Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation

Facilitator Guide for 1-Hour Overview Module

September 2012
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Commissioner

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Overview of the Training Modules for Evaluators

Training Modules for Evaluators

The training modules required for evaluators represent a subset of the module series on educator evaluation. This 6-part training program covers the following topics: a 1-hour Overview of the Evaluation Framework, Unpacking the Rubric (Module 2), Self-Assessment (Module 3), S.M.A.R.T. Goals and Educator Plan Development (Module 4), Gathering Evidence (Module 5), and Observations & Feedback (Module 6). With the exception of the 1-hour Overview, each module includes 2 hours of required training plus an additional hour of optional training.

Purpose and Goals

The training module series for evaluators is designed to prepare administrators and other educators with evaluator responsibilities to implement the new Massachusetts educator evaluation system in their schools and districts through the following intended outcomes:

- Make the 5-Step Cycle concrete and actionable for educators and evaluators.
- Support evaluators in developing and communicating a common understanding of the new educator evaluation framework and the opportunities for professional growth and development using the Massachusetts Model System.

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

ESE originally designed the 8-module series as a training tool for school leadership teams of four to six people, the suggested composition of which included 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. In response to new legislative requirements for evaluation training, training modules 2-6, plus a 1-hour Overview, now represent the required training program for all district- and school-level educators with evaluator responsibilities. Therefore, school leadership teams must include all evaluators and may include, at the district’s discretion, others who will share responsibility for implementation such as administrators without evaluator responsibilities and teacher leaders. In cases where teachers and/or educators without evaluator responsibilities are part of a school leadership team that participates in the series of training modules for evaluators, those educators are not required to attend the required training workshops for teachers.

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.
**Timing and Structure**

The Overview module is one hour in length. Modules 2-6 are three hours in length: the first two hours are required training for all evaluators, and districts may choose to provide the third hour of the modules for additional information on implementation or practice with observations. Each module includes interactive learning activities as well as optional homework assignments that are intended to help participants extend and apply their learning.

**List of Training Modules**

**1-Hour Overview.** The 1-hour Overview module covers the two evaluation ratings everyone will receive, the new performance standards and rubrics, the four educator plans, and the 5-Step evaluation cycle of evaluation.

**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. *This module is an online tutorial.*

**Module 8: Rating Impact on Students.** The eighth module will provide an overview of the ESE-issued guidance on student learning measures and ratings of educator impact on student learning (Available Summer 2013).

*Required Training Modules for Evaluators*
Preparing for 1-Hour Overview

Module Overview

This 1-hour Overview is designed to provide an overview of the new educator evaluation framework, including the two ratings everyone will receive, the new performance standards and rubrics, the four educator plans, as well as the 5-Step Cycle of evaluation. Each step of the evaluation cycle will be examined in greater detail in later Modules.

Context

Participants will have variable levels of knowledge about the new educator evaluation system. Some may have attended a “Getting Started” meeting while some may be unaware of the requirements of the new system. The content of this Overview is framed to describe the key regulatory requirements for educator evaluation, as well as the opportunity of a new educator evaluation system: to make educator evaluation more useful to improving practice and connected with student learning, not ritualistic or passive.

Intended Outcomes

At the end of this session:

- Participants will have a clear understanding of the new educator evaluation framework, including:
  - The two ratings
  - New performance standards
  - Four educator plans
  - The 5-Step Cycle of Evaluation

- Participants will identify concrete “next steps” related to:
  - Training school staff on educator evaluation
  - District- and school-specific implementation strategies
Agenda

I. Welcome (8 minutes)
   • Intended Outcomes (2 minutes)
   • Development of the New Educator Evaluation Framework (3 minutes)
   • Priorities of the New Educator Evaluation Framework (3 minutes)

II. Key Components of the New Evaluation Framework (40 minutes)
   • Summative Performance Rating (15 minutes)
   • Impact Rating on Student Performance (5 minutes)
   • 5-Step Cycle (18 minutes)

III. Next Steps (12 minutes)
   • Team Time (10 minutes)
   • Come to Closure (2 minutes)

Equipment and Materials

- Equipment: Laptop computer with copy of Overview Module PowerPoint, projector
- Materials: Make a copy of the Participant Handout for each participant
  - NOTE: participant handout is best printed on 11 x 17” paper
**Regulatory Requirements**

603 CMR 35.00 describes the revised Massachusetts state regulations around educator evaluation. The following are key highlights from the regulations:

- The evaluation cycle shall include self-assessment addressing Performance Standards established through collective bargaining or included in individual employment contracts.
- The evaluation cycle shall include goal setting and development of an Educator Plan.
- The evaluation cycle shall include implementation of the Educator Plan. 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 evaluation cycle shall include a formative assessment or a formative evaluation.
- The evaluation cycle shall include a summative evaluation, in which the evaluator determines an overall rating of educator performance based on the evaluator's professional judgment and an examination of evidence that demonstrates the educator's performance against Performance Standards and evidence of the attainment of the Educator Plan goals. The educator shall have the opportunity to respond in writing to the summative evaluation.

