily objectives or homework completion).
  - Examples of documents the educator has agreed to create or post.
  - An agreed-upon method for recording the frequency of a desired student behavior.
  - Examples of documents that show a teacher has engaged in a particular practice (i.e., communications with parents).
- While a minimum of two individual and/or teams goals are required (one student learning and one professional practice), the **total number of goals** may depend on the teams and departments of which the educator is a member, the professional judgment of the educator, and guidance from the evaluator. In addition to considering the school and district's priorities, capacity for support, and existing or planned initiatives that require educator effort to implement, evaluators should also consider past performance and the extent to which educators need customized or intensive support to accelerate growth.

**For further guidance on setting S.M.A.R.T. goals, see Appendix B**

## Step 2: Goal Setting & Plan Development

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### Evaluating Educators Serving in Multiple Roles

Districts may elect, subject to their bargaining obligations, how they will choose to evaluate educators who serve in multiple roles. However, simplicity and commonsense are useful guideposts when creating sustainable evaluation systems. In many instances it would be a burden to both the educator and the district to conduct separate evaluations for each role that an educator might have in a school or district. Rather than attempt to do so, ESE suggests that the district and the association/union agree on the educator's primary role based on a review of the educator's course load and other assignments. Where a primary role is not suggested by such an analysis, the parties could designate a primary role, subject to confirmation by the evaluator's supervisor. Notwithstanding, districts may evaluate educators for each of their multiple roles if they so choose, subject to their collective bargaining agreements.

Whichever approach the district adopts, the role-appropriate Standards, Indicators, rubrics, and student performance measures to be used in evaluating the educator should be discussed as part of the goal-setting and plan development component in the educator evaluation cycle, so expectations are clear and agreed upon before evaluation begins.

#### **Example**

A large high school has an educator serving in the supervisor/director role as chair of a math department of five teachers. As part of her workload, the educator also teaches two sections of math. The evaluator and educator determine her evaluation will focus on her supervisory, PD and team development responsibilities, and designate her department chair duties as her primary role for the purpose of evaluation. Conversely, an educator serving in the supervisor/director role in a small high school with just two math teachers (including the educator) might have a more extensive teaching load. The evaluator and educator conclude that her evaluation will focus on her teaching responsibilities, not her supervisory duties.

The parties could create a hybrid rubric including Standards, Indicators, Elements, and/or descriptors from both the teacher rubric and the administrator rubric appropriate to the responsibilities of the educator. Should this approach be taken, the parties are advised not to increase the number of elements, but rather to select those Indicators and elements within four performance Standards that best apply to the educator's role and responsibilities. For more information on creating a hybrid rubric, see [Part III: Guide to Rubrics and Model Rubrics for Superintendent, Administrator and Teacher](#).

## Step 2: Goal Setting and Plan Development

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### Alignment between Educator Plans and Individual Professional Development Plans

#### **Can Educator Plans and Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDPs) be the same plan?**

Yes, the regulations for license renewal ([603 CMR 44.04 \(1\) \(c\)](#)) do allow for these plans to be the same. Given the license renewal cycle is a five year period and multiple evaluation cycles will occur during that time, there can be some challenges to combining these plans. ESE has released several [example forms](#) to help bring these two plans into alignment, including a version of an Educator Plan form and an Educator Plan Addendum.

#### **How do the professional development activities in an Educator Plan count toward an Educator's Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)?**

Though governed by two different statutes, both plans must be consistent with the educational needs of the school and district, be approved by the educator's supervisor, strengthen the educator's knowledge and skills, and enhance the educator's ability to promote student learning. The Educator Plan specifies the kinds of professional development activities educators will pursue to improve their performance and promote student learning.

Not all of the professional development undertaken pursuant to an Educator Plan under 603 CMR 35 (evaluation) may meet the requirements of [603 CMR 44](#) (recertification). However, in many instances the educator's professional development activities will meet these requirements so that successful completion of the professional development activities undertaken pursuant to the Educator's Plan may contribute to the satisfaction of the educator's Professional Development Points (PDP) requirements under recertification.

#### **ESE recommends Educators and Evaluators:**

Use a goal setting and plan development conference at the beginning of the evaluation cycle to review and approve Individual Professional Development Plans and to conduct the bi-annual check-in and end of renewal cycle endorsement that are required under [604 CMR 44](#) during the Evaluation Cycle, if practicable.

Maintain a running record (by the educator) of the professional development activities undertaken pursuant to their Educator Plan under [603 CMR 35](#) to identify activities that meet the PDP requirements for recertification under [604 CMR 44](#) and its accompanying [guidelines](#).

#### **Can an educator receive and use PDPs for attaining the professional practice goal(s) or student learning, goal(s) of his/her Educator Plan under the 603 CMR 35.00?**

If the underlying activities required to meet those goals are consistent with [603 CMR 44.00](#) (license renewal) and ESE's guidance on license renewal, you may receive PDPs for these activities. Similarly, you may be able to receive PDPs for the underlying activities required to attain Team Goals included in an Educator Plan under [603 CMR 35.00](#), if they are consistent with [603 CMR 44.00](#) (license renewal) and ESE's guidance on license renewal.

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## Step 3: Implementation of the Plan

### Overview

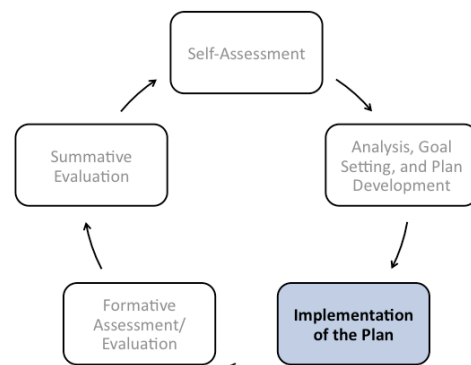
The third step of the evaluation cycle is Implementation of the Educator Plan. Responsibility for this step is divided between educators and evaluators. For the duration of their cycle, educators will pursue the attainment of the goals identified in the Educator Plan and collect evidence on, at minimum, their fulfillment of professional responsibilities and engagement with families. Evaluators will provide educators with feedback for improvement, ensure timely access to planned supports, and collect evidence on educator performance and progress toward goals through multiple sources, including unannounced observations.

The Educator Plan provides a roadmap for dialogue, collaboration, and action: educators and teams use their Educator Plans as a roadmap for pursuing their goals, and evaluators use Educator Plans to drive appropriate and timely support for educators and teams. Collectively and individually, educators and evaluators continue to use rubrics and student data to develop a shared understanding of effective practice, guide ongoing reflection, monitor progress toward goals, and drive collection of evidence.

Engaging in frank conversation about what good practice looks like can be challenging in schools: it requires time, professionalism, and an environment of trust that places student needs at the center of decision-making and dialogue. This conversation, however, is critical. It is the lynchpin of implementation that gives meaning to evaluations, transforming them into a valued source of support. While there is always too little time to accomplish everything that schools want and need to do, evaluation will continue to be superficial and ritualistic unless school leadership, evaluators, teams, and individual educators prioritize and protect time for the conversation and collaboration that is at the heart of continuous learning.

### Timeframe

Step 3, the Implementation of the Educator Plan, begins as soon as Educator Plans are finalized and continues until the end of the cycle and the Summative Evaluation occurs. Certain components, however, do not depend on finalized goals or completed Plans: collection of evidence, including observations, can and should begin as soon as school commences, as educators and evaluators will need adequate time to collect evidence for Standards and Indicators. For example, events welcoming families and students back to school often occur in the opening days or weeks of school and provide valuable demonstrations of educator engagement with families.



Some actions identified in Educator Plans may in fact take place prior to goal setting, as goals may connect to participation in pre-planned professional development—especially if alignment between Educator Plans and school goals and priorities is strong. Once the Educator Plan is complete, evaluators can conduct observations in classrooms and other work environments, review artifacts, and analyze student data with a sharpened focus on goals and high-priority areas of educator performance.

## Step 3: Implementation of the Plan

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### What Is Required in the Regulations?

The educator evaluation regulations require that the evaluation cycle includes implementation of the Educator Plan as per [603 CMR 35.06\(4\)](#). It is the educator's responsibility to attain the goals in the plan and to participate in any trainings and professional development provided through the state, district, or other providers in accordance with the Educator Plan.

The regulations require the use of multiple categories of evidence, including:

- Multiple measures of student learning, growth, and achievement\*;
- Judgments based on observations and artifacts of professional practice, including unannounced observations of practice of any duration; and
- Additional evidence relevant to one or more Performance Standards\*\* ([35.07\(1\)](#)).

During the implementation of the Educator Plan, evaluators and educators compile evidence to be used in Formative Assessments and evaluations and Summative Evaluations.

\* This use of multiple measures of student learning, growth, and achievement noted above is solely for the purposes of determining a performance rating on Standards and overall. District-determined measures of student learning, growth, and achievement will also be used to determine a "Rating of Impact on Student Learning," but that use of multiple measures will be addressed in separate guidance to be published on or before July 1, 2012 as Part VII of the Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation.

