

# Step 1: Self-Assessment & Goal Proposal

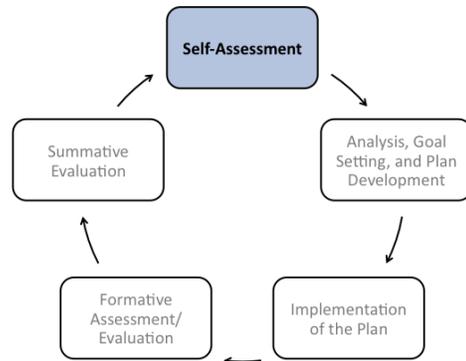
## Overview

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

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

## Time Frame

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



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

## Step 1: Self-Assessment & Goal Proposal

### What Is Required in the Regulations?

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

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

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

## Step 1: Self-Assessment & Goal Proposal

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

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

## Step 2: Goal Setting & Plan Development

### Overview

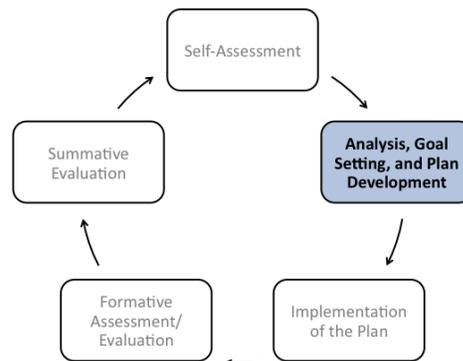
The second step of the evaluation cycle for continuous improvement is goal setting and plan development. The key actions are for educators to share their self-assessments and proposed goals with evaluators; for evaluators to work with teams and individuals to refine proposed goals as needed; and for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

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

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

### Timeframe

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



## Step 2: Goal Setting & Plan Development

### What Is Required in the Regulations?

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Step 2: Goal Setting & Plan Development

### Recommended Actions for Goal Setting & Plan Development

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

## Step 3: Implementation of the Plan

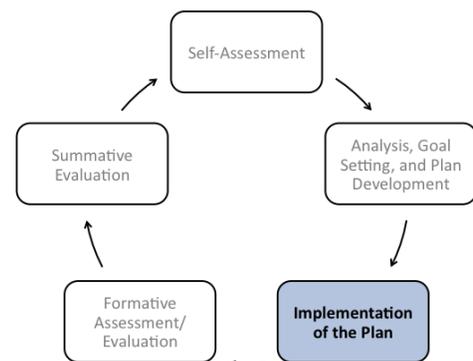
### Overview

The third step of the evaluation cycle is implementing the Plan: responsibility for this step is divided between educators and evaluators. For the duration of their cycle, educators will pursue the attainment of the goals identified in the Educator Plan and collect evidence on, at minimum, their fulfillment of professional responsibilities and engagement with families. Evaluators will provide educators with feedback for improvement, ensure timely access to planned supports, and collect evidence on educator performance and progress toward goals through multiple sources, including unannounced observations. The Educator Plan provides a roadmap for dialogue, collaboration, and action: educators and teams use their Educator Plans as a roadmap for improvement, completing the action steps in quest of progress toward professional practice and student learning goals; evaluators use Educator Plans to drive appropriate and timely support for educators and teams. Collectively and individually, educators and evaluators will continue to use rubrics and student data to develop a shared understanding of effective practice, guide ongoing reflection, monitor progress toward goals, and drive collection of evidence. Engaging in frank conversation about what good practices looks like can be culturally and logistically challenging in schools: it requires time, professionalism, and an environment of trust that places student needs at the center of decision-making and dialogue. This conversation, however, is critical. It is the lynchpin of implementation that gives meaning to evaluations, transforming them into a valued source of support. While there is always too little time to accomplish everything that schools want and need to do, evaluation will continue to be superficial and ritualistic unless school leadership, evaluators, teams, and individual educators prioritize and protect time for the conversation and collaboration that is at the heart of continuous learning.

