![Massachusetts Department of ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION]

The Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation

Evaluating Principals and School-level Administrators

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Purpose of this Guide

The Massachusetts Model System is a comprehensive educator evaluation system designed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) in concert with a wide range of stakeholders and pursuant to educator evaluation regulations, [603 CMR 35.00](#). The Model System includes tools, guidance, rubrics, and contract language to support the evaluation of all educators.[1] School committees and school districts can adopt the Model System, adapt the Model System, or revise their own evaluation system to align with the regulations.[2] This guide:

- Outlines the requirements of the regulations as well as the principles and the priorities that underlie the educator evaluation framework;

- Describes the roles, responsibilities, and process embedded in the Model System for Principal Evaluation; and

- Shares resources and best practices supporting effective implementation.

This guide focuses on the evaluation of principals and other school-level administrators. Guidance particular to implementation of this process for teachers can be found in [Evaluating Teachers and Specialized Instructional Support Personnel](#) and for superintendents in [Evaluating Superintendents and District-Level Administrators](#). Critical insights and lessons from the field have been incorporated throughout Model System.

This guide is divided into five sections corresponding to the five steps of the evaluation cycle: Step 1: Self-Assessment, Step 2: Goal Setting and Plan Development; Step 3: Plan Implementation; Step 4: Formative Assessment/Evaluation; and Step 5: Summative Evaluation. Each section is organized as follows:

- **Overview** – describes the step of the cycle

- **Conditions for Effective Implementation** – includes important knowledge, capacity, systems, and recommended resources

- **Step-Specific Deep Dives** – in-depth guidance on particular considerations or recommendations that warrant further detail or clarification, such as Conducting Observations.

*Note: While this guide provides sufficient information to support the evaluation of principals and school-level administrators, the most in-depth recommendations for a meaningful 5-Step Cycle--applicable to *all* educators—are available in *[Evaluating Teachers and Specialized Instructional Support Personnel](#).*

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

[2] Further details about adopting, adapting, or revising the Model System can be found in The Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework: Overview.

Overview

Five-Step Cycle of Continuous Improvement for Principals

The Model System for Principal Evaluation consists of a one-year evaluation cycle for principals and other school-level administrators (subject to local collective bargaining agreements), with a formative assessment occurring at mid-cycle. At the discretion of the superintendent, the evaluation cycle can be two years for experienced principals and school-level administrators (a description of the steps in a typical two-year cycle appears as Appendix C). Superintendents determine when the cycle starts. A typical annual cycle includes the following steps:

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Late Spring/Summer	**Step 1: Self-Assessment**. In consultation with the school's leadership team, the administrator conducts a self-assessment using the performance Standards and rubric, data about student learning, past progress on school goals (when available), the prior year's evaluation (when available), staff feedback, and other relevant evidence. Based on that assessment, the administrator identifies three types of goals to propose: professional practice, student learning, and school improvement. The administrator may also identify focus Indicators aligned to the goals to focus the evaluator's assessment of practice against the performance Standards.
Summer	**Step 2: Analysis, Goal Setting, and Plan Development.** The administrator meets individually with his or her evaluator to discuss the results of the self-assessment, including the proposed professional practice, student learning, and school improvement goals. The administrator and evaluator develop the Educator Plan. The plan includes the administrator's goals, key strategies, benchmarks of progress, timelines, and focus Indicators when relevant. It also outlines the evidence that will be used to complete the evaluation process and determine the administrator's performance ratings on each Standard and overall, including appropriate student learning measures and anticipated gains associated with each measure.
Throughout School Year	**Step 3: Plan Implementation and Collection of Evidence.** The administrator implements the plan. Both the administrator and evaluator collect the evidence described in the plan and other relevant data, including feedback from staff and data associated with the student learning measures. Observation of practice is also a required source of evidence. Evaluators are expected to visit the school at least three times each year for the purpose of collecting and analyzing evidence, and to provide the administrator with feedback.
Mid-year	**Step 4: Formative Assessment/Evaluation.** At mid-cycle, the administrator synthesizes information obtained to date in order to prepare the Mid-Cycle Goals Progress Report, an assessment of progress on the goals detailed in the Educator Plan. The administrator and evaluator review the evidence. The evaluator completes a Mid-Cycle Formative Assessment Report and shares it with the administrator.
Late Spring/Summer	**Step 5: Summative Evaluation.** The administrator prepares the End-of-Cycle Progress Report, an assessment of progress on the goals and performance on each of the Standards. The administrator and evaluator review the report and other relevant evidence, and the evaluator completes the End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report and shares it with the administrator.

Step 1: Self-Assessment

Overview

The first step of the Educator Evaluation cycle is self-assessment and goal proposal. In this step:

1. The administrator completes the self-assessment.

The administrator assesses his/her practice in relation to the Standards and Indicators of the rubric. The administrator examines a wide range of evidence, including staff feedback as well as appropriate measures of student learning, and is encouraged to consult with the school's leadership team.
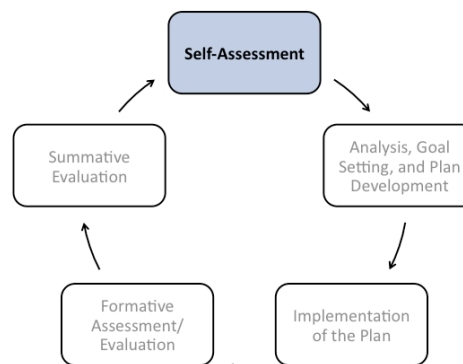
2. The administrator proposes goals.

The administrator uses the self-assessment to propose goals:

- At least one related to improving student learning;

- At least one related to improving the administrator's own professional practice; and

- Two to four goals related directly to school improvement priorities for the year and aligned with district priorities

For each goal, the administrator identifies key actions, timelines, and benchmarks that will be used to assess progress in achieving the goal. The administrator may also identify focus Indicators in each performance Standard that will be in evidence in pursuing the student learning, professional practice and school improvement goals. Successful completion of the goals will provide much of the evidence of effective performance in the focus Indicators.

The self-assessment is a critical moment for educators to take ownership of the process. A guiding principle of the Model System is that evaluation should be done *with* educators, not *to* them. Embracing the self-assessment process empowers school leaders to shape the conversation by stating what *they* think their strengths are as well as those of their school, the areas on which they want to focus, and what support they need.

Conditions for Effective Implementation

Each spring or summer, the superintendent and/or principal supervisor(s) meet with principals and other school-level administrators to review the evaluation process and discuss district expectations related to such aspects of the process as goals, school visits, and collection of evidence, including the mechanisms for collecting staff feedback and the appropriate measures of student learning.

- The evaluator and administrator together **review the rubric** that describes the Standards and Indicators for Effective Administrative Leadership. Typically, the focus of the rubric review is on the elements within each Indicator. Its purpose is to develop and deepen shared understanding of the meaning in practice of key elements. The rubric review also is an opportunity to identify focus Indicators that will be the focus for their attention that year.

- **Prioritize Indicators or elements.** Evaluators and principals may establish a reasonable number of focus Indicators (or elements) to be evaluated on in a given year. How many? The number of

focus Indicators will vary depending on the needs of the principal, but it is helpful to focus annually on no more than one or two Indicators for each Standard. This degree of focus can help focus goal-setting and works to ensure a more positive impact on both the school's and the principal's growth and development.

- **Consider team goals.** Because the regulations require educators to consider team goals, this is a good time to consider team goals across levels or the district as a whole. For example, it may make sense for all elementary and middle school principals to identify a common goal related to transition to middle school or implementation of a tiered system of support for students. It could be that all principals might focus a professional practice goal on improving the frequency of classroom visits and feedback for educators. Leveraging team goals to focus on a district priority for which administrators share responsibility is an effective way to build coherence and collaboration into the evaluation process.

A note on establishing priorities among Standards: The regulations place a priority on Standard I, Instructional Leadership, for all administrators. No administrator can earn an overall rating of Proficient unless he or she has earned a rating of Proficient on Standard I.

Suggested Resources

The "Suggested Resources" section lists several tools and resources that support administrators and evaluators in the self-assessment.