\*\* This additional evidence includes staff feedback (with respect to administrators) and student feedback beginning in 2014-15; the collection and use of this evidence is addressed in [Part VIII: Using Staff and Student Feedback in the Evaluation Process](#). Additional evidence may also include evidence collected by the educator and presented to the evaluator relating to fulfilling professional responsibilities and family outreach and engagement ([35.07\(1\)\(c1\)](#)).

## Step 3: Implementation of the Plan

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### Getting Started

The purpose of the section below is to help educators, evaluators, and school leadership teams begin to implement Educator Plans. The responsibility for implementing the Plans is shared between educators and evaluators.

#### Conditions for Readiness

*This section describes school-wide knowledge, capacity, and information that will increase the readiness of educators and evaluators to effectively implement this step. If schools find that these conditions do not exist, that should not delay implementation. However, strengthening these underlying conditions will increase the likeliness of success. Leadership may need to adjust their communication and professional development strategies and/or add tasks to their implementation plan.*

- **Evaluator training on use of rubric.** The locally bargained performance rubric will drive collection of evidence, analysis of performance, and feedback for improvement. Evaluators should have formal training on using a rubric to evaluate performance (Jonsson & Svingby, 2007). For example, they should be aware of common evaluator biases such as the tendency to be a “hard” (or “easy”) grader or an overemphasis on particular knowledge and skills that could influence the rest of an evaluation.
- **Clear expectations regarding valuable evidence.** Establishing a clear and shared understanding between educator and evaluator of what constitutes solid evidence that the educator is achieving their student learning and professional practice goals and meeting the Standards for effective practice<sup>1</sup> is essential. The artifacts identified as evidence should not be new to educators. More information about the strategic identification and collection of evidence is available in ESE’s [Evidence Collection Toolkit](#).
- **System for collecting and organizing evidence.** Both educators and evaluators will benefit from setting up an easy system for compiling evidence in advance of implementation. Some educators may feel more comfortable putting together something like a traditional “evidence binder” with examples of both their work and that of their students, evidence of fulfillment of professional responsibilities, and evidence of outreach to and engagement with families. Other educators may choose to utilize available technology to compile evidence. Evaluators should be clear about their expectations if there are specific requirements for how evidence is to be compiled and presented.

Evaluators have a more complex task in that they must collect, organize, and review evidence across multiple educators. Many districts are identifying technological solutions that support their ability to efficiently compile evidence. As best practices and valuable resources emerge, ESE will disseminate lessons learned through updates and supplements to this Guide.

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<sup>1</sup> [603 CMR 35.07\(1\)\(c\)](#) notes that educators’ collection of evidence should include: “Evidence of fulfillment of professional responsibilities and growth, such as: self-assessments; peer collaboration; professional development linked to goals and or educator plans; contributions to the school community and professional culture” and “Evidence of active outreach to and ongoing engagement with families.”

## Step 3: Implementation of the Plan

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### Considerations for Planning

*This section highlights key logistics and practical considerations for implementation that will help school leadership teams and evaluators plan.*

- **Plan for providing support, feedback, evidence, and training evaluators.** Evaluators and school leadership should develop a clear plan of action for implementation, which may include:

1. *A systematic plan for tracking and ensuring educator access to support and resources.*

For Educator Plans to be effectively implemented, schools must ensure that educators are receiving the supports identified in the Plans. This may be formally accomplished through sources such as logs of and attendance sheets for professional development, or informally accomplished through sources such as regularly scheduled check-ins with teams or individuals (which could be done via email or in person).

2. *A clear plan for how educators will receive ongoing feedback for improvement.*

Feedback may be based on sources that include: observations of practice and performance in or out of the classroom; review of student or teacher work such as unit and lesson plans, and measures of student learning; and student or staff feedback. School leadership and planning teams should consider the full range of resources that are available for providing feedback to educators, including evaluators, team members, mentors, coaches, specialists, department heads, district staff, and other teacher leaders.

3. *A list of potential sources of evidence.*

Evaluators should plan to take advantage of opportunities to collect evidence through certain events or meetings, such as homework workshops for parents or team analysis of benchmark data. Developing a list of dates, times, and the purpose of such opportunities will assist evaluators in creating a comprehensive but manageable plan for evidence collection. In crafting this list, evaluators should also consider what artifacts are readily available and already collected, such as a log of parent interactions. Creating this list will also reveal the types of evidence that are not currently being collected or tracked by educators or the school.

4. *A plan to support calibration across evaluators.*

Within both schools and districts, calibration across evaluators is critical. School leadership must consider the time, professional development, and support that evaluators need to develop and maintain a shared understanding of effective practice for consistent use of rubrics to evaluate performance. Much like educator teams early in the year, evaluators should continually discuss topics such as distinctions between performance levels, alignment between performance Standards and school goals, or the definitions of certain Indicators. It will benefit teams of evaluators to conduct some observations or review of artifacts together. While districts may take the lead in providing support to evaluators, school leadership should ensure that all evaluators have time to engage in professional conversation about what good practice looks like.



## Step 3: Implementation of the Plan

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- **Sharing of evidence.** Evidence must be shared bi-directionally, as both educators and evaluators have responsibility for compiling data points on educator performance: evaluators should engage in a transparent process of evidence collection, ensuring that educators have full access. If there is more than one evaluator contributing to an educator’s evaluation, school leadership should also consider how the evaluators can appropriately and efficiently share information as needed, with full respect for confidentiality. Finally, educators need to know when they are expected to present evidence to evaluators. This could be a few weeks or days prior to the point of formative review or Summative Evaluation, or could be presented during a formative or summative conference. Clearly communicating the expectations for how evidence will be shared, by whom, and when will assist all parties to effectively compile and organize evidence.
- **Strategic collection of evidence.** Evidence collection should be seen as an opportunity to select a sample of artifacts and other data that fairly represents performance and impact. It is not intended to be a record of all that the educator has done in a year. Evidence should focus on professional practice and student learning goals, high priority Standards and Indicators, and critical school priorities. To that end, faculty and team time may periodically focus on showcasing examples of well-chosen samples and their thoughtful analysis of impact. For example, for the Family and Community Engagement Standard, educators could agree that a roster of attendees at “back to school” night reveals little about practice, nor does it help advance important school goals. Instead, educators might be asked to share the feedback they solicited from attendees or the steps they took to reach out to those who did not attend.

Evaluators should also leverage existing opportunities for collecting evidence and providing feedback. Coordinating the activities required for successful implementation of Educator Plans with existing schedules for interim assessments, team data meetings, short unannounced classroom visits by the principal/evaluator, and other existing activities to track improvements will maximize educators’ time and enhance the coherence and impact of everyone’s effort.

- **Strategic use of team and faculty meetings.** Using a portion of faculty meetings to share trends and patterns in observation and other data can serve multiple purposes. It can advance school goals, provide meaningful feedback to staff about collective progress on important goals, and set the stage and context for significant individual feedback. For example, suppose one of the school’s instructional improvement goals is to increase the proportion of higher level questioning. The principal can report at a faculty meeting on the progress being made on that goal based on trends and patterns in observation data from fall observations compared to observations conducted in winter. The principal/evaluator can then follow up the general feedback with individual teachers whose practice reveals that they are “outliers”—either particularly strong or underdeveloped in terms of effective questioning.

All schools are seeking to build professional cultures in which educators share a common vision of what effective practice looks like and collaborate with one another to achieve it throughout the school. Team and full faculty discussions of the rubrics can help develop that culture—as long as the discussions focus on high priority Indicators and elements—and the evidence that is most likely to provide useful feedback to assess the team’s current performance level with respect to that element. Similarly, team monitoring of progress toward its goals offers another opportunity to build common vision of effective practice.