### Timeframe

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

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



## Step 3: Implementation of the Plan

### What Is Required in the Regulations?

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

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

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

The additional evidence related to one or more performance standard must include evidence collected by the educator and presented to the evaluator relating to fulfilling professional responsibilities and family outreach and engagement ([35.07\(1\)\(c\)1](#)).

During the implementation of the Educator Plan, evaluators and educators compile evidence to be used in formative assessments and evaluations and summative evaluations.

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

\*\* This additional evidence noted above will incorporate staff feedback (with respect to Administrators) and student feedback beginning in 2013-14. The collection and use of this evidence will be addressed in separate guidance to be published on or before July 1, 2013 as Part VIII of the Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation.

### Step 3: Implementation of the Plan

#### Recommended Actions for Implementation of the Plan

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

## Step 4: Formative Assessment & Evaluation

### Overview

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

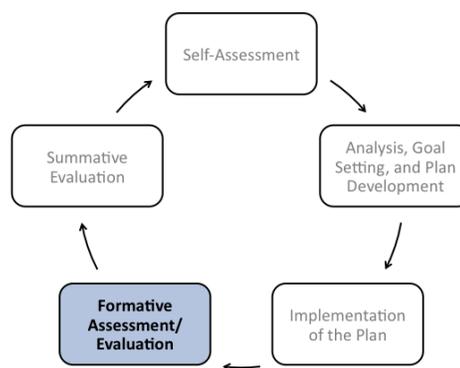
- educator progress towards attaining goals set forth in Educator Plans;
- performance on performance standards; or
- both.

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

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

### Timeframe

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



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

## Step 4: Formative Assessment & Evaluation

### What Is Required in the Regulations?

#### Formative Assessment and Evaluation

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

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

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

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

The educator shall have the opportunity to respond in writing to the formative assessment or evaluation.

#### Changing the Plan

If an educator receives a formative assessment or formative evaluation that differs from the summative rating the educator had received at the beginning of the evaluation cycle, the evaluator may place the educator on a different educator plan, appropriate to the new rating

#### Minimum standards for Proficiency

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

## Step 4: Formative Assessment & Evaluation

### Recommended Actions for Formative Assessment & Evaluation

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

## Step 5: Summative Evaluation

### Overview

The final step of the cycle is the summative evaluation. In this evaluation step, evaluators analyze evidence that demonstrates the educator's performance against Performance Standards and evidence of the attainment of the goals in the Educator Plan to arrive at a rating on each standard and an overall performance rating based on the evaluator's professional judgment. Evidence and professional judgment inform the evaluator's determination. The process is similar to that of formative assessment and evaluation: evaluators review and analyze evidence, gather additional evidence and insights from the educator, and issue performance ratings on each standard as well as an overall rating.

There are two key differences between the formative assessment/evaluation and summative evaluation:

- The summative evaluation involves a separate rating of educators' impact on student learning, based on trends and patterns in statewide and district-determined measures that are comparable across grade and/or subject (to be implemented beginning in 2013-14).
- The summative evaluation results determine the type and duration of an educator's subsequent Educator Plan, as well as consequences around rewards and recognition and local personnel decisions.

The summative evaluation step 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. Thoughtful summative evaluation that identifies trends and patterns in performance and offers feedback for improvement provides educators with valuable information that strengthens the self-reflection and analysis educators engage in as they continue through the improvement cycle with Step 1: Self-Assessment and Goal Proposal. The *school-wide* patterns and trends that emerge through formative and summative evaluations provide school leadership teams with valuable information that can strengthen the professional development and opportunities for growth that are offered to the school.

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

### Timeframe

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

*Please note: Evaluators will not rate educators' impact on student learning until at least 2013-2014 (or later, depending upon data availability) so this guide does not address the process for incorporating the rating of an educator's impact on student learning.*

## Step 5: Summative Evaluation

### What Is Required in the Regulations?

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

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

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

Educators have the opportunity to respond to the summative evaluation in writing.

### Professional Teacher Status

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

## Step 5: Summative Evaluation

### Recommended Actions for Summative Evaluation

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