(603 CMR 35.06)

Additional detail about the regulatory requirements for each step of the 5-Step Cycle of evaluation can be found at [http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr35.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr35.html) and in Part II of the ESE Model System, the *School-Level Planning and Implementation Guide*.

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**Model System Resources**

Model System resources can be found on ESE’s website at [http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/model/](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)

*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)
I. Welcome (8 minutes)

Slide 1 is the title slide.

If participants haven't done so already, encourage everyone to sit together in district or school teams.

During this slide, welcome participants, introduce yourself, and ask participants to briefly do the same with their first name and role. If the group is large, ask for a quick identification of school or district teams.

This slide lists the modules included in the required training program for evaluators.

Explain:

“This Overview is an introduction to the new Massachusetts Evaluation Framework. It is the first of six training modules that will take you through each step of the evaluation cycle, from unpacking the new performance rubrics to setting S.M.A.R.T. goals and developing educator plans, to gathering evidence and conducting observations and feedback. This Overview is about an hour long, while the remaining five modules are each two hours with an optional third hour focused on implementation strategies and planning. Together, these modules will give you the knowledge and the tools to begin implementing the new evaluation framework back in your district and in your school.”
Explain:

“Today we’re going to review the key components of the new Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework, including the two ratings that educators will receive, the new performance standards that everyone—from superintendents to principals to teachers—will use to examine their practice, and the 5-Step Cycle of evaluation, an educator-driven process that includes goal-setting, ongoing dialogue around teaching and learning, and a summative evaluation based on evidence of practice collected over time.

“At the end, you will have time to identify next steps at the school or district, and we’ll briefly review resources available to you and your schools going forward.”

Explain:

“By the end of the hour, you will hopefully have a clear understanding of the new educator evaluation framework and can begin to identify critical next steps related to training and implementing the process at your district and school.

“Before we get started, I’d like everyone to locate the large, 11 x 17” handout with the colorful graphic down the center. This document is here as resource for you to use during the next 45 minutes or so. As you can see, the infographic roughly follows the content we’re going to review today, with space provided to the left and right for you to jot down any relevant notes or questions as they arise. Before we wrap up this session, you will also have about 10 minutes of team time, during which you can discuss what you learned and brainstorm next steps that are necessary in your school or district. The notes and questions you record during the session should help facilitate this team time.

“Okay? Let’s get started.”
“Before jumping into key components of the new evaluation framework, it’s important to pause and understand how we got here, and the role of collaboration and partnership between the state and you—the educators—that paved the way to a shared, common system for evaluating educators.

“In August 2010, thanks to partnerships with over 235 districts and charter schools throughout the Commonwealth, Massachusetts received a $250 million dollar Race to the Top Grant and embarked on a multi-year effort to improve its system of public education. In response to this charge, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education Dr. Mitchell Chester convened a 40-person Task Force to accomplish this following: ‘...recommend...a revised set of regulations and principles consistent with the Board’s mission statement: To strengthen the Commonwealth’s public education system so that every student is prepared to succeed in postsecondary education, compete in the global economy, and understand the rights and responsibilities of American citizens.’

“The Task Force met regularly for seven months and submitted its recommendations to the Commissioner in March 2011, who then shared their recommendations with over 700 educators during a 6-week Listening Tour. These recommendations would provide the foundation for the new regulations governing educator evaluation throughout the Commonwealth, which the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education passed in June 2011. Just six months later, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, after extensive collaboration with Level 4 schools and Early Adopters, union representatives and state educator associations, released the Model System for Educator Evaluation, with which many of you are probably familiar. Based on the new set of regulatory requirements, the Model System is a comprehensive evaluation protocol that is fully aligned to the regulations.

“Some of you are implementing the Model System, while others may be implementing an adaptation of it or a revised version of your own evaluation model. Regardless of the direction you choose, the basic priorities and components of the new evaluation framework that we will cover today are applicable to everyone.”
Priorities the New Educator Evaluation Framework (3 minutes)

**Explain:**

“What are the priorities of the new framework? The Task Force identified five key principles of an effective evaluation model that are embedded in the new system:

“First and foremost, this new framework places student learning at the center of the process by focusing on the evaluation and development of educators.

