Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation

Facilitator Guide for Training Module 4:
S.M.A.R.T. Goals and Educator Plan Development

August 2012
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Overview of the Training Module Series

Training Module Purpose and Goals

This series of eight training modules is designed to prepare school teams to implement the new Massachusetts educator evaluation system in their schools through the following intended outcomes:

- Make the 5-Step Cycle concrete and actionable for educators and their evaluators.
- Support school leadership teams in developing a common understanding of the new educator evaluation framework and the opportunities for professional growth and development using the Massachusetts Model System.
- Provide participants with implementation tips and strategies to help schools make educator evaluation meaningful and doable.

The training module series will accomplish these goals through the use of consistent, standardized training materials, detailed facilitator guides, and participant handouts that connect to Model System resources.

Audience

The audience for each module is school-level leadership teams of four to six people. Districts may bring some or all school leadership teams together for a single training session, or training sessions may consist of teams from several districts within a region.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) recommends that each school leadership team include the principal, one to two additional school-level administrators (e.g., assistant principal, curriculum director, department chair), and two to three current classroom teachers representing a variety of subject areas, grade levels, and/or student needs. The modules are designed so that school leadership teams can facilitate abbreviated or complete versions of each module to other school staff (see the Timing and Structure section for more details). For districts that are interested in bringing these trainings back to their school sites, team members should be comfortable presenting information to a group of adult learners.

Timing and Structure

Each training module is three hours in length and includes interactive learning activities for school leadership teams. Suggested homework assignments described at the conclusion of each module are intended to help participants extend and apply their learning and are designed to take about an hour.
The modules are organized into a four-part structure to help facilitators and participants pace the content appropriately. The four segments of each module are as follows:

- **Connecting**—Builds community, prepares the team for learning, and links to prior knowledge, other modules, and current work; designed for all school-based educators
- **Learning**—Describes key concepts and highlights various implementation scenarios; supports teams to apply knowledge and share ideas; designed for all school-based educators
- **Implementing**—Supports teams to problem-solve and plan next steps for schools and districts; geared toward school leadership teams
- **Reflecting**—Engages participants in providing feedback, reflecting on learning, and closing the session

The Connecting and Learning segments comprise the first two hours of each module, and the third hour is devoted to the Implementing and Reflecting segments. School leadership teams are encouraged to facilitate either (1) an abridged, two-hour version of each module comprised of the Connecting and Learning segments, or (2) a complete module to other school and district staff, as needed.

### List of Training Modules

**Module 1: Overview.** The first module provides an overview of the module series structure and purposes, introduces the 5-Step Cycle of evaluation and Model System, and examines next steps for strategically implementing the new educator evaluation system in schools.

**Module 2: Unpacking the Rubric.** The second module introduces the basic structure and terminology of the Model System performance rubrics and gives participants an opportunity to examine the rubric components.

**Module 3: Self-Assessment.** The third module engages participants in Step 1 of the 5-Step Cycle—self-assessment. Participants will learn how to engage in a comprehensive self-assessment and how this process prepares the educator to strategically identify professional practice and student learning goals. Participants will also practice using the rubric to reflect on educator practice and consider how best to engage in the analysis of student data and goal proposal.

**Module 4: S.M.A.R.T. Goals and Educator Plan Development.** The fourth module focuses on Step 2 of the 5-Step Cycle—how to develop S.M.A.R.T. goals and Educator Plans so that goals are needs-driven, specific, and action-oriented and Educator Plans have clear benchmarks for success and provisions for professional development and support designed to help educators meet their student learning and professional practice goals.

**Module 5: Gathering Evidence.** The fifth module focuses on the collection and organization of evidence by Standard and Indicator and engages participants in thinking strategically about gathering high-quality artifacts to demonstrate performance.

**Module 6: Observations and Feedback.** The sixth module describes expectations for observations (both inside and outside of classrooms), the collection and organization of observation evidence, as well as the sharing of timely, constructive feedback to educators.

**Module 7: Rating Educator Performance.** The seventh module supports participants in using the teacher performance rubric to determine formative or summative ratings.

**Module 8: Rating Impact on Students.** The eighth module will provide an overview of the ESE-issued June 2012 guidance on student learning measures and ratings of educator impact on student learning.
Preparing for Module 4

Module Overview

Module 4 focuses on the second step of the 5-Step Cycle, how to develop S.M.A.R.T. goals that are needs driven, specific, and action oriented and build Educator Plans to support these goals. Participants will learn how Educator Plans make the goals S.M.A.R.T.er through clear benchmarks for success, plans to gather evidence, and provisions for professional development and support designed to help educators meet their student learning and professional practice goals.

Context

Module 4 introduces a series of educator-led activities that are key to making the 5-Step Cycle of evaluation meaningful and personalized for every educator. It builds directly upon the educator self-assessment process described in Module 3: Self-Assessment. Participants should also have familiarity with the Model System rubrics (addressed in Module 2: Unpacking the Rubric) and a working knowledge of the overall evaluation framework from Module 1: Overview. School leadership teams will get the most from this module if they have attended Modules 1–3; consider offering a primer on some of this content if the majority of Module 4 attendees do not have this background.