District-Provided Tools and Resources	DESE Tools and Resources
- District and school improvement plans and/or goals - Dates and intended outcomes of planned professional development opportunities - Specific information on new initiatives that are being implemented or continued from previous years, such as the implementation of a new curriculum - Growth and achievement data for past and current or incoming students - District performance rubric or Model School-level Administrator Rubric	- Guide to Model Evaluation Rubrics - Self-Assessment Form - Deep-Dive: Setting S.M.A.R.T. Goals - Protocol for Developing S.M.A.R.T. Goal Statements

Deep Dive: Setting S.M.A.R.T. Goals

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

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

S	=	**Specific and Strategic**
M	=	**Measurable**
A	=	**Action Oriented**
R	=	**Rigorous, Realistic, and Results-Focused** (the 3 Rs)
T	=	**Timed and Tracked**

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

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

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

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

The **hope** is now a **goal**, that meets most of the SMART Framework criteria:

It's **S**pecific and Strategic	= 10 pounds, 1 mile
It's **M**easurable	= pounds, miles
It's **A**ction-oriented	= lose, run
It's got the 3 **R**s	= weight loss and running distance
It's **T**imed	= 10 weeks

S.M.A.R.T. enough: To make the goal really S.M.A.R.T., though, we need to add an action plan and benchmarks. They make sure the goal meets that final criteria, "Tracked." They also strengthen the other criteria, especially when the benchmarks include "process" benchmarks for tracking progress on the key actions and "outcome" benchmarks that track early evidence of change and/or progress toward the ultimate goal.

Key Actions

- Reduce my daily calorie intake to fewer than 1,200 calories for each of 10 weeks.

- Walk 15 minutes per day; increase my time by 5 minutes per week for the next 4 weeks.

Deep Dive: Setting S.M.A.R.T. Goals

- Starting in week 5, run and walk in intervals for 30 minutes, increasing the proportion of time spent running instead of walking until I can run a mile, non-stop, by the end of week 10.

Benchmarks:

- For Process, maintaining a daily record of calorie intake and exercise

- For Outcome, biweekly weight loss and running distance targets (e.g., After 2 wks: 2 lbs/0 miles; 4 wks: 4 lbs/0 miles; 6 wks: 6lbs/.2 mi; 8 wks: 8 lbs/.4 miles)

Below are more details on the characteristics of S.M.A.R.T. goals as they apply in schools and districts.

S = Specific and Strategic

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

M = Measurable

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

A = Action Oriented

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

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

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

T = Timed

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

# Step 2: Analysis, Goal Setting, and Plan Development

Overview

The second step of the evaluation cycle is goal setting and plan development. Activities involved in Step 2 include:

1. The administrator presents the proposed goals and plan.

The administrator and evaluator meet to discuss the results of the self-assessment and the proposed professional practice, student learning, and school improvement goals as well as the key actions, timelines, benchmarks of progress, sources of evidence, and supports or resources needed to achieve the goals.
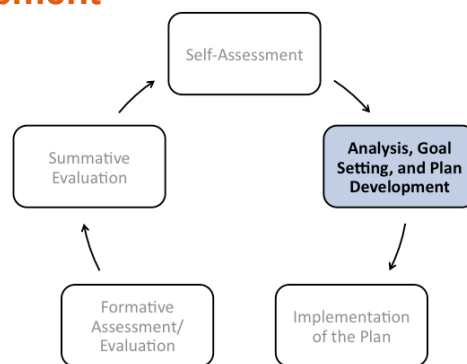
2. The administrator and evaluator review the rubric to address questions, such as:

- Are there any assumptions about specific Indicators that need to be shared because of the local school context?

- Are there any Indicators for which Proficient performance will depend on factors beyond the control of the principals? If so, how will those dependencies be accounted for in the evaluation process?

- Are there any Standards, Indicators, or elements that will be weighted more heavily than others by the evaluator in rating the administrator's performance at the end of the year?

- Are there any Indicators (or elements) that will be a focus for part or all of the year?

3. The administrator and evaluator develop an Educator Plan that identifies activities and resources that will support administrative leadership practice, student learning, and progress toward goal attainment. Once concluded, the plan should reflect the following components:

- The administrator's goals and key actions the administrator will take to achieve those goals;

- The timeline by which actions will be taken;

- Benchmarks for measuring progress;

- Evidence that will be used to determine the administrator's summative rating; and

- Resources and supports needed to be successful.

The type, duration, and primary developer of the Plan is determined according to the administrator's experience and performance in the role. That said, an important difference between an experienced teacher and an experienced school leader is the recommended alignment of the administrator's school improvement plan and their evaluation goals, even for administrators on two-year evaluation plans. While a superintendent may elect to place experienced administrators rated Proficient or Exemplary on two-year evaluation cycles, the Model System for Evaluating Principals and School-Level Administrators recommends intentional alignment between the administrator's *annual* school improvement plans and their evaluation goals.

Conditions for Effective Implementation

Establishing Alignment and Coherence. During the development of the Educator Plan, associating each of the principal's annual goals to the most relevant Indicators and elements from the Standards for Effective Administrative Leadership will help to ensure that evidence related to goal progress can also be used to assess performance in those Standards. Establishing this alignment at the outset will lead to a more coherent and meaningful process for gathering evidence related to both goal progress and overall leadership practice. It also reduces the time and effort spent on collecting, presenting and assessing evidence during the formative and summative evaluation stages.

Identifying sources of evidence ahead of time. Conversations about the goals and planned activities for the year should also identify which **sources of evidence** (to determine both progress toward meeting the goals and ratings of performance against the Standards) will be collected and by whom. This is an opportunity to clarify on the front-end if a plan is in place to sufficiently collect all the evidence necessary. The evidence collected should include all three required types of evidence:

1. Products of Practice, including (a) evidence from multiple school-site visits during which the school administrator and evaluator can collectively examine and discuss specific aspects of practice that are a focus for that administrator; and (b) specific artifacts related to practice not easily observed, but still important to the administrator's growth and development (e.g. family communications, professional development plans, feedback from the principal to teachers on instructional practice, etc.).

2. Multiple Measures of Student Learning, including measures that will be used to assess the administrator's impact on student learning (per Indicator I-F: Student Learning), and other measures of student learning related to individual or school goals.

3. Other evidence, including evidence of active outreach to and ongoing engagement with families, as well as feedback from staff.

Actions and evidence collected throughout the plan should support and communicate progress toward goals, help to establish a representative picture of practice, and provide the evaluator with meaningful opportunities to offer targeted, actionable feedback. Ultimately, the evaluator will rely upon this evidence to assess administrator performance across all four Standards.

Suggested Resources

The "Suggested Resources" section lists several concrete tools and resources that support administrators and evaluators in Step 2.

District-Provided Tools and Resources	DESE Tools and Resources
▪ Copies of district and school improvement plans and/or goals ▪ District performance rubric or Model School-level Administrator Rubric ▪ Self-assessment and proposed goals ▪ Specific information on required evidence, measures of student learning to be used by administrators, and acceptable mechanisms to collect feedback from staff	▪ S.M.A.R.T. goal setting ▪ Educator Plan Form ▪ Model Student and Staff Feedback Surveys ▪ Views of Climate and Learning (VOCAL) Student Survey

Deep Dive: Educator Plans

There are four types of Educator Plans to differentiate evaluation by career stage and performance (see: What's Required in Regulations?). Educator Plans should be designed to provide educators with opportunities for feedback, professional growth, and leadership; and to ensure educator effectiveness and overall system accountability (603 CMR 35.06(3)).

Emerging directly from an educator's professional practice and student learning goals, an Educator Plan should be comprised of key action steps, evidence the educator and evaluator will collect throughout the duration of the plan, and benchmarks to determine progress toward the goals. During the plan's development, evaluators should also communicate clear expectations for educator impact, including but not limited to anticipated student learning gains for the multiple measures that will be used as evidence of educator performance.

What's in an Administrator's Educator Plan?

- Goals: At least one professional practice goal tied to one or more Performance Standards, at least one student learning goal to improve the learning, growth and achievement of the students under the educator's responsibility; and two to four goals related directly to school improvement priorities for the year and aligned with district priorities.

- Actions: Actions the administrator must take to attain these goals, including but not limited to specific professional development activities, self-study, and coursework, as well as other supports that may be suggested by the evaluator or provided by the district.