“Equally central to this process is its focus on promoting the growth and development of educators, from district- and school-level administrators to instructional support personnel and classroom teachers. Everyone will receive feedback and opportunities that support continuous growth and improvement through collaboration.

“The new evaluation framework also requires recognition of truly excellent practice by encouraging districts to reward success in teaching and leadership.

“Equally important, the new framework sets a high bar for tenure by requiring new teachers to demonstrate proficiency in all standards of effective practice within three years to earn professional teacher status.

“Finally, the new framework shortens timelines for improvement, where educators who are not rated Proficient face accelerated timelines for improvement.

“Together, these priorities embody a common set of principles and expectations for all educators in schools and districts across the Commonwealth.”
II. Key Components of the New Educator Evaluation Framework (40 minutes)

Slide 8 is the title slide for the Key Components section.

*Explain:* Slide 9

“Over the next 30 minutes or so, we will go through the following key components of the new evaluation framework: the two ratings that everyone will receive, including a Summative Performance Rating and an Impact Rating on Student Performance, and what they both mean with regard to every educator’s practice. Then we’ll look at the 5-Step Cycle that shapes everyone’s evaluation and drives improved practice and continuous learning.”

*Explain:* Slide 10

“Let’s begin with the end. As a result of this new evaluation framework, everyone will eventually earn two ratings: a Summative Performance Rating, shown here on the left, of either Exemplary, Proficient, Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory; and an Impact Rating on Student Performance, shown here on the right, of either high, moderate or low.

“One critical point about these ratings sets Massachusetts apart from many other states: these ratings are separate – one does not change the other. Your impact on student performance will neither raise nor lower your Summative Performance Rating.

“Another important aspect to consider is the timeframe for the Student Impact Rating, which doesn’t go into effect until the 2014-15 school year. We’ll examine the rationale behind this timeline in a few minutes.

“First, let’s dive into the Summative Rating more closely so you have a better idea of what it represents and how it impacts educator practice.”

The Summative Performance Rating (15 minutes)

Slide 11 is the title slide for the Summative Performance Rating section.
**Explain:**

“Let’s start with the Summative Performance Rating. This rating reflects an assessment of an educator’s professional practice, as well as progress the educator makes toward his or her goals. Starting in the 2012-2013 school year, everyone, including evaluators, will receive a Summative Rating of Exemplary, Proficient, Needs Improvement, or Unsatisfactory.

“There are three types of evidence that inform the Summative Rating. The first includes multiple measures of student learning, growth and achievement. This type of evidence is used to gauge progress on an educator’s student learning goal and can include everything from student work to benchmark assessments to performance measures.

“The second type of evidence includes products of educator practice. This includes artifacts, such as lesson plans, as well as observations conducted throughout the year.

“Finally, starting in the 2013-2014 school year, the Summative Rating will incorporate additional evidence related to student and staff survey feedback.”
Four Performance Levels

*Explain:*

“Based on the collection of evidence related to educator practice, evaluators will issue one of four ratings: Unsatisfactory, Needs Improvement, Proficient, and Exemplary. This four-point scale will likely be a significant shift for many of you. The majority of districts throughout Massachusetts have utilized 3- or even 2-point scales when evaluating teachers and administrators, where most educators were simply rated “meets expectations.” Not only does this type of scale lack transparency, it fails to provide anyone—whether we're talking about teachers, principals, or superintendents—with the critical information and feedback needed to learn and grow in their profession.”

“In this 4-point scale, ‘Proficient’ practice is defined as ‘rigorous but attainable… the expected level of performance for educators.’ The Proficient level of performance will likely capture most of the educators throughout the Commonwealth, while reserving Exemplary ratings for the truly exceptional individuals whose practice can serve as a model for others. Few educators—administrators included—are expected to demonstrate Exemplary performance on more than a small number of standards.”

*Transition:*

“At this point, we’ve talked about the different types of evidence evaluators will use to assess performance, and we’ve looked at the four-point scale that everyone will use to measure effectiveness. Let’s look at the actual Standards of practice that every educator will now be rated on.”
Standards of Effective Practice

*Explain:*  
“The new evaluation framework in Massachusetts will, for the first time, hold all educators in similar roles to common standards of practice. As you can see, there are four standards of practice for administrator leaders, and four standards of practice for teachers and specialized instructional support providers, such as school counselors, psychologists, nurses, and others. These Standards come from decades of research into effective educator practice and reflect the core values of the Massachusetts public school system. They were developed by the Task Force and are clearly defined in the regulations.