## Step 3: Implementation of the Plan

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### **Suggested Resources**

*The “Suggested Resources” section lists several concrete resources that will support educators’ and evaluators’ implementation of Educator Plans.*

- Copy of collective bargaining agreement
- Copies of school and district improvement plans and/or goals
- Rubrics
- Copies of Educator Plans
- Tools for tracking professional development activities and attendance
- Tools for organizing data collection
- Completed Educator Plan Form (see Appendix A) or locally adopted form

### **Tools from the Model System**

*For districts that have chosen to adopt the Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation, the following tools are available to support implementation:*

- Standards and Indicators for Effective Teaching Practice: Teacher Rubric (see [Part III: Guidance on Rubrics and Model Rubrics for Superintendent, Principal, and Teacher](#))
- Additional information on the use of rubrics (see [Part III of the Model System](#))
- [Evaluator Record of Evidence](#) (see Appendix A)
- [Educator Collection of Evidence](#) (see Appendix A)
- [Educator Response Form](#) (see Appendix A)

## Step 3: Implementation of the Plan

### Recommended Actions for Implementation of the Plan

Recommended Action	Individual Educator	Team	Evaluator/ School Leadership	Notes
Review actions in Educator Plans and make agreed-upon supports and resources available to educator teams and individuals			✓	<i>For many educators, key supports will be those provided through teams; evaluators need to have a system for monitoring that these supports are provided</i>
Meet with teams to identify common artifacts all or most educators will be expected to collect and analyze	✓	✓	✓	<i>Educators are required to provide evidence of “fulfillment of professional responsibilities...” and “active outreach to and ongoing engagement with families.”</i>
Collect evidence of educator and team practice and progress toward goals	✓	✓	✓	<i>At least some portion of the evidence should be collected by and through teams</i>
Track collection activities (see Tools from the Model System)	✓	✓	✓	<i>Evaluators must be prepared to compile and review evidence for multiple educators</i>
Document evidence collected and feedback given	✓	✓	✓	<i>Records of evidence should be updated regularly</i>
Provide regular feedback to teams and individual educators		✓	✓	<i>Consider thoughtful use of faculty, team/department <b>and</b> individual meetings</i>
Monitor alignment of educator actions and goals with school and district goals			✓	<i>Accelerated school improvement is more likely with strong vertical alignment of goals</i>

## Step 3: Implementation of the Plan

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### Strategies and Suggestions for Observations

- **Frequent, unannounced observations.** Frequent observation of classroom practice – with feedback—is essential to improving practice, but only feasible if most observations are short, unannounced and followed by brief, focused feedback. There will be times when an evaluator is in a classroom or other work site and it becomes apparent that the visit needs to be extended, but a visit of approximately 10 minutes can yield a great deal of useful information. With short, unannounced visits, many more samples of practice can be collected, and many more powerful conversations about teaching practice can be had. When the typical observation of classroom practice is 10 minutes in duration and does not have to be preceded by a pre-observation conference or followed by a period-long post-observation conference, then evaluators can reasonably be expected to conduct 2 to 5 such observations on a typical day.
  - 3 observations conducted each day on 150 of the 180 days in a school year translate to 450 observations each year, or 10 observations per year for each of 45 teachers. 7-10 brief observations followed by focused feedback should be a sufficient number to secure a representative picture of practice and promote the reflection and discussion needed to support improving practice.
  - Feedback can be provided during a conversation or in writing. Providing feedback through conversation promotes discussion of practice; providing feedback in writing creates an opportunity for the educator to more easily reflect on the feedback on an ongoing basis. Whenever possible, an evaluator should have a conversation with the educator and follow up with brief written feedback summarizing the conversation and/or offering targeted advice for improvement.
  - It should be noted that not all observations can or should be 5 to 15 minutes. There will be circumstances where longer observations are appropriate. Novice or struggling teachers may benefit from longer observations on occasion.
- **Observations outside of the classroom.** Observation of practice need not be limited to classroom observation. Conferences with individual teachers or teacher teams that focus on unit planning or ways the team is responding to interim assessment data can yield useful information and provide opportunities for feedback and growth. They can also be well-aligned with school and team goals. Most schools have goals that depend on effective collaboration among educators, so observation of educators in settings where they are developing their skills in collaboration can support school-wide goals. That said, care needs to be taken to ensure that observation does not interfere with the free exchange of ideas that is important in any healthy collegial environment. Therefore, collecting, reviewing and giving feedback on specific artifacts from department and team meetings can serve a purpose similar to observation of meetings. Similarly, observing educators with parents and/or reviewing a team’s analysis of representative samples of home-school communications can support collaborative work, reinforce school goals, and provide opportunities for useful feedback.

Observation of practice in work sites other than the classroom will be essential for some educators, as many staff have primary responsibilities that are carried out elsewhere, such as school nurses, administrators, or department heads.

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## Step 4: Formative Assessment & Evaluation

### Overview

The fourth step of the educator evaluation cycle is Formative Assessment or Evaluation<sup>1</sup>, during which evaluators assess:

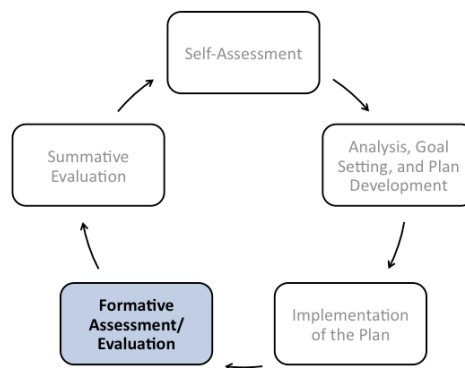
- educator progress towards attaining goals set forth in Educator Plans;
- performance on performance Standards; or
- both.

This step ensures an opportunity for educators to receive feedback and suggestions for improvement. Formative Assessment/Evaluation may be most valuable when it is ongoing and used to prompt reflection, promote dialogue between educators and evaluators, and plan changes to practice, goals, or planned activities when adjustments are necessary. At a minimum, Formative Assessment/Evaluation should be a mid-cycle opportunity of taking stock, implemented through a review of evidence collected by both the educator and the evaluator. If there are patterns of evidence that demonstrate performance that is either *unsatisfactory* or *in need of improvement*, this is a critical time for evaluators to discuss this evidence so there are “no surprises” during the Summative Evaluation and more importantly, to provide the educator with the opportunity to address areas of concern.

Maximizing existing opportunities for evidence reviews, discussions, and feedback through the use of common planning time, regular faculty meeting breakout sessions, and benchmarking sessions will help the Formative Assessment stage in the cycle to be (a) familiar and authentic for educators and (b) manageable for evaluators. Considering that the professional conversations that take place at this stage add meaning to the ratings, evaluators will want to ensure that they have established an effective system for reflecting on artifacts/evidence in a manner that is thoughtful, not rushed, and that allows for educators’ self-identification of strengths and needs.

### Timeframe

The Formative Assessment/Evaluation can occur at any time during the evaluation cycle, however, it typically occurs at the midpoint of an educator’s Educator Plan. For example, an educator on a one-year Development Plan is likely to participate in a Formative Assessment in December or January. Educators on a two-year Self-Directed Growth Plan participate in a Formative Evaluation in May or June, the midpoint of their evaluation cycle.



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<sup>1</sup> As per [603 CMR 35.02](#), “*Formative Evaluation* shall mean an evaluation **at the end of year one for educators on two-year self-directed plans** used to arrive at a rating on progress towards attaining the goals set forth in the plans, performance on performance standards, or both.” (emphasis added) Per [603 CMR 35.06\(5\)\(b\)](#), “The educator’s rating for that year shall be assumed to be the same as the previous summative rating unless evidence demonstrates a significant change in performance in which case the rating on Performance Standards may change.”

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## What Is Required in the Regulations?

### Formative Assessment and Evaluation

The educator evaluation regulations require every educator to have a Formative Assessment or a Formative Evaluation. The regulations differentiate between a “Formative Assessment” and a “Formative Evaluation” (as per [603 CMR 35.02](#) and [35.06\(5\)](#)) in the following way:

- A **Formative Assessment** is the process used to assess progress towards attaining goals set forth in Educator Plans, performance on performance Standards, or both. While Formative Assessment is ongoing and can occur at any time during the evaluation cycle, it typically occurs at least mid-cycle.
- A **Formative Evaluation** is an evaluation at the end of year one for educators on two-year Self-Directed Growth Plans used to arrive at a rating on progress towards attaining the goals set forth in the plans, performance on performance Standards, or both.
  - An experienced educator on a Self-Directed Growth Plan (rated Proficient or Exemplary in the last Summative Evaluation) will maintain the same overall rating in the subsequent Formative Evaluation, unless there is evidence of a significant change in performance.

The Formative Assessment and evaluation are similar in all other respects, so the term “Formative Assessment” is used throughout this section to apply to any formative interaction between the educator and evaluator.

In rating educators on Performance Standards for the purposes of Formative Assessment or Formative Evaluation, districts may use either the rubric provided by the Department in its Model System or a comparably rigorous and comprehensive rubric developed by the district and reviewed by the Department.

The educator shall have the opportunity to respond in writing to the Formative Assessment or evaluation.

### Changing the Plan

If an educator receives performance ratings during the Formative Assessment or Formative Evaluation that differ from the most recent Summative Performance Ratings, the evaluator may place the educator on a different Educator Plan, appropriate to the new rating

### Minimum standards for Proficiency

The regulations ([603 CMR 35.08\(4\)](#)) specify minimum standards for overall Proficient ratings. Educators must be rated Proficient or Exemplary in Standard I: Curriculum, Planning, and Assessment **and** Standard II: Teaching All Students to be eligible for an overall Proficient rating.

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## Getting Started

The purpose of the section below is to help educators, evaluators, and school leadership teams prepare for and engage in Formative Assessment and Evaluation.