- Alignment: Alignment to the Standards and Indicators of Effective Administrative Leadership Practice, as well as local performance standards, district goals, and school goals. (603 CMR 35.06(3)(f))

Who creates the Educator Plan?

Each type of Educator Plan offers the educator and the evaluator different levels of autonomy. Self-Directed Growth Plans are primarily developed by the administrator; Directed Growth Plans should be a collaborative effort between the evaluator and the administrator, with special attention to area(s) in need of growth; Improvement Plans are developed by the evaluator, with goals specific to improving the administrator's unsatisfactory performance; and Developing Educator Plans are developed by the evaluator and the administrator, with a focus on the administrator's professional development in a new position.

What role does evidence play?

Evidence of practice and/or goal progress that the administrator and evaluator will collect throughout the implementation of the plan can be identified when developing an Educator Plan and then updated as needed. Anticipated evidence can be written into key action steps and benchmarks. Identifying evidence at this early stage in the 5-Step Cycle ensures alignment between evidence and the administrator's priorities, while guaranteeing a strategic collection of artifacts that is more manageable for the administrator and evaluator and more powerful in demonstrating the administrator's practice. More tips about strategic evidence identification are available in DESE's Evidence Collection Toolkit.

Deep Dive: Student Learning Measures & Anticipated Student Gains

Massachusetts educator evaluation regulations require that evaluators incorporate evidence of an educator's impact on student learning into performance ratings. For administrators, evidence of their impact on student learning informs their performance rating for Standard I: Instructional Leadership (see Indicator I-F: Student Learning). Evaluators and administrators should identify the most appropriate assessments of student learning and anticipated student learning gains associated with those measures when developing the Educator Plan.

Identifying Types of Measures. Identifying appropriate measures for each administrator is the first step. Evidence from the following types of assessments may be used to inform an administrator's evaluation:

- For administrators with direct responsibility for overseeing instruction of academic content assessed by statewide testing, **statewide student growth measures** must be one of the measures used to determine impact on student learning.

- For administrators with direct responsibility for overseeing instruction of academic content in non-tested grades and subjects, **common assessments** used across the district or multiple classrooms should be used. Common assessments may be measures of learning, growth, or achievement, should be comparable within grades or subjects, and aligned to the MA Curriculum Frameworks or other relevant frameworks.

- Where no common assessments are available, administrators should use data from **classroom assessments** as evidence of impact on student learning.

- For administrators whose role and/or key responsibilities are not directly related to the instruction of students, direct measures may focus on social, emotional, behavioral, or skill development. Indirect measures of impact may also be most appropriate, such as a measure related to student suspension or chronic absenteeism rates. Many administrators may use an indirect measure of student learning along with other direct measures.

Each type of assessment provides unique information that administrators can use to improve practice and evaluators can use to provide administrators with meaningful feedback about their impact.

Determining Anticipated Student Learning Gains. Once you've selected the appropriate measures, the next step is to identify anticipated student learning gains for each measure. How much do you expect students to learn or grow? Anticipated student learning gains are expectations for student performance established during the development of the educator plan for each assessment, against which actual results will be measured. While it may be challenging to determine anticipated learning gains at the beginning of the evaluation cycle, doing so sets up a richer conversation when administrators and evaluators reflect on student results during the later stages of the cycle.

The relationship between the actual and anticipated gains on a given measure is ultimately what the evaluator and administrator examine when considering the administrator's impact on student learning. Administrators and evaluators therefore must have a shared understanding of the anticipated student learning gains associated with these measures.

- **DESE determines anticipated student learning gains for statewide growth measures**. Evaluators must consider student growth percentiles (SGP) for educators who have responsibility for 20 or more students who have taken statewide assessments. The anticipated student learning gain associated with statewide assessments is a mean SGP between 35-65. A mean SGP of 65 or above exceeds expected growth, and a mean SGP of 35 or lower does not meet expected growth.

> ## Deep Dive: Student Learning Measures & Anticipated Student Gains
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> - **Districts are responsible for determining anticipated student learning gains for common assessments**. These anticipated student learning gains should be consistent across the district.
> - When classroom assessments or indirect measures are used as evidence of an administrator's impact on students, **the administrator and the evaluator should agree upon the anticipated learning gains**.
>   - More tips and resources for identifying appropriate measures and determining anticipated student learning gains are available on DESE's Educator Evaluation webpage.

Step 3: Plan Implementation and Collection of Evidence

Overview

The third step of the evaluation cycle is Implementation of the Educator Plan. Responsibility for this step is divided between educators and evaluators. Activities in this step include:

1. The administrator implements the plan.

The administrator, with the support of the evaluator, implements the plan.

2. The administrator and evaluator collect evidence.

Both the administrator and evaluator collect evidence described in the plan and other relevant data, including the required sources of evidence outlined in the regulations:

- Multiple measures of student learning, growth, and achievement;

- Judgments based on observations and artifacts of professional practice, including observations of practice of any duration; and

- Additional evidence relevant to one or more Performance Standards, including but not limited to staff feedback.

In addition to evidence gathered through focused observations of administrator practice, evidence should focus on professional practice and student learning goals, impact on student learning in relation to anticipated student learning gains, high priority Standards and focus Indicators, staff feedback, and critical school priorities.

Conditions for Effective Implementation

Plan for frequent school visits to support administrator's growth and development. In a school visit, the Superintendent or principal supervisor works side-by-side with each administrator engaging in one or more of these activities:

- ✓ Co-observing classes, debriefing together what they see,

- ✓ Reviewing artifacts together, such as written feedback on classroom observations, and/or

- ✓ Attending and debriefing together school-based meetings, including department, team, grade level, and leadership team meetings, as well as meetings between the principal and instructional specialists/coaches/department heads.

Frequent school visits are a key responsibility of the superintendent as they serve as the primary means to best understand principal efficacy and to provide meaningful and actionable feedback to support their growth and development. Superintendents visit schools with school leaders for multiple reasons:

1. To gather evidence needed to assess the administrator's performance

2. To see the administrator in action in order to guide and support their work
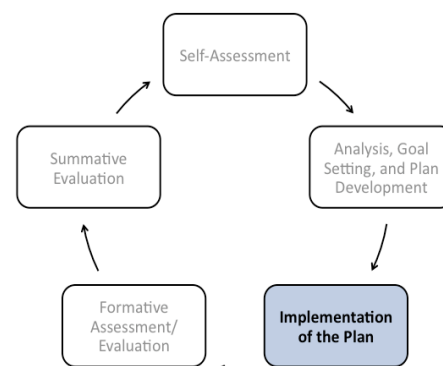
3. To model that a leader can and must make time in their schedule to see students and teachers at work

4. To see firsthand how district and school priorities are being implemented in order to assess progress, celebrate success and identify obstacles

5. To assess how well students are being engaged and challenged

6. To assess how safe and healthy the school culture and climate are for both adults and students

7. To demonstrate that they care enough about teaching and learning to make time to observe it themselves

When thoughtfully implemented, school visits provide the superintendent and administrator with the lion's share of the evidence needed to make a thoughtful assessment of the administrator's performance on each of the four Standards of Effective Administrative Leadership. See Appendix D for additional information and protocols for targeted school-site visits.

Suggested Resources

The "Suggested Resources" section lists tools and resources that support administrators and evaluators in Step 3.

District-Provided Tools and Resources	DESE Tools and Resources
▪ School and district improvement plans ▪ District performance rubric or Model School-level Administrator Rubric ▪ Copies of Educator Plan ▪ PD activities and attendance information ▪ Data collection tools	▪ Principal Supervisor School-Site Visit Protocols ▪ Model Staff Feedback Surveys

Deep Dive: Strategic Evidence Collection

Educators and evaluators collect evidence from multiple sources in order to form a holistic, multi-dimensional view of educator performance. Evidence collection should be meaningful for both the educator and the evaluator – educators should benefit from reflecting on authentic artifacts of their practice, and evaluators should learn something new about the educator's practice that helps inform their judgments.

The regulations call for three categories of evidence:

1. Multiple measures of student learning, growth, and achievement (including statewide, common, and/or classroom assessments. See Deep Dive: Student Learning Measures and Anticipated Student Learning Gains for more information on selecting these measures).