“*Take a quick look at standards #3 and #4,* which are parallel for both administrators and teachers. This underscores the similarities across all educators with regard to practices and responsibilities around family and community engagement, as well as professional culture, similarities that underscore the extent to which *all* educators are working toward similar goals in a school and district.

“Educators will be rated on each of the four Standards, and those ratings will inform their overall Summative Rating. With that in mind, I’d like to draw your attention to the three Standards with asterisks. The Task Force felt that these three Standards were the *most important* components of effective educator practice. In fact, an educator must be rated Proficient on these standards in order to receive an overall Summative Rating of Proficient. For example, if a teacher were to be rated Proficient on Standards 1, 3 and 4, yet rated Needs Improvement on Standard 2, Teaching all Students, the highest overall Summative Rating they could receive would be Needs Improvement until they improved their performance in Standard 2. Similarly, an administrator must be rated Proficient on Standard 1, Instructional Leadership, in order to receive an overall Summative Rating of Proficient or higher.”
Explain:

“The four Standards take shape and find meaning in a performance rubric. Here you can see a map of the Teacher Rubric. The four Standards for teacher practice are listed across the top row. Each standard is then broken down into three to six Indicators. For example, Standard I: Curriculum, Planning & Assessment has three corresponding Indicators: Curriculum & Planning, Assessment and Analysis. Both the Standards and Indicators are defined specifically in the regulations and represent the aspects of practice on which each educator will be evaluated.”

Explain:

“As part of the Model System, ESE developed performance rubrics that incorporate the four Standards of practice and each corresponding Indicator. In order to further define what effective practice associated with each Indicator looks like, the Model System Teacher Rubric, which you see here, breaks the Indicators down further into specific, concrete elements of practice.”

Explain:

“So for example, under Standard II, Teaching All Students, and Indicator B: Learning Environment, the Model System Teacher Rubric identifies three elements associated with effective practice: Safe Learning Environment, Collaborative Learning Environment, and Student Motivation. The remaining fifteen Indicators throughout the rubric are similarly broken down into concrete, targeted elements of practice that will help guide the work of every teacher in a similar direction.

“Keep in mind, educators only receive ratings for each of the four Standards—not on every Indicator or element. The Indicators and elements are there to define and make transparent the expected practice for each Standard.”
Explain:

“In total, ESE has developed four performance rubrics: a rubric for district-level administrators, a rubric for school-level administrators, a classroom teacher rubric, and a rubric for specialized instructional support personnel, such as guidance counselors, school psychologists, and school nurses. They all follow the same structure with four Standards of practice and related Indicators.

“The limited number of rubrics is deliberate. Having only four rubrics underscores the responsibilities and practices that are common and shared by similarly situated educators in the teaching and learning of their students. A third grade teacher will use the same rubric as an AP physics teacher; an assistant principal will be evaluated according to the same Standards and Indicators—using the same rubric—as the principal; and a district-level administrator will use the same rubric as the Superintendent.

“The four rubrics themselves are also very similar to one another. They identify common practices across roles and identify responsibilities of administrators that are necessary in order for teachers to meet their Standards of practice. The similarities and points of alignment across the four rubrics are rich and deliberate. The greater degree to which the rubrics focus on and examine similar aspects of practice, the more likely educators are to engage and excel in those areas of practice across schools and districts.”

Explain:

“There will be cases, however, where an educator’s role is different enough that the rubric doesn’t sufficiently capture their unique responsibilities. Think of a school nurse, a business administrator, or a school psychologist, for example. In cases like this, districts are encouraged to work with that educator (or group of educators) to develop one or two role-specific Indicators that will augment or supplement an existing rubric. The Specialized Instructional Support Personnel Rubric was designed specifically to accommodate additional role-specific Indicators for school-level educators in unique roles such as this. Training Module 2, as well as Part III of the Model System: Guide to Rubrics and Model Rubrics provides more information on using rubrics and developing role-specific indicators.”
Explain:

“In sum, ratings on the Standards of practice, as articulated through a performance rubric, plus an assessment of progress toward educator goals over the course of an educator’s plan, lead to the Summative Performance Rating. Now let’s look at what the Summative Performance Rating means for an educator.”

Facilitator Note: Pause to answer any questions and/or allow a minute or two for participants to jot down notes or questions.

Transition:

“Now let’s look at what the Summative Performance Rating means for an educator.”

Four Educator Plans

Explain:

“The Summative Rating determines the type of plan an educator will be on. As you see here, educators that are rated Proficient or Exemplary—the top two rows of this matrix—will be on Self-Directed Growth Plans, giving them a high degree of autonomy over their goals and plans throughout the evaluation cycle.