### Conditions for Readiness

*This section describes school-wide knowledge, capacity, and information that will increase the readiness of educators and evaluators to effectively implement this step. If schools find that these conditions do not exist, that should not delay implementation. However, strengthening these underlying conditions will increase the likeliness of success. Leadership may need to adjust their communication and professional development strategies and/or add tasks to their implementation plan.*

- **Sufficient evidence.** Readiness, for this step, means being prepared to have a meaningful conversation. It is not necessary to have evidence for every Indicator by the point of Formative Assessment or Evaluation, but educators and evaluators both need to have sufficient evidence to be able to discuss progress. For evaluators, this should include feedback based on observations of practice both in and out of the classroom. Evidence should include both benchmark data on goals and evidence of practice related to Standards.
- **Active pursuit of goals.** Prior to a formative review, educators should have already engaged in some activities identified on their Educator Plan to support attainment of goals. Given the logistics and timing of professional development, this can actually be a challenge. Educator Plans should be written to ensure that some activities can take place prior to mid-cycle.
- **Training of and calibration across evaluators.** This step was highlighted as a consideration for planning in the section on Implementation of the Plan; at this point in the cycle, it is a condition for effective formative reviews. Prior to assessing an educator against Performance Standards, it is critical that evaluators have training, at a minimum, in the use of a rubric and have begun the process of calibrating their use of a rubric with other evaluators within the school and/or across the district.
- **Shared vision of effective practice.** The ongoing conversation noted as a priority in the Overview and reinforced through team collaboration activities described in the Self-Assessment step is foundational to the formative review. Educators and evaluators will be well-served by having some commonality in their understanding of, for example, distinctions between performance levels (Exemplary versus Proficient) or alignment between Performance Standards and school goals.
- **Plan for assigning ratings.** The process of assigning Formative or Summative Evaluation Ratings is both art and science. The “science” of evaluation is the collection of evidence and data that capture an accurate sample of an educator’s performance. The “art” of evaluation comes when evaluators apply their professional judgment to the evidence before them in order to assign performance ratings. More information on establishing performance ratings is available in ESE’s guidance on [Rating Educator Performance](#).

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## Considerations for Planning

*This section highlights key logistics and practical considerations for implementation that will help school leadership teams and evaluators plan for effective formative reviews.*

- **Formative conferences.** The regulations do not require that a conference take place as part of a Formative Assessment or Evaluation. As these details may be addressed through collective bargaining, it is important for school leadership teams to bring an informed, school-based evaluator perspective to planning conversations with district leadership and school committees.

School and leadership teams may suggest strategic requirements for conferences. For example:

- If some educators have only developed team goals, individual conferences may not be necessary for *all* of those educators.
- Conferences may be optional for educators on two-year Self-Directed Growth Plans whose ratings have not changed but should be required for educators on Improvement or Directed Growth Plans.
- Other considerations include the timing of the conference: a conference could occur prior to issuing the Formative Assessment Report to jointly review and discuss evidence, or it could occur after the Report to discuss the contents. If members of a team had distinct responsibilities and contributions, it would make sense to meet first with teams to discuss progress on team goals and then hold individual conferences.

If, however, a pattern of evidence has emerged that suggests that an educator is on track to receive a lower rating than at his/her previous Summative Evaluation, it is critical for the evaluator and educator to discuss the evidence and feedback for improvement.

- **Educator evidence.** Educators need to know when to provide evidence to their evaluator, and evaluators need to be aware of how much time they will need or have to review evidence prior to the Formative Assessment or Evaluation.
- **Analysis of evidence.** Educators and evaluators should have engaged in some analysis of evidence prior to the Formative Assessment. This will help all parties ensure that they are presenting relevant data and have identified any trends or patterns. If the educator(s) and evaluator(s) have a conference, this will create the conditions for a richer conversation and allow for more focused feedback.



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## **Suggested Resources**

*In order to provide ongoing feedback for improvement, it is critical that educators have clear and easy access to certain types of information. The “Suggested Resources” section lists several concrete resources that will support educators and evaluators to engage in Formative Assessment or Evaluation.*

- Up-to-date record of evidence and brief analysis, identifying patterns and trends (educator and evaluator)
- Benchmark data on goals
- Goals and Educator Plans to review and assess progress
- Locally negotiated performance rubric
- Collective bargaining agreement and/or other evaluation requirements

## **Tools from the Model System**

*For districts that have chosen to adopt the ESE Model System for Educator Evaluation, the following tools are available to support implementation:*

- [Evaluation Tracking Sheet](#) (see Appendix A)
- [Formative Assessment Report Form](#) (see Appendix A) or
- [Formative Evaluation Report Form](#) (see Appendix A)
- [Educator Response Form](#) (see Appendix A)
- [Standards and Indicators for Effective Teaching Practice: Teacher Rubric](#) (see Part III)

## Recommended Actions for Formative Assessment & Evaluation

Recommended Action	Individual Educator	Team	Evaluator/ School Leadership	Notes
Schedule time to have formative conferences with enough advance notice to allow both the educator and evaluator to prepare.	✓	✓	✓	<i>Evaluators may not need a conference with all educators; some conferences may be with team.</i>
Communicate expectations about educators' roles in sharing evidence during the conference.			✓	<i>Be explicit about how much documentation or evidence the educator is expected to bring to the conference and when.</i>
Review evidence and artifacts for Standards and Indicators.	✓	✓	✓	<i>Read through the evidence chronologically, looking for patterns and trends 1) over time and 2) within or across Standards and/or Indicators.</i>
Briefly record analysis of evidence.			✓	<i>Evaluators should wait to finalize ratings until the educator has had the opportunity to present evidence.</i>
Determine provisional Formative Ratings and progress toward goals.			✓	<i>Ratings on performance are only required for Formative Evaluations; evaluators should determine whether there is significant evidence of a change in rating.</i>
Share evidence of fulfillment of professional responsibilities and outreach to and engagement with families.	✓	✓		<i>Educators may bring other relevant evidence.</i>
Finalize Formative Performance Ratings.			✓	<i>Only required for Formative Evaluation</i>

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## Formative Conference Process

### Example

The educator and evaluator choose to have a conference for a *Formative Evaluation* which will result in assigned ratings on Standards. The educator prepares a brief analysis of evidence and brings both the analysis and the evidence to the conference.

1. Evaluator brings the Formative Evaluation Report Form (see Appendix A) or locally adopted form with the following items **completed**:
  - a. Summary of evidence under each standard
  - b. Provisional ratings for each of the four standards
2. Evaluator brings Formative Evaluation Report Form with the following items **left blank**:
  - a. No level of progress on goals, to allow teacher to provide evidence and encourage discussion (note that assessing performance on goals is optional)
  - b. No rating in the “overall performance rating” section
3. Evaluator is prepared to offer 2-3 concrete suggestions for improvement in one or two high-impact areas that may be discussed during the conference
4. Educator brings evidence, summary of evidence, and analysis
5. The evaluator may learn information during the Formative Evaluation conference that may change the provisional formative ratings; evaluators should complete the report as soon after the conference as possible to finalize the Formative Standard-level Ratings and assess the educator’s progress toward goals

Note: if the educator had shared the evidence with the evaluator prior to the conference in the scenario above, it would still be wise to consider ratings given prior to the conference to be provisional pending the formative conversation between the educator and evaluator.

In addition to sharing the Standard-by-Standard summary of evidence, the formative conference is an opportunity to review and discuss the educator’s progress toward the goals that were set at the beginning of the evaluation cycle. It is likely that the educator has more information about goal attainment than the evaluator does. Therefore, evaluators should use the Formative Assessment/Evaluation conference to gather additional evidence about performance on specific indicators and the educator’s progress toward goals. After the conference, this evidence should be used to adjust the provisional Standard-level ratings as necessary.

## Changing the Educator Plan after a Formative Assessment or Evaluation

Occasionally, an educator's performance has significantly changed from the last Summative Evaluation. When this happens, the evaluator and the educator may need to create a new Educator Plan with goals targeted toward the specific areas in need of improvement.

Use the following chart to determine if a teacher should move to a different Educator Plan and evaluation cycle:

Previous Summative Performance Rating	New Formative Performance Rating	Change in Educator Plan?	Duration of New Plan and Evaluation Cycle
Exemplary	Proficient	No	N/A
Exemplary or Proficient	Needs Improvement	Yes (Directed Growth Plan)	Up to one school year
Exemplary or Proficient	Unsatisfactory	Yes (Improvement Plan)	Up to one school year
Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory	Yes (Improvement Plan)	At least 30 calendar days and no more than one school year

If a new Educator Plan is warranted, evaluators and educators should set up a time to talk about developing the new Plan. Be aware that the new, shorter evaluation cycle will take effect immediately and will require another Formative Assessment prior to the end date of the new Plan (and accompanying Summative Evaluation).