2. Products of practice (including observations and artifacts of planning or instruction).

3. Additional evidence relevant to one or more Performance Standards (including student and/or staff feedback).

Key principles of meaningful evidence collection:

- **Quality over quantity.** Many districts have found that assembling large binders of evidence can be burdensome and may not meaningfully contribute to productive dialogue between educators and evaluators or help evaluators make informed judgments. Instead, evidence should be a strategic and representative sample of artifacts that tell a story about educator practice.

- **Aligned to priorities.** Rather than collect evidence on every element, educators and evaluators benefit when evidence is focused on school or district priorities or demonstrative of progress towards student learning or professional practice goals.

- **Authentic to an educator's practice.** Evidence artifacts should not be manufactured for the sake of evaluation but instead should be illustrative of an educator's work.

Tips for Educators	Tips for School and District Leaders
▪ When developing the educator plan, identify the evidence that will demonstrate progress toward goal(s) ▪ Combine multiple pieces of evidence to "tell a story" about practice ▪ Evidence should be naturally-occurring artifacts of the practice ▪ Create a folder (electronic or paper) to add evidence throughout the year, but be selective in the end	▪ Identify focus elements or Indicators within the rubrics and support evidence collection in those areas ▪ Identify common pieces of evidence across roles and create a library of high quality examples ▪ Support policies and practices that promote discussions between educators and evaluators around meaningful evidence ▪ Support the sharing and celebration of evidence of exemplary practice

Step 4: Formative Assessment/Evaluation

Overview

The fourth step of the educator evaluation cycle is Formative Assessment/Evaluation[3], which serves as a mid-cycle opportunity to take stock of progress, provide the educator with feedback, and make adjustments as needed. For administrators on annual plans, a Formative *Assessment* occurs at the midpoint of the evaluation cycle, during which evaluators assess progress toward goals and performance on Standards. For administrators on two-year plans, a Formative *Evaluation* occurs at the end of the first year, at which point the evaluator assesses goal progress and provides formative ratings on each of the four Standards and an overall performance rating[4]. In this step:
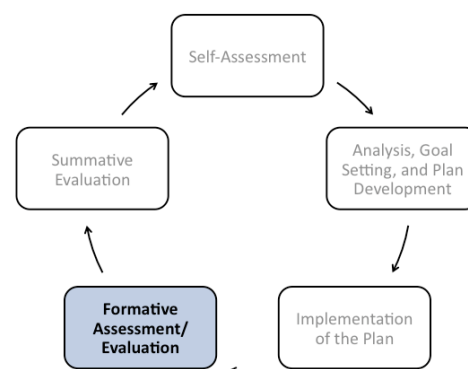
1. The administrator prepares mid-cycle progress report.

At mid-cycle, the administrator analyzes the data and evidence collected to date and prepares the Mid-Cycle Progress Report, an assessment of progress on the goals detailed in the Educator Plan, and related performance in the focus Indicators. This report should include all evidence collected to date, including (if available) progress towards the anticipated student learning gains associated with student learning measures, and feedback from staff.

2. The administrator and evaluator review progress and the evaluator prepares the formative assessment report.

The administrator and evaluator review and discuss the report and evidence. Their purpose is to develop a shared understanding of the progress being made on each goal and focus Indicators, what additional supports or resources would be beneficial, and to achieve agreement on what, if any, mid-course adjustments may be needed. For administrators on one-year plans, the evaluator completes the Formative Assessment Report and shares it with the administrator. For administrators on two-year plans, the evaluator completes a Formative Evaluation Report, which includes ratings on each Standard, and shares it with the administrator.

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[3] Formative Assessments take place mid-way through a 1-year evaluation cycle. Formative Evaluations occur at the end of Year 1 in a 2-year evaluation cycle, and result in performance ratings on Standards and overall.

[4] Formative ratings on each Standard and overall are only required for educators on 2-year self-directed growth plans and may default to the prior Summative Evaluation Ratings unless significant evidence demonstrates otherwise. This acknowledges the expertise of experienced, proficient educators and eases the evaluator burden of developing *new* ratings at the Formative Evaluation unless absolutely necessary.

Step 4: Formative Assessment/Evaluation

Conditions for Effective Implementation

Conducting a Formative Conference. Although the regulations do not require that a conference take place as part of a Formative Assessment or Evaluation, there will be occasions when a conference is warranted, such as when an evaluator and an administrator want to address recent changes in performance that may result in ratings that warrant a new plan. In addition to sharing the Standard-by-Standard summary of evidence, the formative conference is an opportunity to review and discuss the administrator's progress toward the goals that were set at the beginning of the evaluation cycle. It is likely that the administrator has more information about goal attainment and student progress than the evaluator does. Therefore, evaluators may use the formative conference to gather additional evidence about performance on specific Indicators, the administrator's progress toward goals, and his/her impact on student learning.

Considerations for changing the Educator Plan after a Formative Assessment or Evaluation.
Occasionally, an administrator's performance has significantly changed from the last Summative Evaluation. When this happens, the evaluator and the administrator may need to create a new Educator Plan based on revised ratings. Use the following chart to determine if an administrator should move to a different Educator Plan[5]:

Previous Summative Performance Rating	New Formative Performance Rating	Change in Educator Plan?	Duration of New Plan and Evaluation Cycle
Exemplary	Proficient	No	N/A
Exemplary or Proficient	Needs Improvement	Yes (Directed Growth Plan)	Up to one school year
Exemplary or Proficient	Unsatisfactory	Yes (Improvement Plan)	Up to one school year
Needs Improvement	Proficient	Yes (Self-Directed Growth Plan)	Up to one school year
Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory	Yes (Improvement Plan)	At least 30 calendar days and no more than 1 school year

Suggested Resources

The "Suggested Resources" section lists several tools and resources that support administrators and evaluators in the Formative Assessment.

District-Provided Tools and Resources	DESE Tools and Resources
▪ Up-to-date record of evidence and brief analysis ▪ Goals and Educator Plans ▪ District performance rubric or School-level Administrator Rubric	▪ Mid-Cycle Goals Progress Report ▪ Formative Evaluation/Assessment Report

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[5] Note: novice administrators in their first three years in the role are on a Developing Educator Plan, regardless of performance ratings.

Deep Dive: Staff and Student Feedback

The Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework is designed to include information about educator practice from a wide and representative range of sources. Student and staff feedback, which is a required type of evidence, offers a unique and important perspective on educator effectiveness. When taken together with other information sources, student and staff feedback helps to provide a more accurate and detailed picture of an educator's practice.

Student feedback informs teachers' evaluations, and staff feedback informs administrators' evaluations. By including student and staff feedback in the evidence that educators will collect, the Massachusetts' educator evaluation framework ensures that this critical perspective is used to support professional growth and development.

Identifying Feedback Instruments

Districts have flexibility in the identification of feedback instruments for educators. They may choose to utilize district-wide feedback instruments, such as student or staff surveys, or they may create processes by which educators and evaluators can identify feedback instruments at the individual educator level. These approaches are not mutually exclusive, and districts may settle on a combination of district-wide and educator-specific instruments in order to best meet the needs of all educators.

The following principles offer best practices for districts to consider when making decisions about student and staff feedback instruments; they are intended to be applicable regardless of the method for collecting student and/or staff feedback.

- Feedback should be aligned to one or more MA Standards and Indicators for Effective Teaching Practice or Administrative Leadership so that it yields information that is relevant to an educator's practice.

- Feedback should be informative and actionable.

- Instruments must be accessible to all potential respondents so that the information they provide allows educators to draw valid conclusions.

Incorporating Feedback into the 5-Step Cycle of Evaluation

There is no point value or numerical weight associated with feedback in an educator's evaluation. Districts have the flexibility to determine how student and staff feedback informs the Summative Performance Rating. Student and staff feedback may be gathered at multiple points in the 5-step evaluation cycle and considered formatively, summatively, or both.