“If an educator is rated Needs Improvement, they will be on a Directed Growth Plan, which simply means that their goals are focused in the area in need of improvement.

“Educators that receive a Summative Rating of Unsatisfactory are on Improvement Plans, which require more intensive support.

“Finally, you can see at the bottom of this matrix is something called a Developing Educator Plan. This plan is independent of the Summative Rating and is designed to support and develop new teachers and administrators during the first three years on the job.

“Now that we’ve seen where these plans come from, let’s take a deeper look at each one.”
"The four plans are designed to accommodate an educator’s experience level as well as their ratings on the last evaluation cycle. These plans differ in two ways: their duration—a plan could be as long as 2 school years or as short as 30 days—and the degree of autonomy allotted to the educator. The intent is to provide each educator with the opportunity to improve their practice in a manner that meets their specific needs.

“As we just discussed, Developing Educator Plans are for educators that are new to a specific role. This includes non-PTS teachers in the first three years of the profession, as well as administrators in the first three years in a district. In fact, districts have the discretion to place any educator that is in a new assignment on a Developing Educator Plan if they feel that such a plan would be beneficial. This plan can be one school year or less in duration.

“The next three plans are for experienced educators. The Self-Directed Growth Plan is for educators who were rated Proficient or Exemplary on their last evaluation and can be one or two years in length. A Directed Growth Plan is for educators rated Needs Improvement on their last evaluation and can be one school year or less in duration. The purpose of a Directed Growth Plan is to focus on that particular area in which they need to improve so they can achieve an overall rating of Proficient once more and move back into a self-directed plan. An educator can only remain on a Directed Growth Plan for one cycle. If they do not receive a rating of Proficient or higher at the conclusion of that cycle, they would be rated Unsatisfactory and transition to an Improvement Plan.

“Finally, as just mentioned, educators rated Unsatisfactory are placed on an Improvement Plan, which can be anywhere from 30 calendar days in length up to one school year. The Improvement Plan stipulates the educator’s professional practice and student learning goals and identifies the appropriate action steps and professional development required to address those goals.

“As districts transition to the new educator evaluation system, each district will determine the most appropriate starting plan for each educator. Training Module 4 will go into more detail about the four plans.”
Explain:

“As districts transition to the new educator evaluation system, each district will determine the most appropriate starting plan for each educator. Training Module 4 will go into more detail about the four plans.”

The Student Impact Rating (5 minutes)

Slide 23 is the title slide for the Student Impact Rating section.

Explain:

“We’ve now discussed the Summative Performance Rating and its role in determining an educator’s plan throughout the evaluation cycle.

“Let’s shift gears and discuss the second rating everyone will receive—the Impact Rating on Student Performance.”

Explain:

“Every educator is going to receive a rating of impact on student learning, growth and achievement of high, moderate or low. The regulations require that the Impact Rating be based on trends and patterns in student learning. What do we mean by trends and patterns? Trends are results based on at least two years of data, and patterns are defined as consistent results from multiple measures. Bottom line: every educator will need at least two years of data from multiple sources to inform an Impact Rating.

“Data can come from a variety of sources. State-wide growth measures, such as MCAS student growth percentiles or ACCESS scores, must be taken into account when applicable, but as many of you know, only a fraction of educators work with students who take these tests. Therefore, other measures of student learning will inform the Impact Rating, including district-determined measures that are comparable across grade levels and subject areas. We will talk more about these in a moment. First, let’s look at how the Impact Rating works.”
Explain:

“You’ve seen how the Summative Rating determines which of the four plans an experienced educator will follow. We’ve now added in the Impact Rating to this matrix. An educator’s Impact Rating remains completely separate from their Summative Rating and does not change the Summative Rating. What it does do is determine the length of the plan and the nature of an educator’s goals. For educators whose impact on student learning is low, the Educator Plan shall be no more than one school year in length and shall include one or more goals related to student learning developed on the basis of an analysis of the educator’s professional practice.

“For example, if you are an experienced educator with a Summative Rating of Proficient or Exemplary and an Impact Rating of medium or high, you will be on a 2-year Self-Directed Growth Plan. If your Impact Rating is low, your plan will be one year in length, with one or more of your goals focusing on an area of student learning that stands out as in need of additional attention. This outcome is specifically designed to allow the educator and the evaluator to focus on that discrepancy between Proficient or Exemplary practice and low student growth, driving home the principle that student learning remain the focus of educator practice.

“For educators on Directed Growth or Improvement Plans, which are already 1 school year or less in duration, an Impact Rating of low, in conjunction with an analysis of their professional practice needs, simply helps to determine the focus of their goals.