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## Step 5: Summative Evaluation

### Overview

The final step of the cycle is the Summative Evaluation. In this evaluation step, evaluators analyze evidence that demonstrates the educator's performance against performance Standards and evidence of the attainment of the goals in the Educator Plan to arrive at a rating on each Standard and an overall performance rating based on the evaluator's professional judgment. Evidence and professional judgment inform the evaluator's determination. (More information on establishing Summative Performance Ratings is available in ESE's guidance on [Rating Educator Performance](#).)

The process is similar to that of Formative Assessment and Evaluation: evaluators review and analyze evidence, gather additional evidence and insights from the educator, and issue performance ratings on each Standard as well as an overall rating. That said, the Summative Performance Ratings determine the type and duration of an educator's subsequent Educator Plan, as well as consequences around rewards and recognition and local personnel decisions.

The Summative Evaluation completes a full evaluation cycle. The meaning behind this step does not lie in the end of one cycle, however, but in the beginning of the next. A thoughtful Summative Evaluation identifies trends and patterns in performance and offers feedback for improvement, providing educators with valuable information that strengthens the self-reflection and analysis educators engage in as they continue through the improvement cycle with Step 1: Self-Assessment and Goal Proposal. The *school-wide* patterns and trends that emerge through formative and Summative Evaluations provide school leadership teams with valuable information that can strengthen the professional development and opportunities for growth that are offered to the school.

Evaluation practices that are strong throughout the 5-Step Evaluation Cycle—promoting coherence, connection, collaboration, and conversation—serve as a catalyst for change in culture and practice. Together, educators, evaluators, and school leadership teams will have ensured that they do not miss this critical opportunity for promoting better leading, better teaching, better learning, and better schools.

### Timeframe

The Summative Evaluation occurs at the end of each educator's individualized Educator Plan and guides plan development for the subsequent cycle. Most educators will receive a Summative Evaluation near the end of a school year, although educators on a Directed Growth Plan or Improvement Plan may have more than one Summative Evaluation in a single year.

*Please note: Evaluators will not rate educators' impact on student learning until at least 2015-2016. The process for determining an educator's Student Impact Rating is described in the following resources:*

- [Part VII: Rating Educator Impact on Student Learning Using District-Determined Measures of Student Learning](#)
- [Rating Educator Impact: The Student Impact Rating](#)

## Step 5: Summative Evaluation

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### What Is Required in the Regulations?

The educator evaluation regulations require that every educator have a Summative Evaluation as per 603 CMR 35.06.

The Summative Evaluation is used to arrive at a rating on each Standard, determine an overall rating, and serve as a basis for making personnel decisions. Every educator must be rated as Exemplary, Proficient, Needs Improvement, or Unsatisfactory. In rating educators on performance Standards for the purposes of Summative Evaluation, districts may use either the rubric provided by the Department in its Model System or a comparably rigorous and comprehensive rubric developed by the district and reviewed by the Department.

- To be rated Proficient overall, a teacher must have been, at minimum, rated as Proficient on the Standard 1: Curriculum, Planning, and Assessment, and Standard 2: Teaching all Students as defined in [603 CMR 35.03](#). To be rated Proficient overall, an administrator must have been, at a minimum, rated Proficient on the Standard 1: Instructional Leadership as defined in [604 CMR 35.04](#).
- The Summative Evaluation rating must be based on evidence from multiple categories of evidence. MCAS growth scores cannot be the sole basis for a Summative Evaluation rating.
- Evidence and professional judgment shall inform the evaluator's rating of performance standards and the overall rating.

Educators have the opportunity to respond to the Summative Evaluation in writing.

#### **Professional Teacher Status**

“Professional teacher status, pursuant to G.L. ch. 71, § 41, should be granted only to educators who have achieved ratings of Proficient or Exemplary on each Performance Standard and overall. A principal considering making an employment decision that would lead to professional teacher status for any educator who has not been rated proficient or exemplary on each Performance Standard and overall on the most recent evaluation shall confer with the superintendent of schools by May 1. The principal's decision is subject to review and approval by the superintendent.” (See [603 CMR 35.08\(6\)](#))

## Step 5: Summative Evaluation

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### Getting Started

The purpose of the section below is to help educators, evaluators, and school leadership teams get started with the implementation of Summative Evaluations.

**Note that many aspects of Step 5: Summative Evaluation are similar to Step 4: Formative Assessment & Evaluation. For additional Conditions for Readiness and Considerations for Planning, refer to pages 42-43 of this guide.**

### Conditions for Readiness

*This section describes school-wide knowledge, capacity, and information that will increase the readiness of educators and evaluators to effectively implement this step. If schools find that these conditions do not exist, strengthening these underlying conditions will increase the likeliness of success. Leadership may need to adjust their communication and professional development strategies and/or add tasks to their implementation plan.*

- **Sufficient evidence.** At this stage, evaluators should have multiple data points for every Standard and Indicator (the preponderance of evidence for a particular Standard may fall within a specific Indicator if it was an area of focus or priority). This evidence can include that which educators provide.

### Considerations for Planning

*This section highlights key logistics and practical considerations for implementation that help school leadership teams and evaluators plan.*

- **Time for reflection.** School leadership teams, evaluators, and educators should ensure that they set time aside to consider the information and lessons gleaned from this process in two key areas:
  1. *Implementation of educator evaluation.* To increase the effectiveness of evaluations in the upcoming school year and/or evaluation cycle, leadership teams and the faculty should discuss the successes and challenges experienced by different members of the school, strategies for improving the process, and supports needed for more effective implementation.
  2. *Connections between educator progress and school and district goals.* Well-aligned goals are emphasized as a priority for the purpose of accelerating school progress. School leadership should examine the connections between educator progress on goals and school or district progress on goals. This information can be used to prioritize certain Standards, Indicators, and/or Elements for the next school year. All members of the school should engage in conversation on attainment of *school goals*, including areas still in need of improvement and opportunities to scale up or replicate success. These conversations—including a focused review of progress on short term goals—will enable the school to work strategically toward long term goals.



## Step 5: Summative Evaluation

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### **Suggested Resources**

*In order to create coherence across existing or planned initiatives, align individual and team goals with school and district goals and priorities, and promote collaboration and conversation, it is critical that educators have clear and easy access to certain types of information. The “Suggested Resources” section lists several concrete resources that will support educators to engage in self-assessment and goal proposal thoughtfully and effectively.*

- Up-to-date record of evidence and brief analysis, identifying patterns and trends (educator and evaluator)
- Benchmark and final data on goals
- Goals and Educator Plans to review and assess progress
- Locally negotiated performance rubric
- Collective bargaining agreement and/or other evaluation requirements
- Completed Educator Plan Form (see Appendix A) or locally adopted form
- Completed Evaluator Record of Evidence Form (see Appendix A) or locally adopted form
- Completed Educator Collection of Evidence Form (see Appendix A) or locally adopted form
- Completed Formative Assessment or Evaluation Report Form (see Appendix A) or locally adopted form

### **Tools from the Model System**

*For districts that have chosen to adopt the Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation, the following tools are available to support implementation:*

- Evaluation Tracking Sheet (see Appendix A)
- Summative Evaluation Report Form (see Appendix A)
- Educator Response Form (see Appendix A)
- Standards and Indicators for Effective Teaching Practice: Teacher Rubric (see Part III)

## Step 5: Summative Evaluation

### Recommended Actions for Summative Evaluation

Recommended Action	Individual Educator	Team	Evaluator/ School Leadership	Notes
Schedule times of summative conferences with enough advance notice to allow both the educator and evaluator to prepare	✓	✓	✓	<i>Make sure the educator knows the purpose of the meeting, how to prepare, and the expected outcomes of the discussion</i>
Communicate expectations about educators' roles in sharing evidence during the conference			✓	<i>Be explicit about how much documentation or evidence the educator is expected to bring to the conference and when</i>
Review evidence and artifacts for each Standard and Indicator	✓		✓	<i>Read through the evidence chronologically, looking for patterns and trends 1) over time and 2) within or across Standards and/or Indicators</i>
Review Formative Assessment/Evaluation	✓		✓	<i>Formative assessments provide additional evidence of feedback the educator has received as well as a record of evidence of progress, performance, and patterns</i>
Briefly record analysis of evidence			✓	<i>Evaluators should wait to finalize ratings until the educator has had the opportunity to present evidence</i>
Determine provisional summative ratings and progress toward goals			✓	<i>Summative conference, if any, may reveal information that affects ratings</i>
Share evidence of fulfillment of professional responsibilities and outreach to and engagement with families	✓	✓		<i>Educators may bring other relevant evidence</i>
Finalize summative ratings for each standard and for the Overall Summative Rating			✓	<i>Overall summative rating also takes progress on goals into consideration</i>

## Step 5: Summative Evaluation

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### Moving Forward

The Summative Evaluation step marks the end of one evaluation cycle and kicks off a new cycle of self-assessment, goal setting, and plan development. When well-implemented, educators will leave the Summative Evaluation conference with a good idea of their next steps for the following evaluation cycle. The new cycle will coincide with the new school year for educators on a Development Plan or Self-Directed Growth Plan, but it may begin midyear for educators on a Directed Growth Plan or Improvement Plan.