Deep Dive: Staff and Student Feedback
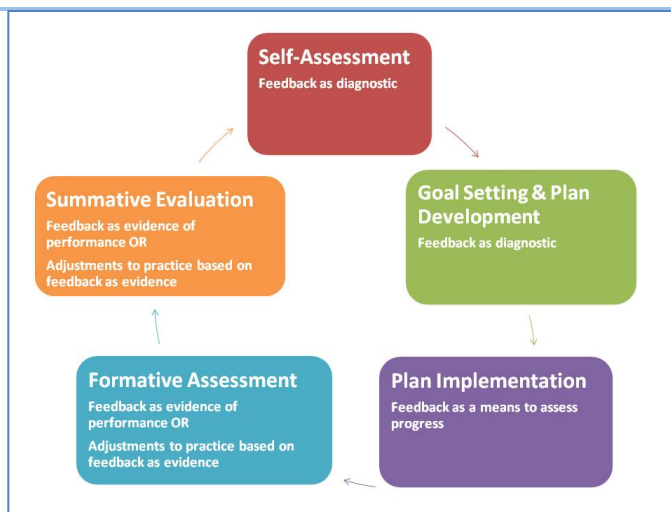
The most meaningful and actionable ways an educator may incorporate student and staff feedback into the evaluation cycle is through an educator's self-assessment, as a tool to shape his or her goal-setting process, and/or as a means to demonstrate changes in practice over time.

Key Messages

- **Feedback should be meaningful and actionable.**

- **Feedback collection tools can take many forms (not just surveys).**

- **Feedback is one component of an evaluation framework that draws on many different types of evidence.**

- **There are no weights or formulas associated with feedback.**

DESE's Model Feedback Surveys

DESE's model feedback surveys are designed to assist districts in this work. Student feedback surveys for classroom teachers are available for grades 3-12 in standard, short, and mini forms. Staff surveys for school-level administrators are available in standard and short forms.

The surveys were designed in accordance with the same key principles of effective feedback outlined above and give districts a feasible, sustainable, cost effective tools for educator to use. Districts may adopt or adapt these surveys, and/or choose to use other feedback instruments.

More information on student and staff feedback in educator evaluation, including examples of feedback methods and uses, is available on DESE's Staff and Student Feedback webpage.

Step 5: Summative Evaluation

Overview

The final step of the cycle is the Summative Evaluation. In this step:

1. The administrator submits progress report.

The administrator prepares and submits to the evaluator an assessment of progress on the goals and performance on each of the Standards, including evidence associated with staff feedback as well as impact on student learning relative to anticipated student learning gains.

2. The administrator and evaluator review report.

The administrator and evaluator review the evidence and the report. The evaluator also reviews any other relevant evidence for the purpose of arriving at:

- An assessment of attainment of goals;
- A rating of the administrator's performance on each of the Standards; and
- An overall rating of the administrator's performance.

3. The evaluator completes the Summative Evaluation.

The evaluator completes the End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report, shares it with the administrator, and adds it to the administrator's personnel file with any written comments attached that the administrator requests to be added within two weeks of receipt of the report.

The picture below illustrates the entire process by which an evaluator determines a Summative Performance Rating.
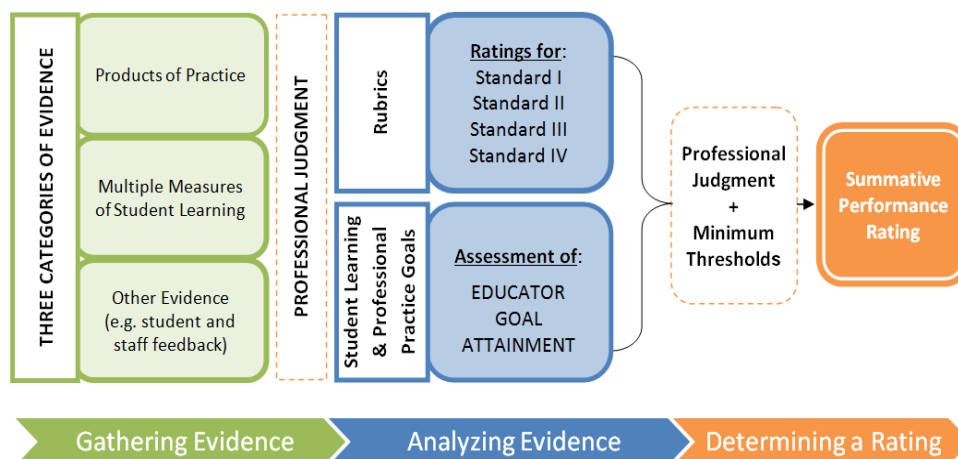
The Summative Evaluation completes a full evaluation cycle. The meaning behind this step does not lie in the end of one cycle, however, but in the beginning of the next. A thoughtful Summative Evaluation offers feedback for improvement, providing administrators with valuable information that strengthens the self-reflection and analysis educators engage in as they continue through the improvement cycle with Step 1: Self-Assessment and Goal Proposal.
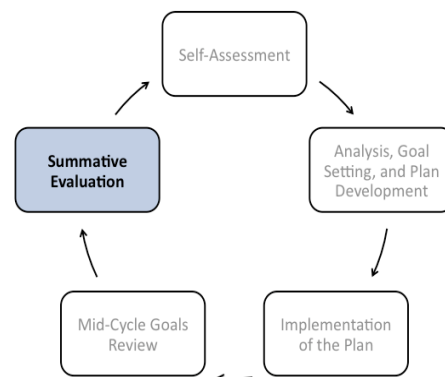
Conditions for Effective Implementation

Sufficient evidence collection. At this stage, evaluators should have multiple data points for every Standard (the preponderance of evidence for a particular Standard may fall within a specific Indicator if it was an area of focus or priority). This evidence can come from both the evaluator and the administrator and must include multiple measures of student learning, evidence of practice (including artifacts and observations), and feedback from staff.

The role of professional judgment. There are no numbers or percentages that dictate ratings on Standards, the assessment of educator goal attainment, or the overall Summative Performance Rating for an individual educator. The use of professional judgment based on multiple types of evidence promotes a more holistic and comprehensive analysis of practice, rather than over-reliance on one individual data point or rote calculation of practice based on predetermined formulas. Evaluators are also encouraged to take into account how administrators respond to or apply additional supports and resources designed to promote student learning, as well as their own professional growth and development. Finally, professional judgment gives evaluators the flexibility to account for a wide variety of factors related to individual administrator performance, such as: school-specific priorities that may drive practice in one Standard; an administrator's number of goals; experience level and/or leadership opportunities; and contextual variables that may impact the learning environment, such as unanticipated outside events or traumas.

That said, professional judgment does not equate to a "black box" from which evaluators can determine a performance rating. Evaluators must be well versed in and follow three regulatory requirements in the application of professional judgment to an administrator's practice:

- Inclusion of three Categories of Evidence

- Assessment of Goal Attainment

- Minimum Threshold Requirements

Regular collaboration and calibration with other district administrators around leadership practice is also critical to ensuring that one's professional judgment is reinforcing a shared vision of effective leadership.

Suggested Resources

In order to ensure a transparent and comprehensive Summative Evaluation, it is critical that administrators have clear and easy access to certain types of information. The "Suggested Resources" section lists several tools and resources that support administrators and evaluators in the Summative Evaluation.

District-Provided Tools and Resources	DESE Tools and Resources
▪ Up-to-date record of evidence and brief analysis ▪ Benchmark and final data on goals ▪ Evidence of student learning, growth, and achievement from statewide, common, and classroom assessments ▪ District performance rubric or Model School-level Administrator Rubric ▪ Completed Educator Plan ▪ Completed Formative Assessment/Evaluation Report Form or locally adopted form	▪ End-of-Cycle Progress Report ▪ Summative Evaluation Report

Cycle of Continuous Improvement

The five-step evaluation cycle is a continuous improvement process. The end of the annual cycle is the start of the next annual cycle. The End-of-Cycle Progress Report that the administrator has prepared for Step 5 is the core of the self-assessment required for Step 1. Together with the evaluator's End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report and the discussion that led to its preparation, the administrator has critical feedback needed to begin to consider the goals he or she will propose to the evaluator for Step 2 of the evaluation cycle. Of course, the administrator will want to consider additional feedback as well. For example, reviewing the evidence about school goals with the school leadership team, colleagues, the faculty and parents groups will yield valuable information. So, too, will thoughtful reflection about his/her own performance against the key Indicators in the rubric. That said, a carefully prepared administrator's report and thoughtfully developed evaluator's report are keys to ensuring that the promise of continuous improvement becomes a reality.