Intended Outcomes

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Translate student learning and professional practice goals into S.M.A.R.T.er goals.
- Develop a sample Educator Plan that describes what the educator and evaluator will do, support that will be provided, and timelines.
Agenda

I. Welcome (3 minutes)

II. Connecting (17 minutes)
   - Connecting Content (5 minutes)
   - Connecting Activity: Blazing a Trail (10 minutes)
   - Connecting Wrap-Up/Debrief (2 minutes)

III. Learning (1 hour, 40 minutes)
   - Learning Content 1 (5 minutes)
   - Learning Wrap-Up/Debrief 1 (5 minutes)
   - Learning Content 2 (20 minutes)
   - Learning Activity 2: Laying the Foundation (40 minutes)
   - Learning Wrap-Up/Debrief 2 (5 minutes)

IV. Implementing (50 minutes)
   - Implementing Content (10 minutes)
   - Implementing Activity: Strategically Planning for Plans (30 minutes)
   - Implementing Wrap-Up/Debrief (10 minutes)

V. Reflecting (5 minutes)

VI. Wrap-Up (5 minutes)
   - What's Next?
   - Homework
Equipment and Materials

- **Equipment:** Laptop computer, projector

- **Materials:**
  
  Make a copy of the Participant Handout packet for each participant

  Make a copy of Learning Activity 1: What Makes a Goal S.M.A.R.T.? Example Revisions, included as the last page in this document for each participant. Wait until after Learning Activity 1, during Learning Debrief 1, to pass out this answer sheet.

  Put the following materials on each table:
  
  o Markers (enough for several at each table)
  
  o Sticky notes (enough for several at each table)
  
  o Chart paper (each team will need two pieces for the activity in Laying the Groundwork and the Implementing Content section)

  Bring the following materials for use by you:
  
  o Marker
  
  o Chart paper (the facilitator will need one piece of chart paper in the Implementing Content section)
Regulatory Requirements

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 Plans. The type, duration, and developer of each Plan are 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 of 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.

Source: *Part II: School-Level Planning and Implementation Guide*, p. 25
Model System Resources

Model system resources can be found on ESE’s website at http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/model/.

Specific resources that are useful to review before facilitating this training module include:

**Part II: School-Level Planning and Implementation Guide**
- Overview of the Educator Evaluation Framework (pp. 5–6)
- Priorities for Implementing the Framework (pp. 7–8)
- Step 1: Self-Assessment & Goal Proposal (pp. 14–22)

**Part III: Guide to Rubrics and Model Rubrics for Superintendent, Administrator, and Teacher**
- Structure of the Model Rubrics (p. 6)
- Rubrics At-a-Glance (p. 7)
- Standards and Indicators of Effective Teaching Practice: Rubric (pp. C-2–C-15)
Facilitator Guide

I. Welcome (3 minutes)

Slide 1 is the title slide. During this slide, welcome participants and introduce yourself.

This slide lists the modules and includes the outcomes for Module 4.

Explain:

“This module extends the work of Module 3: Self-Assessment and focuses on establishing S.M.A.R.T. student learning and professional practice goals. These goals will be part of Educator Plans that are action oriented and have clear benchmarks for success, including provisions for professional development and support.

Explain:

“We will start today’s meeting by connecting this training to the previous and remaining modules and provide specific guidance on the development of S.M.A.R.T. student learning and professional practice goals. This module includes hands-on practice and reflection to prepare you to create S.M.A.R.T. goals and to design aligned Educator Plans to reach them.”
II. Connecting (17 minutes)

Connecting Content (5 minutes)

Slide 4 is the title slide for the Connecting section. The Connecting section will take approximately 20 minutes. This is intended to acquaint participants with the learning objectives as well as make a broader connection to the 5-Step Cycle of evaluation.

**Explain:**

“Each step of the 5-Step Cycle of evaluation is connected; each step builds upon the work completed in the previous step. The Analysis, Goal Setting, and Plan Development step calls upon the thoughtful and comprehensive self-assessment process in Step 1. While the Educator Plan development relies on dialogue between the educator and evaluator, the initial phase of the cycle is educator driven.”

**Explain:**

“By the end of this session, you will be able to identify characteristics of “not-so-S.M.A.R.T.,” “S.M.A.R.T.,” and “S.M.A.R.T.er” goals; translate student learning and professional practice goals into S.M.A.R.T.er goals, and develop Educator Plans that describe what the educator and evaluator will do, with accompanying support and timelines.”

**Explain:**

“As mentioned earlier, the self-assessment and goal setting steps of the evaluation cycle are interrelated. Self-assessment provides a solid, evidence-based foundation for goal setting and ensures that goals are tied directly to the performance standards in the rubric, relevant to the individual educator’s needs, and useful to continued growth of individual educators and teams.

“When goals are S.M.A.R.T.er, they become the basis of a detailed Educator Plan, which identifies what the educator is going to do, what support the evaluator and schools are going to provide, and when things will be completed.

“The educator and evaluator check in on progress toward goals and adjust the plan as needed during the formative assessment/evaluation.

“Take a look at the arrow at the bottom of the slide. Throughout all of these steps, educators and evaluators collect and share evidence to demonstrate educator improvements in professional practice and student growth.”
Connecting Activity: Blazing a Trail (10 minutes)

**Purpose and intended outcomes:**
The purpose of this activity is for participants to connect with their team members, developing a shared experience of discussing personal goals and getting familiar with the process of setting goals, making plans, and overcoming obstacles.

**Facilitation directions:**
It is essential that the facilitator be prepared to share a personal example that includes all of the components listed below:

- Goal
- Plan to accomplish
- Obstacles
- Outcomes/result

Some examples of personal goals are getting a master’s degree, running a marathon, buying a house or car, overcoming a fear, or learning a new skill.

**Activity detail:**

*Explain:*

“Setting goals and devising a plan to attain them is not just a skill that we use in our professional lives. Many of you, like me, probably have stories of how you set a goal and made a plan to accomplish it.”

At this point, explain your personal goal, making sure to answer all of the questions on the slide.

*Explain:*

“With your school team, share specific times that you individually set goals in your personal lives. Then choose one person’s goal to focus on as a group.

“Using that person’s goal and situation, answer the questions on the PowerPoint slide together, with a recorder jotting down the answers to these questions.