Ultimately, both the Summative Performance Rating and the Student Impact Rating will jointly determine the next Educator Plan for each educator. However, the *Impact on Student Learning* category will not go into effect until at least 2015-2016 and require patterns and trends across a minimum of two years of data for at least two district-determined measures of student learning, growth, and achievement to be established. It is likely that most educators will not receive an Impact Rating until Spring of 2016.

In the meantime, the *Summative Rating* categories can guide evaluators in determining the appropriate Educator Plan for each educator:

- Educators without Professional Teacher Status (PTS) and those in a new assignment (at the discretion of the evaluator) – **Development Plan**
- Educators with PTS rated Proficient or Exemplary – **Self-Directed Growth Plan**
- Educators with PTS rated as Needs Improvement – **Directed Growth Plan**
- Educators with PTS rated as Unsatisfactory – **Improvement Plan**, with goals specific to improving the educator's unsatisfactory performance

Until Student Impact Ratings are incorporated into an educator's evaluation, districts may determine whether a one- or two-year Self-Directed Growth Plan is warranted for specific groups of educators. For example, a district may decide that veteran teachers new to a school should be placed on a one-year plan to ensure necessary supports during acclimation. In other instances, it might be helpful for school leadership teams and evaluators to consider the frequency of check-ins with an educator around specific areas for growth, or how the one- versus two-year plans will balance an evaluator's workload.

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# Appendix A: Forms for Educator Evaluation

## Overview of Forms

The forms included in this Appendix are suggested templates, provided as tools to support educators and evaluators as they implement the educator evaluation framework. For all of these forms, additional pages may be attached as needed.

- [Evaluation Tracking Sheet](#). This form is intended to be used to track the completion of each step throughout the educator's evaluation process. It will be completed by the educator in conjunction with his/her primary (and possibly supervising) evaluator.
- [Self-Assessment Form](#). This form is intended to be used in support of Step 1: Self-Assessment, the educator's initial step of the cycle. The form can be used by individuals or teams; however, each individual will need to submit a self-assessment. Evaluators sign the form to indicate receipt. The form includes sections for the educator to complete an analysis of student learning, growth, and achievement and an assessment of practice against performance standards. Submission of this form will be noted and initialed on the **Evaluation Tracking Sheet**.
- [Goal Setting Form](#). This form is intended to be used in support of Step 1: Self-Assessment **and** Step 2: Goal Setting and Plan Development. Individuals and teams may use this form to propose goals (a minimum of one student learning goal and one professional practice goal). The form should initially be submitted with the Self-Assessment Form with the box "Proposed Goals" checked. If the goals are approved as written, the evaluator will check the box "Final Goals" and include a copy of the form with the **Educator Plan Form**. If the goals undergo further refinement, edits may be made to the original, or the form may be rewritten. If the form is redone, the new form should have the box "Final Goals" checked and should then be attached to the **Educator Plan Form**. Submission of this form will be noted and initialed on the **Evaluation Tracking Sheet**.
- [Educator Plan Form](#). This form is intended to be used in support of Step 2: Goal Setting and Plan Development. It will either be completed by the educator for a *Self-Directed Growth Plan*, by the educator and the evaluator together for a *Directed Growth Plan* and a *Developing Educator Plan*, and by the evaluator for an *Improvement Plan*. Completion and/or submission of this form will be noted and initialed on the **Evaluation Tracking Sheet**.
- [Evaluator Record of Evidence Form](#). This form is intended to be used by the evaluator in gathering evidence of an educator's practice during Step 3: Implementation of the Plan. It will be completed by the evaluator and may be reviewed by the educator at any time.
- [Educator Collection of Evidence Form](#). This form is intended to be used to support the educator in collecting evidence of his/her practice. It will be completed by the educator and shared with the evaluator prior to Formative Assessment/Evaluation and Summative

- **Formative Assessment Report Form.** This form is intended to be used in support of an educator’s Formative Assessment (Step 4) at the mid-point of the evaluation cycle, at minimum; it can be used multiple times as Formative Assessment can be ongoing. It will be completed by the evaluator. Evaluators are not required to assess both progress toward goals and performance on Standards; they will check off whether they are evaluating “Progress toward Attaining Goals,” “Performance on each Standard,” or both. Evaluators will provide a brief narrative of progress that includes feedback for improvement. Educators sign off to indicate that they have received a copy of the report and may use the **Educator Response Form** to provide a written response. Completion of this form will be noted and initialed on the **Evaluation Tracking Sheet**.
- **Formative Evaluation Report Form.** This form is intended to be used in support of an educator’s Formative Evaluation at the end of year one of a two-year Self-Directed Growth Plan. It will be completed by the evaluator. Evaluators are not required to assess both progress toward goals and performance on Standards; they will check off whether they are evaluating “Progress toward Attaining Goals,” “Performance on each Standard,” or both. Evaluators will provide a brief narrative of progress that includes feedback for improvement. At the point of Formative Evaluation, Standard-level ratings and the overall rating are assumed to be the same as the prior Summative Evaluation unless evidence demonstrates a significant change in performance leading to a change in Overall Rating and, possibly, Educator Plan. If there is a change in rating, evaluators must provide comments on each of the four Standards briefly describing *why* the rating has changed, the *evidence* that led to a change in rating, and offering *feedback for improvement* (evaluators are encouraged to provide comments even if there is no change to ensure that educators have a clear sense of their progress and performance and receive feedback for improvement). Educators sign off to indicate that they have received a copy of the report and may use the **Educator Response Form** to provide a written response. Completion of this form will be noted and initialed on the **Evaluation Tracking Sheet**.
- **Summative Evaluation Report Form.** This form is intended to be used for Step 5: Summative Evaluation. This form applies to all Educator Plans. It will be completed by the evaluator. The evaluator must complete all sections, which are: “Attainment of Student Learning Goal(s),” “Attainment of Professional Practice Goal(s),” “Rating on each Standard,” “Overall Performance Rating,” and “Plan Moving Forward.” Evaluators must provide comments on the student learning goal(s), professional practice goal(s), each of the four Standards, and the overall rating briefly describing the level of attainment or performance rating, the *evidence* that led to the level of attainment/rating, and offering *feedback for improvement*. Educators sign off to indicate that they have received a copy of the report and may use the **Educator Response Form** to provide a written response. Completion of this form will be noted and initialed on the **Evaluation Tracking Sheet**.
- **Educator Response Form.** This form is intended to be used in support of the educator, should he/she want to have a formal response to any part of the evaluation process kept on record. It will be completed by the educator; the evaluator will sign to acknowledge receipt. If the form is submitted in response to the Formative Assessment/Evaluation or to the Summative Evaluation, receipt of the response will also be noted and initialed on the **Evaluation Tracking Sheet**.

## Evaluation Tracking Sheet

Educator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Evaluator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Evaluator, if any—Name/Title/Role in evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

School(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Educator Plan:       Self-Directed Growth Plan       Directed Growth Plan  
                           Developing Educator Plan       Improvement Plan

Plan Duration:       2-Year       One-Year       Less than a year \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluation Step	Date(s)	Educator Initials	Evaluator(s) Initials
Self-Assessment received by evaluator			
Educator Plan development completed			
<input type="checkbox"/> Formative Assessment conference, if any <sup>1</sup> <input type="checkbox"/> Formative Evaluation conference, if any <sup>2</sup>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Formative Assessment Report completed <input type="checkbox"/> Formative Evaluation Report completed <sup>3</sup>			
Educator response, if any, received by evaluator <sup>4</sup>			
Summative Evaluation conference, if any			
Summative Evaluation Report completed			
Educator response, if any, received by evaluator			

<sup>1</sup> As per the ESE Model System for Educator Evaluation Contract Language, evaluation conferences are required for ratings of Needs Improvement and Unsatisfactory but conferences may be requested by either the educator or evaluator for any Educator Plan. The conference may occur before or after the Report is completed; the sequence in the above table does not denote required chronological order.

<sup>2</sup> Formative Evaluation only occurs at the end of the first year of a **two-year Self-Directed Growth Plan**.

<sup>3</sup> The educator's Formative Evaluation Rating at the end of the first year of the two-year cycle shall be the same as the previous Summative Rating unless evidence demonstrates a significant change in performance. In such a case, the rating on the Formative Evaluation may change. Assigning ratings is optional during Formative Assessment.

<sup>4</sup> An educator may provide written comments to the evaluator at any time using the Educator Response Form but 603 CMR 35.06 ensures that educators have an opportunity to respond to the Formative Assessment, Formative Evaluation, and Summative Evaluation in writing.