“In sum, the Impact Rating and the student results on district or state measures that inform it are explicitly designed to prompt focused self-assessment, collaborative inquiry, conversation, and action, resulting in targeted professional growth or development plans and goals that lead to improvement. The Impact Rating is a signaling device for further investigation, not a dispositive judgment on performance.”
Explain:

“All that said, it’s important to know that the Impact Rating isn’t going into effect for several years.

“As defined, an Impact Rating requires student data from multiple measures across at least two years. Districts with Level 4 schools will start identifying such measures during the 2012-2013 school year and administering them in 2013-14. RTTT and non-RTTT districts follow this pattern one year later. For most educators, two years of collecting data will mean that the first Student Impact Ratings will not be made until the end of the 2014-15 or 2015-16 school year.

“For information on developing district-wide measures of student learning, growth and achievement for use in determining Impact Ratings, ESE has published Part VII of the Model System: Rating Educator Impact on Student Learning Using District-Determined measures on its website.”

Facilitator Note: Pause and answer any questions, or provide time for participants to jot down notes and questions about the material just covered.

Transition:

“For information on developing district-wide measures of student learning, growth and achievement for use in determining Impact Ratings, ESE has published Part VII of the Model System: Rating Educator Impact on Student Learning Using District-Determined measures on its website.”
The 5-Step Evaluation Cycle (18 minutes)

Slide 27 is the title slide for the 5-Step Evaluation Cycle section.

Explain:

“We’ve covered the two ratings every educator will receive under the new evaluation framework and what it means to be on one of the four educator plans. We’ve also reviewed the four standards and performance rubrics that will define practice for every educator in the Commonwealth. Let’s now take a look at the next key component of the new framework: the 5-Step cycle of evaluation.”

Explain:

“This may or may not look familiar to you. This is the 5-Step Evaluation Cycle that drives every educator’s plan.

“Each step of the cycle was developed in direct response to former evaluation practices in many schools and districts, where evaluation was ‘something done to the educator,’ disconnected from student and educator learning. The 5-Step Cycle is designed to ensure that the educator is an active participant throughout his or her evaluation and is driving the very process forward. Each step is designed to capitalize on collaboration and promote continuous learning.

“We’re going to go through each step over the next few minutes. For those of you with evaluator responsibilities, think about wearing “two hats”—as someone who will be conducting evaluations, and as an educator who will be experiencing your own evaluation cycle.”

Explain:

“The cycle begins with the educator in the driver’s seat, engaging in a self-assessment.

“Many people think that this part is easy—something to overlook, perhaps, and just jump to goal setting.

“I would argue that this is the driving force of the entire evaluation cycle—a critical opportunity for the educator to take ownership of their own evaluation rather than experience it as something being done to them. The extent to which educators engage in a thoughtful, comprehensive, targeted self-assessment will drive the entire process to meet their needs and help them to excel.

“The purpose of the self-assessment is two-fold: it actively
engages the educator in launching his or her own evaluation, and it prepares the educator to propose rigorous, targeted goals. The self-assessment process has three parts: analyzing student learning needs, identifying professional practice needs related to the four Standards of practice, and thinking about goals related to these two areas.

“Module 3: Self-Assessment will focus more on how to shape and support this first step of the 5-Step Cycle.”

Explain:

“After completing the self-assessment, educators move to Step 2: Analysis, Goal Setting and Plan Development. At this point, educators set at least two goals. These goals should be S.M.A.R.T.: Specific and strategic, measurable, action-oriented, rigorous, realistic and results-focused, timed and tracked. When done well, the educator’s goals will lead directly to the development of each educator’s plan, a plan that will describe exactly what the educator and evaluator will do over the course of the evaluation cycle to meet the proposed goals.

“Of the two goals, one must be a student learning goal related to the achievement or growth of students for whom that educator is responsible. The other goal must be a professional practice goal that is aligned with the Standards and Indicators in the rubric. The nature of both goals should come directly from the self-assessment, as well as what was learned in prior evaluation cycles.

“Educators must also consider team goals. Team goals are common goals they may set with a grade level or subject-area team at their school and can be a very effective way for groups of similarly situated educators to work together on common objectives, whether they’re related to a new initiative like the implementation of the revised Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, or targeted to a school-wide goal, such as decreasing the achievement gap or better supporting English Language Learners.

“Team goals can be extremely effective in moving schools and districts forward toward meeting shared improvement goals and objectives.”
“The last component of Step 2 is the development of the Educator Plan. Developing the Educator Plan is a much simpler process when the goals are clear.