“If the individual is comfortable and your group wants to, we will ask a couple of groups to share what they discussed.”

Give groups 6–8 minutes to have this discussion.

**Facilitator note:** Ask one or two groups to volunteer to share. Follow up with the individual whose goal the group discussed and ask what made the goal worthwhile.

**Key point:** Drive home the importance of setting and pursuing challenging, rewarding goals and of being “in charge of” your goals.
Common facilitation challenges and solutions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants may have difficulty identifying a goal.</td>
<td>It is likely that more than one member of the group will have an example goal that would work for this activity. Prompt individuals with the following types of goals if necessary. Some examples of personal goals are getting a master's degree, running a marathon, buying a house or car, overcoming a fear, or learning a new skill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants may not feel comfortable sharing personal goals because they know they may be asked to share their experiences with the whole group.</td>
<td>Reassure participants that groups do not need to share if they do not want to. If an individual has a personal example that they do not want to share with other people in their group, that is fine. The group just needs to be able to discuss an example from one participant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unless done as a quick activity, participants may wonder, “What is the point of this activity?”</td>
<td>Facilitator must manage time well so the activity does not drag on and must be explicit about the activity’s purpose and connection.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guiding questions:

- Identify a challenging goal one team member has accomplished and is willing to discuss.
- Did that person set the goal or did someone (doctor, partner, friend) set the goal for that person? How did that make a difference?
- What plans did that person make to accomplish the goal?
- What obstacles surfaced?
- What was the outcome or result?

Connecting Wrap-Up/Debrief (2 minutes)

Explain:

“Did you notice how the energy in the room rose as you all began thinking about and talking about a goal you accomplished that you were proud of? I’m willing to put money on the fact that most of you remembered a goal that was not easy, one that took real effort, right? One for which you had to do specific things and periodically check your progress. Not a goal where your success depended just on luck, right? One where it was really clear whether you’d achieved it or not and one that you had a “say” in choosing, right? This last point is really important: Each of us does better when we play a major role in setting our own goals—or at least the action steps we’re going to take to achieve them.

“Please let the memory of these last few minutes—the memory of this goal—be a touchstone for all of us collectively as you move ahead with goal setting in the new educator evaluation system.”
III. Learning (1 hour, 40 minutes)

Learning Content 1 (5 minutes)

During this section, the facilitator will discuss the goal setting process in the evaluation cycle.

Slide 9 is the title slide for the Learning section.

Explain:

“The next critical piece of the evaluation cycle is to establish S.M.A.R.T. goals that are based upon identified professional practice and student learning needs.

“We are going to discuss how to establish student learning and professional practice goals so that they are of high quality.”

Explain:

“As we just experienced in our Connecting activity, empowering individuals and teams in the goal-setting process creates greater buy-in and an increased level of commitment.

“We also know that practice is more likely to improve when educators participate in professional development and supports that are meeting the real needs of the educator and his or her students. The Educator Plan creates an opportunity for educators to identify individualized and team supports and then helps them document efforts to improve.”

“Goal setting and plan development is a process that promotes continual learning while keeping student learning at the center of all efforts.”

Explain:

“The goal-setting process also promotes efforts to ensure that the goals build consistency and coherence across and within the schools and classrooms.

“One thing learned from successful early implementations of the 5-Step Cycle was the value of team goals. Team goals should be encouraged—they can be leveraged to promote the realization of school and district goals, while still meeting the needs of both educators and students.”
“For example, let's take a ninth-grade biology teacher, Dan. Dan works at a school receiving a school improvement grant. The school is focusing on literacy. After conducting his self-assessment and looking at his students’ data, Dan hypothesizes that their lack of experience with nonfiction texts may be preventing his students from reaching their potential in science. So, Dan might identify a student learning goal around improving students’ scientific reading and writing, a skill emphasized in the revised Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Since this is an issue facing other science teachers in his school, his professional practice goal could be a team goal around strengthening skills in teaching content literacy in ninth-grade science.

“See how Dan’s individual and team goals address real needs for students and educators, while helping everyone focus on areas of particular importance to the school (like literacy) and the district (like the revised Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks)? This is just one example of how the self-assessment and goal-setting process can promote consistency and coherence across schools, classrooms, and educators, even as it aids educators in narrowing their focus to a reasonable set of S.M.A.R.T. goals.”

Transition:
“So now to get down to the specifics of S.M.A.R.T. goals....”


Purpose and intended outcomes:
The purpose of this activity is to introduce participants to the concept of S.M.A.R.T. goals and give everyone a shared experience in reviewing some good and not-quite-there goals. Participants will use Module 4, Handout 1: What Makes a Goal “S.M.A.R.T.”? in their table groups to begin developing a shared understanding of S.M.A.R.T. goal criteria.

Activity detail:
Before displaying Slide 14, engage participants in a quick assessment of their prior knowledge about S.M.A.R.T. goals.

Ask:
“How many of you are familiar with the concept of a S.M.A.R.T. goal?”

[Pause to let participants raise their hands.]

“How would you define a S.M.A.R.T. goal without deciphering the acronym and why are S.M.A.R.T. goals important?”

[Call on a couple of participants to share their ideas.]
Explain:

“The acronym S.M.A.R.T. will guide you in crafting strong goals. As you can see on the slide, well-written goals should be specific and strategic, measurable, action oriented, rigorous, realistic, and results focused, and timed and tracked. The Massachusetts approach to S.M.A.R.T. goals focuses on ways to make the process even S.M.A.R.T.er, marrying goals with good action plans and benchmarks. We’ll get into all of this in just a bit, but first let’s gain some practice with S.M.A.R.T. and not-so-S.M.A.R.T. goals.”