Educator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Evaluator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Evaluator, if any—Name/Title/Role in evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

School(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 1: Analysis of Student Learning, Growth, and Achievement**  
*Briefly summarize areas of strength and high-priority concerns for students under your responsibility for the upcoming school year. Cite evidence such as results from available assessments. This form should be individually submitted by educator, but Part 1 can also be used by individuals and/or teams who jointly review and analyze student data.*  
[603 CMR 35.06 \(2\)\(a\)1](#)

Team, if applicable: \_\_\_\_\_

List Team Members below:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Educator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## Part 2: Assessment of Practice Against Performance Standards

*Citing your district's performance rubric, briefly summarize areas of strength and high-priority areas for growth. Areas may target specific Standards, Indicators, or Elements, or span multiple Indicators or Elements within or across Standards. The form should be individually submitted by educator, but Part 2 can also be used by teams in preparation for proposing team goals.*

[603 CMR 35.06 \(2\)\(a\)2](#)

Team, if applicable: \_\_\_\_\_

List Team Members below:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Signature of Educator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\* The evaluator's signature indicates that he or she has received a copy of the self-assessment form and the goal setting form with proposed goals. It does not denote approval of the goals.

# Goal Setting Form

Educator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Evaluator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Evaluator, if any—Name/Title/Role in evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

School(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Check all that apply<sup>1</sup>:  Proposed Goals  Final Goals      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

A minimum of one student learning goal and one professional practice goal are required. **Team goals must be considered** per [603 CMR 35.06\(3\)\(b\)](#). Attach pages as needed for additional goals or revisions made to proposed goals during the development of the Educator Plan.

<b>Student Learning S.M.A.R.T. Goal</b> <i>Check whether goal is individual or team; write team name if applicable.</i>	<b>Professional Practice S.M.A.R.T. Goal</b> <i>Check whether goal is individual or team; write team name if applicable.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> Team: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> Team: _____

**S.M.A.R.T.:** S=Specific and Strategic; M=Measurable; A=Action Oriented;  
R=Rigorous, Realistic, and Results-Focused; T=Timed and Tracked

<sup>1</sup> If proposed goals change during Plan Development, edits may be recorded directly on original sheet or revised goal may be recorded on a new sheet. If proposed goals are approved as written, a separate sheet is not required.

# Educator Plan Form

Educator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Evaluator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Evaluator, if any—Name/Title/Role in evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

School(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Educator Plan:     Self-Directed Growth Plan                       Directed Growth Plan  
                          Developing Educator Plan                       Improvement Plan\*

Plan Duration:     2-Year                       One-Year                       Less than a year \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_                      End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Goal Setting Form with final goals is attached to the Educator Plan.**

Some activities may apply to the pursuit of multiple goals or types of goals (student learning or professional practice). Attach additional pages as necessary.

<b>Student Learning Goal(s): Planned Activities</b>		
<i>Describe actions the educator will take to attain the student learning goal(s). Activities may apply to individual and/or team. Attach additional pages as needed.</i>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Supports/Resources from School/District<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Timeline or Frequency</b>

\*Additional detail may be attached if needed

Educator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Professional Practice Goal(s): Planned Activities</b> <i>Describe actions the educator will take to attain the professional practice goal(s).                      Activities may apply to individual and/or team. Attach additional pages as needed.</i>		
Action	Supports/Resources from School/District <sup>1</sup>	Timeline or Frequency

**This Educator Plan is “designed to provide educators with feedback for improvement, professional growth, and leadership,” is “aligned to statewide Standards and Indicators in 603 CMR 35.00 and local Performance Standards,” and “is consistent with district and school goals.”** (see [603 CMR 35.06 \(3\)\(d\)](#) and [603 CMR 35.06\(3\)\(f\).](#))

Signature of Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Educator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\* As the evaluator retains final authority over goals to be included in an educator’s plan (see [603 CMR 35.06\(3\)\(c\)](#)), the signature of the educator indicates that he or she has received the Goal Setting Form with the “Final Goal” box checked, indicating the evaluator’s approval of the goals. The educator’s signature does not necessarily denote agreement with the goals. Regardless of agreement with the final goals, signature indicates recognition that “It is the educator’s responsibility to attain the goals in the plan and to participate in any trainings and professional development provided through the state, district, or other providers in accordance with the Educator Plan.” (see [603 CMR 35.06\(4\)](#))

\_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> Must identify means for educator to receive feedback for improvement per [603 CMR 35.06\(3\)\(d\)](#)

## Evaluator Record of Evidence Form

Educator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Evaluator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Evaluator, if any—Name/Title/Role in evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

School(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Educator Plan and Duration: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Standards and Indicators for Effective Teaching Practice: Rubric Outline</b> as per <a href="#">603 CMR 35.03</a> The evaluator should track collection to ensure that sufficient evidence has been gathered.			
<b>I. Curriculum, Planning, &amp; Assessment</b>	<b>II. Teaching All Students</b>	<b>III. Family &amp; Community Engagement</b>	<b>IV. Professional Culture</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> I-A. Curriculum and Planning <input type="checkbox"/> I-B. Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> I-C. Analysis	<input type="checkbox"/> II-A. Instruction <input type="checkbox"/> II-B. Learning Environment <input type="checkbox"/> II-C. Cultural Proficiency <input type="checkbox"/> II-D. Expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> III-A. Engagement <input type="checkbox"/> III-B. Collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> III-C. Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> IV-A. Reflection <input type="checkbox"/> IV-B. Professional Growth <input type="checkbox"/> IV-C. Collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> IV-D. Decision-making <input type="checkbox"/> IV-E. Shared Responsibility <input type="checkbox"/> IV-F. Professional Responsibilities

\* The Rubric Outline is intended to be used for citing Standards and Indicators. Evaluators should review the full rubric for analysis of evidence and determination of ratings

## Evaluator Record of Evidence Form

Educator: \_\_\_\_\_ Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Date</b> <i>(Record date of collection, duration if applicable)</i>	<b>Source of Evidence*</b> <i>(e.g., parent conference, observation)</i>	<b>Standard(s)/ Indicator(s)</b> <i>Note Standard(s) and Indicator(s) to which evidence is tied</i>	<b>Analysis of Evidence</b> <i>Record notes "based on observations and artifacts of professional practice, including unannounced observations of practice of any duration" or other forms of evidence to support determining ratings on Standards as per <u>603 CMR 35.07</u></i>	<b>Feedback Provided</b> <i>Briefly record feedback given to educator (e.g., strengths recognized, suggestions for improvement)</i>
EX: 11/8/11	EX: unit plans, benchmark data	EX: I-A, I-B	EX: unit plans were appropriately modified after analysis of benchmark data to better reflect student performance at mid-point of semester	EX: recognized strong adjustment to practice, suggested teacher collaborate with team on backward curriculum mapping

\*note if classroom observations are announced or unannounced



# Educator Collection of Evidence Form



Educator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Evaluator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Evaluator, if any—Name/Title/Role in evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

School(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**Evidence pertains to (check all that apply)<sup>1</sup>:**

- Fulfillment of professional responsibilities and growth
- Evidence of outreach to and ongoing engagement with families
- Progress toward attaining student learning goal(s)
- Progress toward attaining professional practice goal(s)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Summary of Evidence

*Summarize the evidence compiled to be presented to evaluator with a brief analysis.  
Attach additional pages as needed.*

Signature of Educator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Attachment(s) included  
\_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> Per [603 CMR 35.07\(1\)\(c\)1](#), "Evidence compiled and presented by the educator includ[es]: 1. Evidence of fulfillment of professional responsibilities and growth, such as: self-assessments; peer collaboration; professional development linked to goals and or educator plans; contributions to the school community and professional culture; 2. Evidence of active outreach to and ongoing engagement with families." However, educator collection of evidence is not **limited** to these areas.

# Formative Assessment Report Form



Educator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Evaluator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Evaluator, if any—Name/Title/Role in evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

School(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## Assessing<sup>1</sup>:

Progress toward attaining goals

Performance on Standards

Both

### Progress Toward Student Learning Goal(s)

*Describe current level of progress and feedback for improvement. Attach additional pages as needed.*

### Progress Toward Professional Practice Goal(s)

*Describe current level of progress. Attach additional pages as needed.*

<sup>1</sup> As per [603 CMR 35.02](#) and [603 CMR 35.06\(5\)](#), Formative Assessment shall mean the process used to assess progress towards attaining goals set forth in educator plans, performance on performance standards, or both.

# Formative Assessment Report Form



Educator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## Performance on Each Standard

*Describe performance and feedback for improvement. Attach additional pages as needed.*

### I: Curriculum, Planning, & Assessment

### II: Teaching All Students

### III: Family & Community Engagement

### IV: Professional Culture

The educator shall have the opportunity to respond in writing to the Formative Assessment as per [603 CMR 35.06\(5\)\(c\)](#) on the Educator Response Form.

Signature of Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Educator\* \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Signature of the educator indicates acknowledgement of this report; it does not necessarily denote agreement with the contents of the report. Educators have the opportunity to respond to this report in writing and may use the Educator Report Form.