Appendix A. Roles and Responsibilities

Superintendent/Evaluator

- Know and understand the *Massachusetts Standards of Effective Administrative Practice*.

- Understand the MA principal evaluation process and participate in training to strengthen capacity to implement the Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation effectively and with integrity.

- Identify the administrator's strengths and areas for improvement and make recommendations for improvement.

- Ensure that the goals and actions detailed in the administrator's Educator Plan are measurable, challenging, and focused on high-priority needs of students.

- Set requirements or expectations around the use of appropriate measures of student learning (including statewide assessments where available) and associated anticipated student learning gains.

- Make at least three visits to the administrator's worksite to observe the administrator in action.

- Review the administrator's analysis of staff feedback, as well as, optionally, feedback from students and parents when available.

- Prepare for the Formative and Summative Evaluation Conferences.

- Prepare the Mid-Cycle Formative Assessment Report.

- Prepare the End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report.

Principal/Administrator

- Know and understand the *Massachusetts Standards of Effective Administrative Practice.*

- Understand the MA principal evaluation process and participate in training to strengthen capacity to implement the Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation effectively and with integrity.

- Prepare for the Goal Setting and Plan Development Conference by completing a self-assessment using the rubric; analyzing student learning data; assessing school progress, strengths, and areas for improvement; and proposing SMART goals.

- Collaborate with the evaluator in the development of the final goals and plan.

- Implement the plan and gather data, artifacts, and other evidence that demonstrates performance in relation to the Standards and progress in attaining goals, including staff feedback, as well as appropriate measures of student learning and anticipated student learning gains associated with those measures.

- Host announced and unannounced school visits by the evaluator.

- Use feedback from the evaluator, staff, peers, students, and others to inform and improve practice.

- At mid-cycle, present analysis of progress toward goals.

- At end-of-cycle, complete and present the End-of-Cycle Progress Report analyzing performance and progress on goals.

Appendix B. Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework

Educator Evaluation is designed to promote student learning, growth, and achievement by providing educators with feedback for improvement, enhanced opportunities for professional growth, and clear structures for accountability (603 CMR 35.00).

The MA educator evaluation framework applies to every educator. School committees evaluate superintendents using the MA educator evaluation framework; superintendents apply the same framework when they evaluate assistant superintendents, principals and other district administrators; and principals, in turn, apply the framework when they evaluate teachers, SISP, and school-level administrators.

There are six key features of the Massachusetts educator evaluation framework:

1. **Statewide Standards and Indicators for Effective Administrative Leadership and Teaching Practice.** The Standards and Indicators for both administrators and teachers establish a statewide understanding about what effective administrative leadership and teaching practice looks like.[6] Each Standard is broken down into 3-6 core Indicators.

Standards for Administrators	**Standards for Teachers**
Instructional Leadership	*Curriculum, Planning and Assessment*
Management and Operations	*Teaching All Students*
Family and Community Engagement	*Family and Community Engagement*
Professional Culture	*Professional Culture*

2. **Role-specific rubrics define the Standards and Indicators.** The Standards and Indicators are "translated" into rubrics that describe practice in detail at different levels of proficiency (603 CMR 35.06). Educators and evaluators use the rubric most appropriate to the role of the educator as a foundation for self-assessment, formative assessment and summative evaluation. Rubrics give substance to the Standards and Indicators. Each Indicator[7] is broken down into elements that are in turn described at four levels. Rubrics are a tool for making explicit and specific the behaviors and actions present at each level of performance. They prompt careful analysis and foster constructive dialogue about those expectations and how to improve practice. Detailed information about rubrics can be found in the Guide to Model Evaluation Rubrics.

3. **Three Categories of Evidence.** To assess educator performance on the Standards and Indicators, the regulations require use of three types of evidence (603 CMR 35.07(1)):

    - *Multiple measures of student learning, growth, and achievement*, including classroom assessments, common assessments comparable across grade or subject district-wide, and state-wide growth measures where available, including the MCAS Student Growth Percentile (SGP) and ACCESS for English Learners.
    - *Judgments based on observations and artifacts of professional practice*, including unannounced observations of practice of any duration; and

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[6] The regulations define the Standards and Indicators for Effective Teaching Practice and for Administrative Leadership Practice (603 CMR 35.03 and 603 CMR 35.04).

[7] The Student Learning Indicator (I-F for administrators and II-C for teachers) is the only Indicator without corresponding elements or descriptions of practice. Evidence of impact on student learning based on multiple measures of student learning, growth, and achievement must be taken into account by an evaluator when determining a performance rating for that Standard.

- *Additional evidence relevant to one or more Performance Standards*, including student feedback as a source of evidence when evaluating teachers, and staff feedback as a source of evidence when evaluating administrators (603 CMR 35.07(1)).

4. **Statewide Performance Rating Scale.** The performance of every educator is rated against the Performance Standards described above. All educators earn one of four ratings: Exemplary, Proficient, Needs Improvement, or Unsatisfactory. Each rating has a specific meaning:

- *Exemplary* performance represents a level of performance that exceeds the already high standard of Proficient. A rating of Exemplary is reserved for performance that is of such a high level that it could serve as a model.

- *Proficient* performance is understood to be fully satisfactory. This is the rigorous expected level of performance; demanding, but attainable.

- *Needs Improvement* indicates performance that is below the requirements of a Standard but is not considered to be Unsatisfactory at the time. Improvement is necessary and expected.

- *Unsatisfactory* performance is merited when performance has not significantly improved following a rating of Needs Improvement, or performance is consistently below the requirements of a standard and is considered inadequate, or both.

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

- The *Self-Directed Growth Plan* applies to experienced educators rated Proficient or Exemplary and is developed by the educator. Evaluators apply professional judgement to collected evidence of educator performance to place educators on either a one or two-year plan.

- The *Directed Growth Plan* applies to experienced educators rated Needs Improvement and is a plan of one school year or less, developed by the educator and the evaluator.

- The *Improvement Plan* applies to experienced educators rated Unsatisfactory and is a plan of no less than 30 calendar days and no longer than one school year, developed by the evaluator.

Few new educators are expected to demonstrate proficiency across every Indicator or even every Standard in their first years of practice. Therefore, the fourth plan applies to teachers without PTS, an administrator in the first three years in a district, or an educator in a new assignment (at the discretion of an evaluator):

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

6. **Five-Step Evaluation Cycle.** The 5-Step Evaluation Cycle is the centerpiece of the evaluation framework and designed to have all educators play an active, engaged role in their professional growth and development. Every evaluation begins with a Self-Assessment and concludes with a Summative Evaluation. It is a continuous improvement process in which evidence from the Summative Evaluation becomes important information for the educator's next Self-Assessment and subsequent goal setting.

Appendix C. What's Required In the Regulations

Step 1: Self-Assessment

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

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

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

Step 2: Analysis, Goal Setting, and Plan Development

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 is established according to status and performance as follows:

- **Developing Educator Plan** (developed by the educator and the evaluator)
  This plan is for an administrator with less than three years 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. Evaluators will apply professional judgement to collected evidence of educator performance to place educators on either a one or two-year plan.

- **Directed Growth Plan** (developed by the educator and the evaluator)
  This plan is for an experienced educator rated as Needs Improvement on the previous Summative Evaluation. This plan is for one school year or less.

- **Improvement Plan** (developed by the evaluator)
  This plan is for an experienced educator rated as Unsatisfactory on the previous Summative Evaluation. This plan is for no less than 30 calendar days and no longer than one school year.

Step 3: Plan Implementation

The regulations on educator evaluation require the following **categories of evidence** to be used in evaluating each educator as per 603 CMR 35.07:

For educators responsible for direct instruction, multiple measures of student learning, growth, and achievement, which shall include:

1. Measures of student progress on classroom assessments that are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks or other relevant frameworks and are comparable within grades or subjects in a school;

2. Measures of student progress on learning goals set between the educator and evaluator for the school year;

3. Statewide growth measure(s) where available, including the MCAS Student Growth Percentile and the Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment.

4. Common assessments of student learning, growth, and achievement.

For educators whose primary role is not as a classroom teacher, the appropriate measures of the educator's contribution to student learning, growth, and achievement are set by the district.