Explain:

“Please turn to Handout 1 in your packet: What Makes a Goal “S.M.A.R.T.”? Take about 10 minutes to read the three pages on your own and underline one phrase that you find particularly significant.”

Provide a one-minute warning to wrap up, and then bring the group back together after five minutes.

Explain:

“Now, at your table, I’d like each of you to share your underlined phrase. Discuss the phrases that emerged and your learnings. Pick one phrase to share as a group.”

Give teams 5–10 minutes for this part of the activity.

Bring the whole group back together and ask for a few volunteers to share their phrase.

Explain:

“Now I’m going to ask you to put this knowledge to use with a partner at your table. Turn to Handout 2: Identifying S.M.A.R.T. Goals, and review the four statements in the chart. As a pair, determine if the goal statements meet the criteria of a S.M.A.R.T. goal. If yes, mark a Y in the middle column. If no, mark an N.”

After three minutes, ask volunteers to share if each goal was S.M.A.R.T. or if it needs revision.

“The fact is, each of the goal statements could be stronger, so some of you may have noted that they all could have been revised. Lack of specificity, measurable outcomes, and concrete time frames are just a few of the missing elements in many of these goal statements.”
Explain:

“Now we’re going to place ourselves in the shoes of one of these educators and revise a goal together to make it S.M.A.R.T. After we do one together, I’m going to turn you loose to revise the other three. But first, let’s focus on the fourth goal together, which is a principal’s goal: ‘I will manage my time more effectively in order to increase the frequency of classroom observations.”

Using a blank piece of chart paper at the front of the room, write the S.M.A.R.T. acronym down the left-hand side of the paper, leaving room next to each letter for notes. Use the guiding questions below to prompt responses from the group and jot down responses beside each letter.

Explain:

“We’re not going to worry about putting it all together in a polished goal statement. This is just an exercise to get our heads around each element of a S.M.A.R.T. goal.

“Let’s start by thinking about the S in S.M.A.R.T. How can we make this more specific and strategic? What kind of observation? What is a desired outcome of more frequent observations?”

Allow participants time to respond, and then ask the following questions to guide participant thinking around the acronym S.M.A.R.T.

- S.—How can we make this more specific and strategic? What kind of observation? What is a desired outcome of more frequent observations?
- M.—How many observations? How long are they? How often?
- A.—What are a couple key action steps required to do this work?
- R.—Are you balancing rigor with realistic?
- T.—Can you track progress the way this goal is written?

After the group completes the collective S.M.A.R.T. goal, have everyone get back into their pairs.

“Now that we’ve worked through one together, I’d like to you turn back to your partner, and, together, pick one of the remaining goals that is not S.M.A.R.T. and revise it to make it meet the S.M.A.R.T. criteria. You can use the method we just used together or try it your own way. You’ll have about seven minutes to complete this activity.”

**Common facilitation challenges and solutions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants may consider this activity easy and redundant as they may have participated in similar trainings in the past.</td>
<td>Speed up this section to meet the needs of the audience. If participants have a good handle on the establishment of S.M.A.R.T. goals, less time will be needed to do analysis and can go directly to revision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants may be very unfamiliar with S.M.A.R.T. goals and find the activity challenging.</td>
<td>Focus the participant on only one or two of the statements, not all of them. Remind them that it is okay to find it a challenge—getting smart about S.M.A.R.T. goals takes practice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Guiding questions:

- Which goals did you identify as being S.M.A.R.T.?
- Which ones needed revision?
- How did you revise them?

Learning Wrap-Up/Debrief 1 (5 minutes)

Call the group back together after about five minutes, and direct them to the “cheat sheet,” which includes some sample revisions for all four goals. Copies should be passed out to participants. Encourage them to compare/contrast their own revisions, and answer any remaining questions.

Learning Content 2 (20 minutes)

“We’re about to move on to see how goals help you construct your Educator Plan, but, before we do, let’s pause briefly to review a few key attributes of S.M.A.R.T. goals.

“First, note the importance of goals that are measurable, timed, and tracked. ‘Measurable’ doesn’t always mean “percentage on a test” but can be represented by everything from hours spent in a collaborative learning environment to the number of students completing a one-mile jog by the end of a semester. Just remind yourself what UCLA Coach John Wooden used to say: “You haven’t taught until they’ve learned.” How do you know they’ve learned?

“Second, consider the timing of your plan when constructing your goals. If you’re on a one-year developing plan, try to stick to outcome measures that are available to you within the school year. MCAS-based outcomes won’t help you very much, since they’re not available until fall of the following year. Look to other assessments, or consider alternative ways to measure student learning gains.

“Whether you’re focusing on student learning or your own professional practice, this is an opportunity for teachers and administrators to work together to identify the best measures of progress.”
Transition to Slide 17:
“We've gone through a lot of content about goal establishment, and, for many people, the act of developing a good goal is a discrete accomplishment in and of itself. Great job! Now what?

“Quick show of hands: How many of you have devoted time and energy into creating a S.M.A.R.T. goal (or its equivalent), only to see it wither on the vine throughout the year for lack of attention, focus, or accountability?”

Explain:

“Just as a comprehensive self-assessment leads directly into the identification of targeted, relevant student learning and professional practice goals, the goals themselves become the foundation for your Educator Plan. We are now going to take it forward by developing an Educator Plan that details the action steps needed to accomplish each goal and identifies measurable benchmarks to gauge progress.”

Explain:

“Developing the Educator Plan is a much simpler process when the goals are clear. In fact, the Educator Plan should comprised key action steps and benchmarks to determine progress toward the goals.

“Adding key action steps and benchmarks to a S.M.A.R.T. goal in order to track and measure progress is what we mean by making a goal S.M.A.R.T.eR. Key action steps should be tightly linked to realistic attainment of the goal, and benchmarks should be identified to track progress (process benchmarks) and results (outcome benchmarks).”