“What does it mean to make a S.M.A.R.T. goal S.M.A.R.T.er?” When you add key action steps and benchmarks to a S.M.A.R.T. goal in order to track and measure progress, you elevate the goal to a concrete action plan. Key action steps should be tightly linked to realistic attainment of the goal, process benchmarks should be identified to track progress, and outcome benchmarks represent the desired results. This is what we mean by making a goal S.M.A.R.T.er, and this is what defines the details—the action steps and necessary supports and professional development—for everyone’s educator plan.


“Step 3: Implementation of the Plan is the heart of the 5-Step Cycle, during which point everyone completes the action steps outlined in their plan. The educator gathers evidence around his/her practice with specific focus on his or her goals, while evaluators conduct frequent observations and engage in ongoing dialogue with educators around practice and student learning.

“You may have questions or concerns about what is meant by ‘evidence.’ The new framework purposefully identifies several types of evidence that inform an evaluation in order to ensure a comprehensive picture of practice for each educator. Evidence can and should include everything from student learning data to various artifacts to observational evidence, all of which should relate directly to the educator’s goals or focused aspects of practice and prompt feedback and dialogue about instruction.

“You still might be concerned about collecting and maintaining evidence, not knowing if it’s the right evidence or the best evidence. Or as an administrator, you might be worried about organizing reams of paper associated with each educator. The prospect of gathering evidence might feel overwhelming. It doesn’t have to be. So how do you make sure that this process is constructive and beneficial to you and the rest of the staff in your district, without letting it get overwhelming?”
"The collection of evidence must be seen as an opportunity to select a sample of high-quality 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. It’s important that there be sufficient evidence associated with each Standard such that an evaluator can make an informed judgment related to practice under that Standard. That said, the preponderance of evidence should focus on the educator’s goals, high priority Indicators, and any critical school priorities not addressed by the professional practice and student learning goals.

“Evidence should never be manufactured or created for the sake of evaluation, but rather reflect a sample of the day-to-day work an educator completes. School leaders can also identify common artifacts for which all educators are responsible—artifacts that represent evidence of schoolwide goals or objectives when relevant. There is no set number of artifacts required to be submitted, and, in fact, the number of artifacts to collect will vary by educator depending on their goals and the action steps in their plan. Whether an educator identifies 8, 10, or even 12 artifacts, the key is to ensure a balanced representation of performance.”

"Remember how observations used to be all that was required in an evaluation? The new evaluation framework represents a big shift away from that model. Now, observations represent one of several sources for evidence, and they play a critical formative role in promoting professional growth and development. Through the use of short, frequent observations, rather than one or two formal observations, evaluators have the opportunity to provide targeted, ongoing feedback to educators and maintain a dialogue around teaching and learning. Research shows that this type of targeted, ongoing feedback about instruction has the most potential to change and improve practice.

“The regulations define Proficient practice with regard to evaluation as including “frequent, unannounced visits to classrooms” followed by “targeted and constructive feedback to teachers.” This underscores the importance of moving beyond the typical announced observation to an approach that is more sustained, targeted and constructive. The ESE Model System recommends frequent, brief unannounced observations for all educators, while maintaining at least one
announced observation for new teachers or educators who are struggling.

“In Training Module 6: Observations & Feedback, you will have the opportunity to practice conducting a short observation that is focused on an educator’s goals and targeted Standards of practice. You’ll also have an opportunity to develop constructive, evidence-based feedback that is designed to move the educator forward in their practice.”

**Explain:**

“For Step 4, the educator submits his or her collected data to the evaluator in advance of their conversation, and the evaluator looks at all of the evidence collected to date and provides feedback to the educator to help him or her improve professional practice.

“For educators on a plan that is 1 year or less in length, the formative assessment serves as a critical “check-in” regarding progress on goals and/or performance standards. For educators on a 2-year plan, the formative evaluation takes place at the end of the first school year. In addition to checking progress on goals, the formative evaluation in 2-year plans results in ratings on each of the four Standards as well as an overall Summative Rating. However, these ratings are assumed to be the same as the previous Summative Rating unless evidence demonstrates a significant change in performance, in which case the rating on the performance Standards may change.”

**Explain:**

“Finally, at the end of the cycle, everyone has a Summative Evaluation.

“The Summative Evaluation is the point at which the evaluator gathers all of the evidence together—the artifacts, observation notes, and measures of student learning related to the educator’s goals, and develops ratings based on this comprehensive picture of practice. Every educator will earn a rating on each of the four Standards, as well as an overall Summative Rating that takes into account progress on his/her goals.