Judgments based on observations and artifacts of professional practice, including unannounced observations of practice of any duration;

Additional evidence relevant to one or more Performance Standards, including, but not limited to:

1. Evidence compiled and presented by the educator including:

   a. Evidence of fulfillment of professional responsibilities and growth, such as: self-assessments; peer collaboration; professional development linked to goals and or educator plans; contributions to the school community and professional culture;

   b. Evidence of active outreach to and ongoing engagement with families.

2. Student feedback (with respect to teachers and support personnel) collected by the district.

3. Staff feedback (with respect to administrators) collected by the district.

4. The Department shall research the feasibility and possible methods for districts to collect and analyze parent feedback as part of educator evaluation.

5. Any other relevant evidence from any source that the evaluator shares with the educator.

Step 4: Formative Assessment/Evaluation

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

▪ A **Formative Assessment** is the process used to assess progress towards attaining goals set forth in Educator Plans, performance on performance Standards, or both. While Formative Assessment is ongoing and can occur at any time during the evaluation cycle, it typically occurs at least mid-cycle.

▪ A **Formative Evaluation** is an evaluation at the end of year one for educators on two-year Self-Directed Growth Plans used to arrive at a rating on progress towards attaining the goals set forth in the plans, performance on performance Standards, or both.

  ○ An experienced educator on a Self-Directed Growth Plan (rated Proficient or Exemplary in the last Summative Evaluation) will maintain the same overall rating in the subsequent Formative Evaluation, unless there is evidence of a significant change in performance.

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

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

Changing the Plan

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

Step 5: Summative Evaluation

Every educator has a Summative Evaluation per 603 CMR 35.06. The Summative Evaluation is used to arrive at a rating on each Standard, determine an overall rating, and serve as a basis for making personnel decisions. Every educator must be rated as Exemplary, Proficient, Needs Improvement, or Unsatisfactory. In rating educators on performance Standards for the purposes of Summative Evaluation, districts may use either the rubric provided by the Department in its Model System or a comparably rigorous and comprehensive rubric developed by the district and reviewed by the Department.

▪ To be rated Proficient overall, an administrator must have been, at a minimum, rated Proficient on the Standard 1: Instructional Leadership as defined in 604 CMR 35.04.

▪ The Summative Evaluation rating must be based on evidence from multiple categories of evidence. MCAS growth scores cannot be the sole basis for a Summative Evaluation rating.

▪ Evidence and professional judgment shall inform the evaluator's rating of performance standards and the overall rating.

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

Appendix D. Two-Year 5-Step Cycle Timeline for Principals

Late Spring/Summer	**Step 1: Self-Assessment.** In consultation with the school's leadership team, the administrator conducts a self-assessment using the performance Standards and rubric, data about student learning, past progress on school goals (when available), the prior year's evaluation (when available), staff feedback, and other relevant evidence. Based on that assessment, the administrator identifies three types of goals to propose to his or her evaluator: professional practice, student learning, and school improvement. The administrator may also identify focus Indicators aligned to the goals to focus the evaluators assessment of practice against the performance Standards.
Summer	**Step 2: Analysis, Goal Setting, and Plan Development.** The administrator meets individually with his or her evaluator to discuss the results of the self-assessment, including the proposed professional practice, student learning, and school improvement goals. The administrator and evaluator develop the Educator Plan. The plan includes the administrator's goals, key strategies, benchmarks of progress, and timelines. It also outlines the evidence that will be used to complete the evaluation process and determine the administrator's performance ratings on each Standard and overall, including the appropriate student learning measures and anticipated gains associated with each measure.
Throughout 2 School Years	**Step 3: Plan Implementation and Collection of Evidence.** The administrator implements the plan. Both the administrator and evaluator collect the evidence described in the plan and other relevant data, including feedback from staff and data associated with the student learning measures. Observation of practice is also a required source of evidence. Evaluators are expected to visit the school at least three times each year for the purpose of collecting and analyzing evidence.
End of Year 1 (late spring/summer)	**Step 4: Formative Assessment/Evaluation.** At mid-cycle, the administrator synthesizes information obtained to date in order to prepare the Mid-Cycle Goals Progress Report, an assessment of progress on the goals detailed in the Educator Plan. The administrator and evaluator review the evidence. The evaluator completes a Mid-Cycle Formative Assessment Report and shares it with the administrator.
End of Year 2 (late	**Step 5: Summative Evaluation.** The administrator prepares the End-of-Cycle Progress Report, an assessment of progress on the goals and performance on each of the Standards. The administrator and evaluator review the report and other relevant evidence, and the evaluator completes the End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report and shares it with the administrator.

Appendix E. Protocols for Superintendent's School Visits

When thoughtfully implemented, school visits provide the superintendent and principal with the lion's share of the evidence needed to make a thoughtful assessment of the principal's performance on each of the four Standards in the School-level Administrator rubric. DESE has developed **six field-reviewed tools** to support comprehensive, focused school-site visits that will benefit both principals and superintendents.

The School Visit Framework

The first tool describes the critical features of a school visit and the roles and responsibilities of the superintendent and principal <u>before</u>, <u>during</u> and <u>after</u> the visit to make school visits the foundation for both meaningful principal evaluation and effective district improvement work. The protocol offers concrete guidance for conducting a school visit that can be adapted to a specific focus or objective.

Ten Steps for an Effective School Visit

Before the Visit	During the Visit	After the Visit
1. Establish Expectations 2. Review Artifacts and Develop Visit Focus 3. Establish Time, Agenda and Preparation Required	4. Observe with a Specific Focus 5. Debrief What You Observed and Read 6. Share Feedback 7. Agree on Next Steps and Plan for Accountability	8. Hold Each Other Accountable for Next Steps 9. Review Artifacts 10. Reflect, Prepare Feedback & Address Implications

School Visit Protocol #1: Classroom Observation and Feedback (A resource for Standard I)
The resource for Standard I is a school visit protocol a superintendent can use to gather evidence about the principal's work related to observing teaching practice and providing useful feedback to the teacher. Superintendents gather evidence and also guide and support the principal's development as they observe 2-4 classrooms together and debrief afterwards with a focus on the principal's prior and planned feedback. This protocol places primary focus on Observations and Feedback (I-D-3) and offers options for prioritizing specific elements within Standards I and II.

School Visit Protocol #2: Student Culture and Climate (A resource for Standard II)
This is a protocol for a school visit, principal conference and artifact review designed to collect evidence for guiding, supporting and assessing the principal's performance in establishing effective Operational Systems and Routines (II-A-1) and ensuring students' Social Emotional Well-Being (II-A-2) and Health and Safety (II-A-3).

School Visit Protocol #3: Family Engagement (A resource for Standard III)
This is a protocol for a school visit, principal conference and artifact review designed to assess the principal's progress in engaging, supporting and communicating with families. This protocol focuses on Family Engagement (III-A-1), Family Support (III-B-2), and Culturally Proficient Communication (III-C-1).

School Visit Protocol #4A: Professional Culture (A resource for Standard IV)
The first resource for Standard IV is a protocol for a school visit, conference and artifact review designed to gather information about the principal's work building a healthy professional culture with primary focus

on Meetings (IV-A-3), and secondary focus on Mission and Core Values (IV-A-2), Communication Skills (IV-C-1) Shared Vision Development (IV-E-1) and Managing Conflict (IV-F). In this protocol, the superintendent observes the principal leading a meeting of a school team or faculty and debriefs with the principal afterwards. This protocol makes optional use of a portion of DESE's *Model Staff Feedback Survey*[8].

School Visit Protocol #4B: Cultural Proficiency (A resource for Standard IV)
The second resource for Standard IV is a school visit protocol designed to gather evidence about the effectiveness of the policies and practices in place to enable staff and students to interact effectively in a culturally responsive environment (Cultural Proficiency – IV-B). In this protocol, the superintendent and principal together observe students interacting with one another and with adults in public spaces, talk with a group of students and/or staff, and examine artifacts, policies and practices related to culturally responsive teaching and leading. This protocol makes optional use of portions of both the DESE *Model Student* and *Staff Feedback Surveys* and DESE's annual VOCAL (Views of Climate and Learning) student survey.[9]

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[8] Student and Staff Feedback
[9] Student and Staff Feedback

Appendix F. Ratings and Goals for Principals New to a School

The evaluation process for principals who are new to the school or who have been promoted from within need not be substantially different from the process used for principals who have served more than one year in the district or role. There are two modifications to the process worthy of consideration.