Explain:

“These action steps, needed supports, and benchmarks can be documented on the Educator Plan Form located within Part II: School-Level Planning and Implementation Guide, or a similar organizing tool.

Explain:

“As an example, let’s take the principal’s professional practice goal from our earlier activity. Here it is, fully developed into a S.M.A.R.T. goal: ‘I will manage my time more effectively in order to increase the frequency and impact of classroom observations by learning how to do 10-minute observations with feedback, and by the start of the second semester, conducting eight visits per week, on average, that an increasing percentage of teachers report are useful.’

“Given this goal, what actions will the principal need to take in order to achieve that goal? Take a few minutes to read this principal’s proposed plan to support her professional practice goal. There is a reproduction of this slide in your packet in Handout 3.”

Give participants a minute or so to read through the example.
Explain:

“You will notice that both types of benchmarks are included in the timeline/benchmark or frequency column of this plan—those are process benchmarks and outcome benchmarks.

“Process benchmarks are used to measure plan implementation, providing timelines for when certain aspects of the plan should be in place. They help you know that you’re on track and making progress.

“In the example, one process benchmark states: January 15/March 15/May 15—check in to determine if eight observations per week (on average) have been completed.

“Outcome benchmarks are used to measure if the plan has the intended results.

“In the example, one outcome benchmark states: January 1 and June 1—will have collected feedback via teachers regarding their perceived value of the process.”

Explain:

“It is important for Educator Plans to include both types of benchmarks. The process benchmarks help the educator and evaluator monitor progress, so they know if they’re off course or need to make an adjustment, and the outcome benchmarks provide concrete evidence of success.

“I also want you to make a note of the supports and resources identified in this plan. The superintendent has committed to supporting collaborative work by multiple principals across schools toward this goal, indicating that (a) this could be a team goal shared by principals in the district, and (b) the superintendent could even be aligning her professional practice goal in support of this work by principals. These are important examples of coherence and alignment that successful districts are using to make the goal-setting process as meaningful as possible.”

Transition to a brief description of the four types of Educator Plans.

Explain:

“Before we dive into what it looks like to create an Educator Plan ourselves, I’d like to do a quick review of the types of plans in the new evaluation framework.

“There are four types of Educator Plans that take into consideration both the career stage (e.g., years of experience) and performance. New teachers, as well as administrators within the first three years in a district, will be on a Developing Educator Plan.”

“The next three—Self-Directed Growth Plan, Directed Growth Plan, and Improvement Plan—apply to “experienced educators,” which is defined as a teacher who has Professional Teaching Status (PTS) or an administrator with more than three years in an administrator position in the school district.

“Now do a quick mental check—where do you fall on the four plans?”
“Each Educator Plan has specific requirements. Generally speaking, experienced educators with higher performance ratings will be on self-directed growth plans, which give them the most ownership over the development of the plan. This will probably apply to the majority of educators at your school. For those identified as Needs Improvement or for teachers without professional status, both the evaluator and educator develop the plan collaboratively. In situations in which the educator is rated as Unsatisfactory, the evaluator is responsible for developing the Educator Plan.

“This is also the case in determining the duration of the plan. Experienced teachers rated as Proficient or Exemplary can be on two-year plans, while educators with increased needs are on a shorter timeline in order to provide these educators with more frequent monitoring and feedback on their performance.

“Let’s take a minute and discuss the benefits of differentiating the requirements within the Educator Plans. Do any of you have thoughts about some potential benefits to this approach?”

Call on 1–3 volunteers in the audience. Anticipate the following possible responses:

- Shorter plans for struggling educators or educators identified as in need of improvement may feel counterintuitive, but it has the effect of focusing more resources in a more targeted manner where needed. It addresses one of the five driving principles of the new evaluation framework—to shorten timelines for improvement.
- Differentiating plans allows for evaluators’ time to be allocated more effectively, with more time devoted to educators identified in need of additional supports.
- Self-directed growth plans for strong educators acknowledge their experience by placing them in the driver’s seat, giving them opportunities to work toward more long-term goals, while simultaneously ensuring that they are not ignored.

“Regardless of what plan you’re on, educators and evaluators truly share implementation responsibility. Part of developing, refining, and finalizing goals and plans is collaborating around what will be most useful for the educator, what specific types of evidence are available to demonstrate progress, and how the evaluator can best support attainment of goals through existing resources, ongoing and upcoming professional development, and targeted and ongoing feedback.”
Learning Activity 2: Laying the Foundation (40 minutes)

Purpose and intended outcomes:
Taking sample student learning and professional practice goals for one educator, participants will identify specific actions and benchmarks to be included in an Educator Plan.

Facilitation notes:
Each school team will work to develop an Educator Plan based on two goals for one educator—one student learning and one professional practice goal. The examples are included in each handout packet. The goals belong to an eighth-grade geometry teacher on a one-year self-directed growth plan.

The goals for this teacher are listed below:

- **Goal 1: Student Learning Goal (Individual)**: In order to ensure mathematical literacy in each of the three content areas for eighth-grade geometry, I will incorporate essay questions into unit assessments that require elaboration of mathematical reasoning so that by the end of the 2012–13 school year, 80 percent or more of my students demonstrate proficiency on essay questions on the end-of-year eighth-grade geometry assessment.

- **Goal 2: Professional Practice Goal (Team)**: Our eighth-grade mathematics team will become more familiar with instructional strategies proven to provide access to the mathematical curriculum and develop language skills across domains (speaking, listening comprehension, reading, and writing) for intermediate and advanced ELLs, such that we are able to implement a minimum of three targeted strategies by the end of the 2012–13 school year and see improvements in ELLs' achievement in mathematics as a result.