# Formative Evaluation Report Form

\* For educators on two-year Self-Directed Growth Plans at the end of Year One of the cycle

Educator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Evaluator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Evaluator, if any—Name/Title/Role in evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

School(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## Assessing<sup>1</sup>:

Progress toward attaining goals

Performance on Standards

Both

### Progress Toward Student Learning Goal(s)

*Attach additional pages as needed.*

Did not meet    Some progress    Significant Progress    Met    Exceeded

Rationale, evidence, and feedback for improvement:

### Progress Toward Professional Practice Goal(s)

*Attach additional pages as needed.*

Did not meet    Some progress    Significant Progress    Met    Exceeded

Rationale, evidence, and feedback for improvement:

<sup>1</sup> As per [603 CMR 35.02](#) and [603 CMR 35.06\(5\)](#), formative evaluation shall mean the process used to assess progress towards attaining goals set forth in educator plans, performance on performance standards, or both.

# Formative Evaluation Report Form

Educator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

- Evaluator is assigning same ratings as prior Summative Evaluation; no comments needed  
 Evaluator is assigning ratings that differ from prior Summative Evaluation; comments are required

## Rating on Each Standard

**I: Curriculum, Planning, & Assessment**     Unsatisfactory     Needs Improvement     Proficient     Exemplary

Rationale, evidence, and feedback for improvement:

**II: Teaching All Students**     Unsatisfactory     Needs Improvement     Proficient     Exemplary

Rationale, evidence, and feedback for improvement:

**III: Family/Community Engagement**     Unsatisfactory     Needs Improvement     Proficient     Exemplary

Rationale, evidence, and feedback for improvement:

**IV: Professional Culture**     Unsatisfactory     Needs Improvement     Proficient     Exemplary

Rationale, evidence, and feedback for improvement:



# Summative Evaluation Report Form



Educator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Evaluator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Evaluator, if any—Name/Title/Role in evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

School(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Current Plan:       Self-Directed Growth Plan       Directed Growth Plan  
                          Developing Educator Plan       Improvement Plan

## Progress Toward Student Learning Goal(s)

*Attach additional pages as needed.*

Did not meet     Some progress     Significant Progress     Met     Exceeded

Rationale, evidence, and feedback for improvement:

## Progress Toward Professional Practice Goal(s)

*Attach additional pages as needed.*

Did not meet     Some progress     Significant Progress     Met     Exceeded

Rationale, evidence, and feedback for improvement:

Educator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## Rating on Each Standard

**I: Curriculum, Planning, & Assessment**     Unsatisfactory     Needs Improvement     Proficient     Exemplary

Rationale, evidence, and feedback for improvement:

**II: Teaching All Students**     Unsatisfactory     Needs Improvement     Proficient     Exemplary

Rationale, evidence, and feedback for improvement:

**III: Family/Community Engagement**     Unsatisfactory     Needs Improvement     Proficient     Exemplary

Rationale, evidence, and feedback for improvement:

**IV: Professional Culture**     Unsatisfactory     Needs Improvement     Proficient     Exemplary

Rationale, evidence, and feedback for improvement:





# Educator Response Form

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Educator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Evaluator—Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Evaluator, if any—Name/Title/Role in evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

School(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**Response to: (check all that apply)**

- Educator Plan, including goals and activities
- Evaluator collection and/or analysis of evidence
- Formative Assessment or Evaluation Report
- Summative Evaluation Report
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Educator Response</b> <i>Attach additional pages as needed</i>	

Signature of Educator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Attachment(s) included

## Appendix B: Setting S.M.A.R.T. Goals<sup>1</sup>

Good goals help educators, schools, and districts improve. That is why the educator evaluation regulations require educators to develop goals that are specific, actionable, and measurable. They require, too, that goals be accompanied by action plans with benchmarks to assess progress.

This “S.M.A.R.T.” Goal Framework is a useful tool that individuals and teams can use to craft effective goals and action plans:

<b>S</b>	=	<b>S</b> pecific and <b>S</b> trategic
<b>M</b>	=	<b>M</b> easurable
<b>A</b>	=	<b>A</b> ction Oriented
<b>R</b>	=	<b>R</b> igorous, <b>R</b> ealistic, and <b>R</b> esults-Focused ( <b>the 3 Rs</b> )
<b>T</b>	=	<b>T</b> imed and <b>T</b> racked

Goals with an action plan and benchmarks that have these characteristics are “S.M.A.R.T..”

A practical example some of us have experienced in our personal lives can make clear how this S.M.A.R.T. goal Framework can help turn hopes into actions that have results.

**First, an example of *not* being “S.M.A.R.T.” with goals:** *I will lose weight and get in condition.*

**Getting S.M.A.R.T.er:** *Between March 15 and Memorial Day, I will lose 10 pounds and be able to run 1 mile nonstop.*

The **hope** is now a **goal**, that meets most of the S.M.A.R.T. Framework criteria:

It’s <b>S</b> pecific and <b>S</b> trategic	= 10 pounds, 1 mile
It’s <b>M</b> easurable	= pounds, miles
It’s <b>A</b> ction-oriented	= lose, run
It’s got the 3 Rs	= weight loss and running distance
It’s <b>T</b> imed	= 10 weeks

**S.M.A.R.T. enough:** To make the goal really “S.M.A.R.T.,” though, we need to add an action plan and benchmarks. They make sure the goal meets that final criteria, “Tracked.” They also strengthen the other criteria, especially when the benchmarks include “process” benchmarks for tracking progress on the key

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<sup>1</sup> The S.M.A.R.T. goal concept was introduced by G.T. Doran, A. Miller and J. Cunningham in *There’s a S.M.A.R.T. way to write management’s goals and objectives*, *Management Review* 70 (11), AMA Forum, pp. 35-36. *What Makes a Goal “S.M.A.R.T.”?* also draws from the work of Ed Costa, Superintendent of Schools in Lenox; John D’Auria, Teachers 21; and Mike Gilbert, Northeast Field Director for MASC.

actions and “outcome” benchmarks that track early evidence of change and/or progress toward the ultimate goal.

### **Key Actions**

- Reduce my daily calorie intake to fewer than 1,200 calories for each of 10 weeks.
- Walk 15 minutes per day; increase my time by 5 minutes per week for the next 4 weeks.
- Starting in week 5, run and walk in intervals for 30 minutes, increasing the proportion of time spent running instead of walking until I can run a mile, non-stop, by the end of week 10.

### **Benchmarks:**

- For process, maintaining a daily record of calorie intake and exercise
- For outcome, biweekly weight loss and running distance targets (e.g., After 2 wks: 2 lbs/0 miles; 4 wks: 4 lbs/0 miles; 6 wks: 6lbs/.2 mi; 8 wks: 8 lbs/.4 miles)

### **S = Specific and Strategic**

Goals need to be straightforward and clearly written, with sufficient specificity to determine whether or not they have been achieved. A goal is strategic when it serves an important purpose of the school or district as a whole and addresses something that is likely to have a big impact on our overall vision.

### **M = Measurable**

If we can't measure it, we can't manage it. What measures of quantity, quality, and/or impact will we use to determine that we've achieved the goal? And how will we measure progress along the way? Progress toward achieving the goal is typically measured through “benchmarks.” Some benchmarks focus on the process: are we doing what we said we were going to do? Other benchmarks focus on the outcome: are we seeing early signs of progress toward the results?

### **A = Action Oriented**

Goals have active, not passive verbs. And the action steps attached to them tell us “who” is doing “what.” Without clarity about what we're actually going to do to achieve the goal, a goal is only a hope with little chance of being achieved. Making clear the key actions required to achieve a goal helps everyone see how their part of the work is connected—to other parts of the work and to a larger purpose. Knowing that helps people stay focused and energized, rather than fragmented and uncertain.

### **R = Rigorous, Realistic, and Results-Focused (the 3 Rs)**

A goal is not an activity: a goal makes clear what will be different as a result of achieving the goal. A goal needs to describe a realistic, yet ambitious result. It needs to stretch the educator, team, school, or district toward improvement but not be out of reach. The focus and effort required to achieve a rigorous but realistic goal should be challenging but not exhausting. Goals set too high will discourage us, whereas goals set too low will leave us feeling “empty” when it is accomplished and won't serve our students well.

### **T = Timed**

A goal needs to have a deadline. Deadlines help all of us take action. For a goal to be accomplished, definite times need to be established when key actions will be completed and benchmarks achieved. Tracking the progress we're making on our action steps (process benchmarks) is essential: if we fall behind on doing something we said we were going to do, we'll need to accelerate the pace on something else. But tracking progress on process outcomes isn't enough. Our outcome benchmarks help us know whether we're on track to achieve our goal and/or whether we've reached our goal. Benchmarks give us a way to see our progress and celebrate it. They also give us information we need to make mid-course corrections.