The first difference lies in the rating system as it applies to principals new to the role of principal. As described previously, ratings of E*xemplary* performance are not commonplace. They are reserved for performance on Standards or Indicators that exceeds P*roficient* and is worthy of serving as a model for others. *Proficient* performance represents performance that is fully satisfactory. It, too, is meant to represent a high standard. Few new educators—be they principals or teachers—are expected to be P*roficient* on every Indicator or even every Standard in their first years of practice. For that reason, the N*eeds Improvement* level of performance can have a particular meaning for educators new to the role of teacher, principal, or superintendent. In these cases, N*eeds Improvement* can have the meaning of D*eveloping*. It means that the educator's practice on a Standard or Indicator is not yet P*roficient*, but the educator appears to be on track to achieve proficiency within three years.

The second modification applies to both principals new to the role and those who are new to a school. It has to do with the substance of the goals established for the principal in the first year.

New principals will need time and support to develop high-functioning leadership teams and serve as effective instructional leaders in their new assignment. They need support to spend a considerable portion of the first year working with key stakeholders—including, of course, the superintendent—to examine school needs and develop a coherent, widely understood strategy and goals for addressing them. The goals established for the principal's first year need to take into account the time needed to accomplish them, and, at the same time, ensure forward momentum on important ongoing improvement efforts at the school.

To that end, the following three goals can serve as starting points for the principal and superintendent as they collaborate to develop the goals to be included in the Educator Plan for the first year. The first two are school improvement goals. The third is a goal related to the principal's own professional practice. They are inter-related, and each reinforces the other.

Goal 1: Effective Entry and Direction Setting. By January, the school will have broad agreement from key stakeholders about (1) the school's most critical needs, (2) the strategies and goals that will address them most effectively, and (3) the measures that will be used to assess progress.

Focus Indicators

- I-E: Data-Informed Decision-making
- IV-A: Commitment to High Standards
- IV-E: Shared Vision

Key Actions[10]

1. By mid-August, present to the superintendent a written entry plan, including (a) types of evidence to be analyzed; (b) stakeholders to be interviewed; (c) methods for assessing instructional

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[10] This timetable applies to principals who begin July 1; it will need to be adapted for those starting at other times.

practice, and (d) methods for assessing school "systems of support" including transportation, safety, food services, and student services.

2. By November, complete and present a report of entry findings that (a) synthesizes evidence collected, (b) identifies strengths of the school and the most critical areas for improvement that require further inquiry, and (c) identifies next steps for study.

3. By January, propose key strategies to improve student learning and other school systems of support.

4. By February, collaborate with the leadership team and others to identify three to five student learning and school improvement goals that will drive school improvement efforts going forward.

5. Secure stakeholder feedback about engagement, awareness, and commitment to the strategies and goals.

Focus Indicators

- I-E: Data-Informed Decision-making
- IV-A: Commitment to High Standards
- IV-E: Shared Vision

Benchmarks

1. Presentations completed on schedule. (process)

2. Goals adopted. (process)

3. Results of spring survey of key stakeholder groups demonstrating engagement (85 percent), awareness (75 percent), and agreement (60 percent). (outcomes)

Goal 2: Maintaining Momentum during the Transition. Keep the school moving forward during this year's transition in leadership by working with members of the school leadership team and others to ensure that meaningful progress is made on critical school goals.

Focus Indicators

- I-D: Evaluation

Key Actions

1. By October 1, complete with all members of the leadership team and all educator teams Steps 1 and 2 of the new Five-Step Cycle of Continuous Improvement (i.e., Self-Assessment; Analysis, Goal Setting, and Educator Plan Development).

2. By the end of February, complete formative assessment conferences with each member of the leadership team and all educator teams to assess progress on goals.

3. By late spring, conduct at least five brief, unannounced visits to each classroom and provide feedback about classroom practice. [11]

4. By June 30, complete End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Reports for those educators on one-year Educator Plans and analyze goal attainment.

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[11] In districts with more than 20 classrooms, responsibility for completing five, 10-minute unannounced classroom observations per classroom may need to be shared with one or more administrators or teacher leaders.

Benchmarks

1. Educator Plans completed. (process)

2. Log demonstrates at least five, 10-minute (or longer) observations per classroom. (process)

3. Analysis of End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Reports demonstrates *meets* or *exceeds* rating on 75 percent of goals. (outcome)

Goal 3: Teacher Evaluation. By June, this principal's ratings of classroom instruction will be comparable to those of other principals and district administrators, reflecting a shared understanding among administrators districtwide of what classroom instruction looks like when it is being done at the Proficient level.

Focus Indicators:

▪ I-D: Evaluation
▪ IV-D: Continuous Learning of Administrator

Key Actions

1. Participate in all district leadership team meetings to "unpack" the rubric, view teaching videos, calibrate and share conclusions about the level of practice observed.

2. Study the district's rubric for effective teaching practice with the school leadership team.

3. Observe at least five classrooms with a colleague and discuss perceptions of practice.

Benchmark

When rating selected video of classroom instruction at the end-of-year administrator workshop, the principal's ratings of teaching practice are comparable to those of his or her peers. (outcome)

This third goal is a suggested professional practice goal for the principal. Pursuing this goal accomplishes four distinct purposes: (1) it will help a principal implement the educator evaluation system; (2) the principal will build skills at classroom observation; (3) the principal will be supported to become an engaged member of the district leadership team and forge relationships with colleagues that will support his or her entry and continued professional growth; and (4) it will help ensure that the evaluation system is implemented throughout the district in ways that teachers and other educators will see as fair and transparent.

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Appendix G. Principal Evaluation Forms

DESE forms are provided to support each step of the 5-Step Cycle. All forms are *optional* and may be adapted as needed to meet the needs of the district and/or individual educator. All evaluation forms are located on DESE's Educator Evaluation webpage.

Step 1: Self-Assessment and Goal Setting	**Self-Assessment and Goal-Setting Form.** To be completed by the principal/school administrator, this form supports an educator's self-assessment related to student learning needs and professional practice, and provides additional space to propose goals. *Note: this is a general form designed to support teachers and may be adapted to meet the needs of school-level administrators.*
Step 2: Educator Plan Development	**Educator Plan Form.** This form is intended to be used in support of Step 2: Goal Setting and Plan Development. It will either be completed by the educator for a *Self-Directed Growth Plan*, by the educator and the evaluator together for a *Directed Growth Plan* and a *Developing Educator Plan*, and by the evaluator for an *Improvement Plan*. *Note: this is a general form designed to support teachers and may be adapted to meet the needs of school-level administrators.*
Step 3: Plan Implementation	NA
Step 4: Formative Assessment/Evaluation	**Mid-Cycle Goals Progress Report.** To be completed by the principal/school-level administrator in support of Step 4: Formative Assessment/Evaluation, this form provides the principal with an opportunity to present progress to date on their goals as well as related performance associated with the focus Indicators. **Mid-Cycle Formative Assessment/Evaluation Report.** To be completed by the superintendent/principal supervisor upon receipt of the Mid-Cycle Goals Progress Report, this form is intended to provide the principal/school-level administrator with feedback on their goal progress and performance associated with focus Indicators. For Formative Evaluations only (for administrators on two-year plans), the superintendent/principal supervisor also provides ratings in each Standard and overall, however these ratings default to the prior Summative Evaluation unless significant evidence deems otherwise.
Step 5: Summative Evaluation	**End-of-Cycle Progress Report.** To be completed by the principal/school leader, this form provides the administrator with the opportunity to present evidence of goal progress/completion, as well as related performance associated with the focus Indicators. The superintendent/evaluator may use this report to inform the Summative Evaluation. **Summative Evaluation Report for Principals/School Leaders.** To be completed by the superintendent/principal supervisor, this form serves as the final summative evaluation for the principal/school leader and includes ratings for goal progress, ratings for each of the four Standards, and the overall Summative Performance Rating.