Teams will work together using Post-it Notes and a blank piece of chart paper. Their worksheet instructs them to label it so it resembles this chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Goal(s) and Professional Practice Goal(s)</th>
<th>Planned Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Supports/Resources From School/District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Starting with Goal 1, team members will write action steps, one per Post-it Note, to share with the team. As each team member completes a Post-it Note, he or she should begin placing them on a blank piece of chart paper. The first time through, all action steps should be posted. This will be completed for both goals. Then the team will work to consolidate the similar action steps. Once consolidated, teams will then work together to determine the needed resources and supports and to develop the timeline to complete the Educator Plan.
Activity detail:

*Explain:* 

“This activity is a culmination of the activities completed throughout the day. You will take what you learned today and use that knowledge to develop an Educator Plan. Your school team will work together to develop a plan for an educator with two goals. The example goals and instructions for this activity are included on Handout 4, so make sure you have that in front of you.

“One member of your team is going to quickly label your chart paper so that it resembles the chart on the slide.

“The first step in building a plan is to identify action steps needed to accomplish each goal. These are things like attending a professional learning activity, working with the team to identify and implement instructional strategies that are more accessible for English language learners, etc. Start with Goal 1, his individual student learning goal. Working together, brainstorm action steps related to that goal and write them on your Post-it Notes. Use one Post-it Note for each suggested action step. When 3–4 minutes have passed, I’m going to cue you to move on to his second goal, which is a professional practice team goal. You’ll do the same thing—brainstorm specific action steps related to that goal and place them on Post-it Notes.

“We’re focusing only on action steps right now. The intent of this activity is to generate a lot of ideas in a short period of time. So, it is okay to have duplication. As ideas are generated, post each action step onto the chart paper, in no particular order.

“We will take eight minutes to complete this part of the activity, so you should plan on taking 3–4 minutes generating activities for each goal.

At seven minutes, give a one-minute warning to wrap up, and then bring the group back together after eight minutes.

Ask the participants:

“Was that an easy process? Did you have duplication in the actions steps?”

Wait for participant responses.

“Yes, most often it is likely that action steps will be similar for the goals—most particularly if they are aligned. Now as a team, take the next five minutes to organize or cluster the action steps into groups that are similar, so the Educator Plan can be as strategic and coherent as possible. This process should take about seven minutes.”

At four minutes, give them a warning.

At five minutes, pull the group back together to describe the next step.
“Okay, good job. Now you will work to complete Part 2 of the activity. Now that you’ve come back together as a team, pick one person to act as a recorder. Taking one of your pieces of chart paper, divide it into the same three columns as displayed on your handouts—Action, Supports/Resources From School/District, and Timeline/Benchmark or Frequency. The recorder will be responsible for filling in each column based on the action steps, support/resources, and benchmarks identified for each goal.

“First step: Transfer your action steps from the chart paper into in the first column, taking care to present them in sequential order.

“Now that you have the action steps pared down and sequential, work together to identify the supports and resources that the teacher needs to take each action step and accomplish these goals.

“Many of resources will be the same across action steps, like grade-level team meetings, while some will be more unique or targeted, like individual meetings with an instructional mathematics coach. One thing to keep in mind during this activity—*draw on what you know, what’s available in your school and district, and how you would see this educator prospering in your school. Make it real to you.* Ready? You have 10 minutes. Go.”

At eight minutes, give the teams a warning.

At 10 minutes, pull them back together.

At the conclusion of Part 2, have teams post their Educator Plans around the room and engage in a gallery walk to view each plan.

*Explain:*

“Good work! Let’s take a few minutes to review other Educator Plans. We will do this by conducting a gallery walk. Each team will move clockwise and spend two minutes reviewing the example Educator Plans.

“As you walk around and read the other plans, consider the following questions:

- Are supports/resources identified and strategically leveraged across goals?
- Are a timeline and frequency of key benchmarks specified?
- Are action steps specific and sequential?”

You may not have a chance for each team to review each plan. That is okay. After four walks, ask the teams to sit down.
Common facilitation challenges and solutions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants determine action steps but have not clearly delineated benchmarks.</td>
<td>Reinforce the critical nature of the benchmarks. Reviewing progress toward goals is imperative to determine if actions or the goal needs to be modified. Regular check-ins are a critical part of the Educator Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants may have difficulty aligning action steps or identifying the necessary supports or resources.</td>
<td>Remind participants to consider current approaches to develop teachers at the school. Can these be used or modified in a way that provides more support for teachers? Ask them to consider other support professionals or colleagues in the building to help educators reach their goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants want to see how a two-year self-directed growth plan differs from a one-year plan.</td>
<td>The main difference is, of course, the timeline, which has an immediate impact on the types of goals an educator might select. Professional practice goals lend themselves more easily to a two-year Educator Plan than student learning goals. For two-year professional practice goals, educators need to identify extended resources and supports that are available to them and communicate to the administration what they require to accomplish their goals. Due to the increased timeline, educators should be directed to build in regular process benchmarks. If an educator’s students change from year to year, they should still consider yearly student learning goals so that they can best address the needs of their immediate students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guiding questions:

- Are supports/resources identified and strategically leveraged across goals?
- Are a timeline and frequency of key benchmarks specified?
- Are action steps specific and sequential?
Learning Wrap-Up/Debrief 2 (5 minutes)

Lead participants through a share-out of what they observed in the Educator Plans. The purpose of this is to help participants gain different perspectives of what can be included in Educator Plans as well as to learn about how they can leverage supports and resources within their district.