“Module 7: Rating Educator Performance is an online tutorial that reviews the suggested process for determining a Summative Performance Rating based on ratings for each of the four Standards as well as progress made toward educator goals.”
“This visual captures the 5-Step Cycle for teachers in linear form, rather than a circular form. The linear graphic provides a different way to look at this process, with the five steps of the cycle spread out across the top of the page and the components of each step listed below. You’ll see in this 1-year cycle, everyone conducts their self-assessment in September and moves through Step 2: Goal Setting and Plan Development by the end of October. The formative assessment takes place in the middle of the year, usually in January or February, so the evaluator can touch base with the educator and check in on progress toward their goals. The cycle concludes in May or June with the Summative Evaluation.”

“For educators on a 2-year plan, the two main differences are the length of Step 3: Implementation of the Plan, which extends over a period of two school years, and the timing of Step 4: the Formative Evaluation, which takes place at the end of the first year in June. For two-year cycles, Step 4 is called a Formative Evaluation, rather than a Formative Assessment, because the evaluator actually rates an educator’s performance on each Standard and provides an overall Summative Performance Rating. (Remember, this formative evaluation rating is presumed to be the same as the prior ratings unless there is evidence of a significant change in performance. That means that for the vast majority of educators on 2-year plans, the formative evaluation at the end of year 1 still acts as a mid-cycle check-in focused on progress on goals.)”

“Together, this five step cycle drives continuous learning for all educators. At the conclusion of each cycle, all of the conversations, analyses, and experiences that inform the Summative Evaluation provide the foundation for the next self-assessment, creating a continuous cycle of improvement that will improve teaching and learning throughout the school.”
III. Next Steps (12 minutes)

Team Time (10 minutes)

*Explain:*

“We’ve covered a lot of material in a short period of time, with a lot to do ahead!

“At this point, I’d like to give everyone some time to talk together, in your teams, about what we’ve just learned, and what are some critical next steps you need to take as a district or as a school to bring the new educator evaluation framework back to the rest of your staff.

“You will have about 10 minutes to work together and start brainstorming next steps. But first, it’s important that you have a concrete plan for the remaining training that you as evaluators need to receive this year, as well as the training that your teachers needs to have. You are about to complete the first of six required training modules for evaluators, so make sure that you are clear about when and where the remaining five will occur. Second, if you have not done so already, discuss or confirm the plan for bringing your teachers and remaining school staff through the four-hour teacher training program developed by ESE. Both training programs are available on the ESE Educator Evaluation website at [http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/implementation/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/implementation/).

“Once you’ve confirmed the educator evaluation training schedules, take some time to identify 2-3 critical next steps that your school or district needs to focus on this coming year when implementing this new model."
Come to Closure (2 minutes)

After 10 minutes, transition participants back to closing remarks.

*Explain:*

“We’re covered a lot of information about the content and structure of the new evaluation framework. Before coming to a close, let’s return to those five priorities outlined by the Task Force and place them in the context of what we now know.

“How does the new framework **place student learning at the center**? Multiple measures of student performance inform both the Summative Rating through the inclusion of student learning goals, and the Student Impact Rating, which requires trends and patterns of student outcomes.

“How does the framework **promote the growth and development of educators**? In addition to a new set of rigorous Standards and Indicators for everyone, the 5-Step Cycle places the educator in the driver’s seat and requires continual collaboration and communication around practice throughout the process.

“The new evaluation framework actually requires **recognition of truly excellent practice**, as demonstrated by those educators receiving Exemplary ratings. Districts are encouraged to find unique and innovative ways to reward success in teaching and leadership.

“With regard to **setting a higher bar for tenure**, the new evaluation framework requires new teachers to be Proficient in all four standards of effective practice in order to receive professional teacher status.

“Finally, the new framework **shortens timelines for improvement** by defining educator plans of shorter duration for those educators who are struggling, allowing supervisors the ability to focus resources more effectively on those educators and accelerating the timeline for improvement.

“Together, these priorities embody a common set of principles and expectations for all educators in schools and districts across the Commonwealth.”
Explain:

“Module 2, Unpacking the Rubric, is the next module in the series for evaluator training. This module will introduce participants to the basic structure and terminology of the ESE Model System rubrics, which are the overarching tool for much of the 5-Step Cycle of evaluation. Participants will have an opportunity to begin developing a shared understanding of the four performance-level descriptions in the teacher rubric.”

When the team time is complete, hand out the feedback form for the session, direct participants as to where they can send questions via email, and dismiss the group.

Keep this final slide (slide 43) on the screen as participants start to gather their things and leave the session.

**NOTE: Enter your email address on this final slide, so participants know where to send questions.**