**Ask:**
“Were there similarities within the plan or differences?”

After participant responses, summarize:

“Yes, it is likely that you would see some duplication, but the action steps, supports, and resources might be very different depending on the school structure and the availability of support. It is important that the evaluator and educator are aware of the types of supports that are needed and can be provided to ensure that the plan leads to results.”

Ask participants if they identified any particularly strong plans. Teams did not have long enough to create perfect plans, so there should be some suggestions to strengthen each plan.

**Explain as a transition:**
“It is critical that the goal development process is grounded in identified needs within the self-assessment process. In addition, creating a strong plan is necessary to ensure that goals are met. Goals are not likely to be achieved if action steps and benchmarks are not determined and monitored regularly.”
IV. Implementing (50 minutes)

Implementing Content (10 minutes)

During this section, the facilitator will discuss the importance of connecting Steps 1 and 2 together through the identification of key district, school, team, and individual goals. Administrators need to have a general knowledge of the type of supports that are needed in their school as well as the availability of resources within the district. This level of awareness will help the strategic development of coherent, well-supported Educator Plans throughout the school and district.

Explain:

“Supporting the development of S.M.A.R.T. goals that lead to coherent, targeted Educator Plans really drives a rewarding evaluation cycle, but this probably feels like a huge job for you right now. What we’ve learned from early adopter schools and districts is that the most successful schools have been the ones that leveraged the goal-setting process and the development of Educator Plans to directly support what was already going on at their school. Rather than see it as ‘one more thing,’ they approached Steps 1 and 2 as opportunities to capitalize on and support existing initiatives and goals, with a focus on promoting teamwork and collaboration.”

Explain:

“This level of cohesiveness and coordination among plans, resources, and supports doesn’t happen on its own and takes deliberate planning. Let’s start thinking about how this might be accomplished within your school.

“Using Handout 5, take five minutes and read through just the first section, Conditions for Readiness, and underline key phrases and concepts.”

After five minutes, ask participants to turn to an elbow partner and discuss the three main ideas presented in this section.

Guiding questions:

- “How would you rank these three components in order of importance at your school?”
- “What will you need to focus on from the standpoint of facilitating implementation of Step 2 this year?”

Summarize:

“As you just read, administrators need to have a general knowledge of the type of supports that are needed in their school, as well as the availability of resources within the district. This level of awareness will help in strategically developing cohesive Educator Plans throughout the school and district.”
**Ask the group:**
“How would you rank these conditions for readiness in order of importance at your school? What will your school need to focus on in order to facilitate implementation of goal-setting and Educator Plan development?”

Track responses on a piece of chart paper at the front of the room that displays the three conditions for readiness.

**Implementing Activity: Strategically Planning for Plans (30 minutes)**

**Purpose and intended outcomes:**
The purpose of this activity is to give participants the time to begin planning for implementation of Educator Plans at their school. Both school and district level administration and evaluators play a pivotal role in ensuring that these plans can be executed so that results are realized.

*Explain:* Slide 29

“As mentioned, feedback from schools and districts already implementing the new evaluation model has underscored the importance of coherence and alignment in goal setting, from the district to the school to the educator. This activity will focus on the second “condition for readiness,” knowledge of available supports, and highlight the potential for strategic alignment among district, school, and team goals.”

*Explain:* Slide 30

“In addition to focusing on ways to capitalize on already existing resources and supports for educators, this exercise will highlight the importance of team goals. Not only have early implementers found team goal setting helpful in making the process more “doable,” but they have also turned to teams to promote specific ‘high leverage’ Indicators and elements within the rubric that align with their school and district goals. This focus on team goals has the added benefit of promoting collaboration within the school and establishing shared accountability for outcomes.”
Explain:

“We are going to use Handouts 6 and 7 for this activity. Handout 6 is the Teacher Performance Rubric At-a-Glance, and Handout 7 is Creating a Through Line.

“We’re going to go through this activity in a step-by-step process that moves pretty quickly. The ultimate goal is to help you create a document that you can bring back to your school and use as a targeted guide for goal setting.

“I’m going to give you about 10 minutes to complete the first part of this activity. As a team, start to identify key district initiatives and goals for 2012–13 as well as key school improvement initiatives and goals. Compare them to one another and locate where they align. You might want to do this on some scrap paper or the backside of Handout 7.

“Finally, match your district and school goals for next year to the appropriate Standards from the teacher performance rubric, as identified on Handout 7. Identify one person to fill in the first two columns of the table as you engage in this discussion. You don’t need to complete all four rows—the important aspect to focus on is the alignment between the first two columns—your district and school priorities. Okay, 10 minutes—let’s begin.”

After 10 minutes, move to the next part of the activity.

Explain:

“Now that you’ve had time to identify and discuss points of alignment between your district and school initiatives this year and located them in the four Performance Standards of practice, let’s drill down to identify 2–3 target Indicators associated with each Standard that really embody high-quality practice related to these goals and initiatives. For example, if you’ve identified points of alignment between your district’s focus on community engagement through the Massachusetts Tiered Systems of Support and your school’s Wraparound Zone Initiative, you might identify Indicators III.A. (Engagement) and III.B. (Collaboration) under Standard III: Family and Community Engagement as “high leverage” for your staff this year.

“Use Handout 6: Teacher Performance Rubric At-a-Glance for this step. Remember—the Indicators are the bold subtitles under each Standard. For those of you who were able to complete three or four rows on your through line, select two to focus on for purposes of this activity, and make a plan to complete the others back at your school. I’ll give you about eight minutes for this step.”

After eight minutes, bring participants’ attention back and move into the final step of this activity.

Explain:

“At this point, you should have a pretty good idea of what good practice related to key district and school initiatives is going to look like back at your school. The last part of this activity is where the rubber meets the road. Knowing the importance and value of collaboration and teamwork, what would you hope to see teams of educators within your school working on together in pursuit of these goals?

“We are now going to complete the last column on Handout 7. Divide your team into two groups, and assign each subgroup one team goal to develop. Each goal should be related to professional practice that would support and promote your most important district and school priorities. Think about and focus on grade-level teams, vertical teams, and/or department teams—whatever is the most naturally occurring team in your building. Be as thoughtful and focused as possible here. These could serve as a starting point as you go
back to your schools to propose goals.

“You have eight minutes to complete this last step.”

**Common facilitation challenges and solutions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants may not be familiar with their district initiatives.</td>
<td>Remind participants that there may not be many district initiatives and that they can still complete the activity with the topics they know about. Tell participants that effective implementation of the new Educator Evaluation System is one initiative that most Massachusetts districts have. Implementation of the new Massachusetts Curricular Frameworks (the Common Core) is another initiative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants may have difficulty identifying appropriate example team goals.</td>
<td>Tell participants to consider one subject area or grade level with which they are familiar—they can focus on that area and use it as an example for the team goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants may have anxiety because their school culture is not collaborative or conducive to team goals.</td>
<td>Remind participants that team goals need to be considered but are not required. They could also focus on a school leadership team goal, or an administrator team goal, as a way to model what a collaborative team goal would look like.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Guiding question:**

- What potential team goals did you identify that align with the district and school goals?

**Implementing Wrap-Up/Debrief (10 minutes)**

*Explain:*

“Before we wrap up, I want to give your leadership team the opportunity to share each team goal with one another. Go ahead and take a few minutes to discuss your ideas, and take time to jot down ways you might strengthen or improve each goal.”

After five minutes, bring the whole group back together.

“Wow—you have just completed an enormous amount of work, with the intention that this will be a solid launching point for implementing Step 2 back at your school.”
V. Reflecting (5 minutes)

Slide 32 is the introductory slide for the Reflecting section.

**Explain:**

“Before closing the meeting, let’s reflect on what we learned today. Find Handout 8 in the participant packet. On your own, take five minutes to answer the following questions.”

Give participants about five minutes to complete this activity.
VI. Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

Slide 34 is the introductory slide for the Wrap-Up section.

*Explain:* Slide 35

"Within this module, we reviewed the development of S.M.A.R.T.er goals and the Educator Plan. Much of the success is based upon the Educator Plan and the collection of evidence to track progress and validate efforts. Modules 5 and 6 of this series will provide explicit guidance on identifying potential data sources as well as methods to collect, aggregate, and use data to make informed decisions."

**Suggested Homework**

The homework assignment for this module will help participants extend their learning to their schools and prepare participants for Modules 5 and 6. The homework assignments for this session are described on Slides 37 & 38.

Slide 36 is the introductory slide for the Homework section.

Homework for the school leadership team is focused on identifying and establishing the appropriate structures and processes that need to be in place in order to facilitate goal setting and the development of Educator Plans back at their school.

*Explain:* Slide 37

“The school leadership team homework assignment is more about the nuts and bolts of implementing goal setting and Educator Plans. As a team, read through the section Considerations for Planning on p. 26 of *Part II: School-Level Planning and Implementation Guide* (which is also included in your handout packet). Based on those *key logistics and practical considerations*, identify decisions that have been determined and processes already in place, and identify areas in which a process needs to be established in order to coordinate the development of Educator Plans at your school.

“Draft an action plan that (1) merges existing practices with key practices that need to be established, (2) identifies individual roles and responsibilities associated with each logistical step, and (3) aligns the work to key target dates on a calendar, such that goal setting and Educator Plan development can occur at the appropriate time.”

*Explain:* Slide 38

“As a team, work together to complete this to help you move forward with implementing goal setting and Education Plan development back at your school.”
The homework assignment for school leadership teams to present to teachers is described on Slide 38. That does not need to be covered with this group of participants.

**Come to Closure**

When the homework assignments have been covered, transition to the final wrap-up, direct participants as to where they can send questions via e-mail, and dismiss the group.

Keep this final slide on the screen as participants start to gather their things and leave the session.

Note: Enter your e-mail address on this final slide so that participants know where to send questions.

Example revisions to the goal statements included on Handout 2 are included below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal Statement</th>
<th>Example Revision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I will improve student outcomes in Grade 4 mathematics during the 2012–13</td>
<td>I will improve student performance on district-created benchmarks from 47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school year.</td>
<td>percent proficient (baseline) to 80 percent proficient in Grade 4 mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–Teacher Level</td>
<td>during the 2012–13 school year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the 2012–13 school year, our beginner ELL students will improve</td>
<td>During the 2012–13 school year, at least 80 percent of our beginner ELL students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language proficiency as measured by a second administration of the</td>
<td>will improve English language proficiency in all language domains as measured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>district language proficiency assessment used to determine student placement</td>
<td>by a second administration of the district language proficiency assessment used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at the beginning of the year.</td>
<td>to determine student placement at the beginning of the year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–Team Level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To increase my staff’s use of student data, I will design meetings to review,</td>
<td>To increase my staff’s use of student data, I will schedule monthly meetings for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>analyze, and interpret student data to inform curriculum and instruction.</td>
<td>each department in which our data team works with teachers to review, analyze,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–Administrator Level</td>
<td>and interpret student data to inform lesson planning, assessment, teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>strategies, and instructional interventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will manage my time more effectively in order to increase the frequency of</td>
<td>I will manage my time more effectively in order to increase the frequency and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>classroom observations.</td>
<td>impact of classroom observations by learning how to do 10-minute observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–Administrator Level</td>
<td>with feedback, and by the start of the second semester, conducting eight visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>per week, on average, that an increasing percentage of teachers report are useful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
