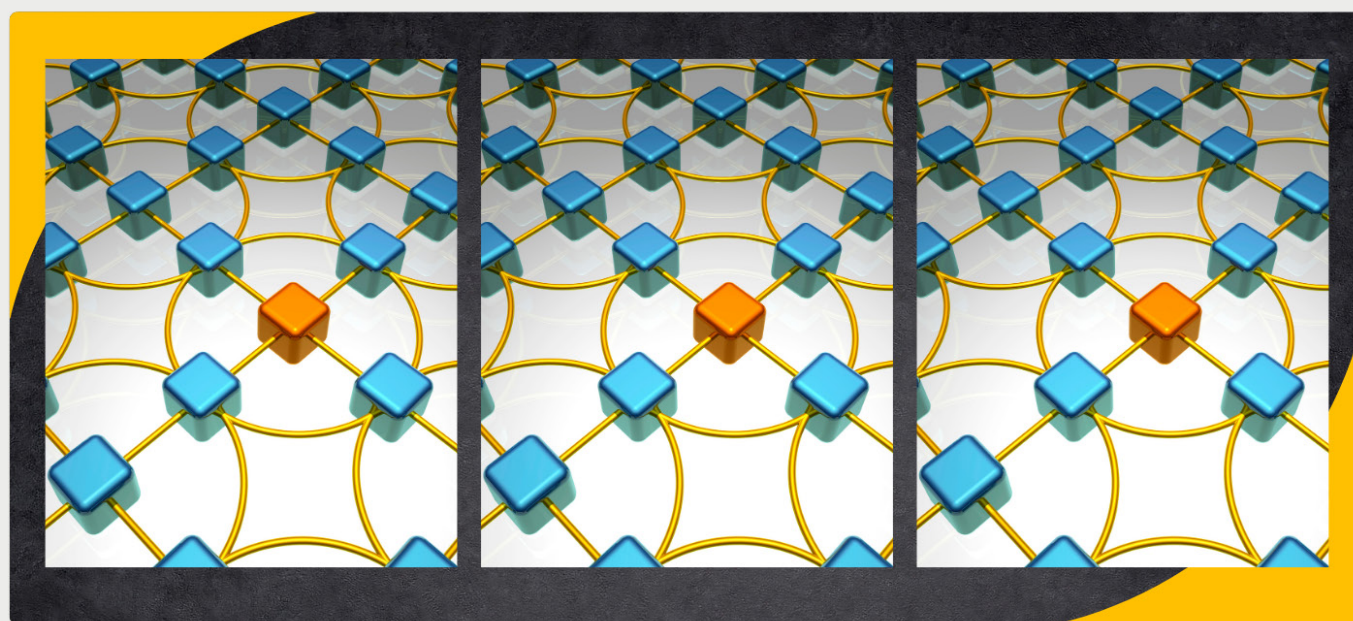


Designing a New York State Standards-Based Educator Evaluation and Professional Support (STEPS) Plan

DEVELOPING THE COMPONENTS OF A PLAN



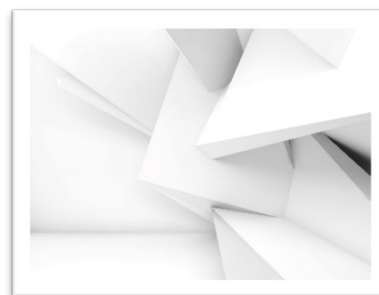
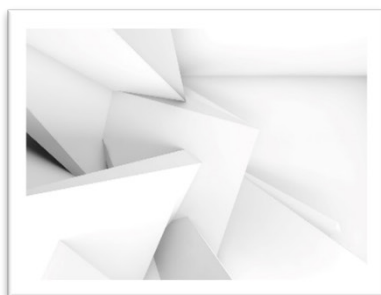
Office of Educator Quality and Professional Development

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

89 WASHINGTON AVE | ALBANY, NY 12243

www.nysed.gov/educator-quality/nys-steps

Background	3
NYSED's Vision for Educator Evaluation Systems Under Education Law §3012-e.....	3
Introduction	4
Components of a STEPS Plan.....	4
I. NYS Teaching Standards and Educational Leadership Standards	4
II. Groups of Educators	5
III. Multiple Measures	6
Required: Observations/School Visits	7
Required: Additional Measures	7
Sample STEPS Plans: Selecting Measures to Assess the Standards	9
IV. Scoring.....	13
Defining Expectations	13
Scoring the Measures and Rating the Standards.....	14
Converting Measure Scores to Standard Ratings	14
Combining the Standards Ratings to get an Overall Rating	14
Frequency of Scoring the Standards and Providing an Overall Rating	15
V. Formal Professional Learning System	17
Requirement to Provide Personalized Professional Support.....	18
VI. Training of Evaluators	18
VII. Engagement Training on the STEPS Plan	19
Additional Considerations.....	20
Annual Review Component	20



Background

On Friday, June 28, 2024, Governor Kathy Hochul signed Chapter 143 of the Laws of 2024, establishing Education Law (“EL”) §3012-e. Accordingly, school districts and boards of cooperative educational services (“BOCES”) will transition to new teacher and principal evaluation systems, beginning in the 2024-25 school year.

NYSED’s Vision for Educator Evaluation Systems Under Education Law §3012-e

The New York State Education Department (the “Department” or “NYSED”) believes that well-designed and implemented evaluation systems can support teachers and school leaders by encouraging reflection and goal-setting; creating opportunities for collaboration between educators; providing timely, actionable feedback that supports growth and development; identifying personalized professional learning opportunities; and recognizing excellent educators and creating opportunities for great teachers to remain in the classroom, while advancing their careers through teacher leadership roles such as school-based teacher educators, mentor teachers, instructional coaches, and other differentiated roles.

Under Education Law §3012-e, school districts and BOCES can reflect on their current educator evaluation practices and develop new locally designed systems consistent with NYSED’s vision and our shared goal of supporting teacher and leader development across the career continuum. These new Standards-based Educator Evaluation and Professional Support plans (“NYS STEPS” or “STEPS”) supports all educators’ professional growth as a part of a comprehensive, systematic approach and advances excellence in teaching and learning aligned to our [New York State \(“NYS”\) Teaching Standards and Educational Leadership Standards](#) and the [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#). Educators will receive meaningful feedback on their practice and intentional professional learning and growth opportunities through multiple measures, including observation.

This guidance builds on prior guidance documents: [Designing a STEPS plan – a Preliminary Guide and Designing a STEPS Plan - Requirements and Guidance](#), and provides specific examples of how a local educational agency (“LEA”) could design the components of a STEPS plan.

Additional information, tools, and resources related to educator evaluation plans can be found on the NYSED [Office of Educator Quality and Professional Development website](#).

Introduction

Before developing the components of your plan, we recommend that you first read [Designing a NYS STEPS Plan – a Preliminary Guide](#). Among other things, this guidance provides a process for LEAs to conduct a needs assessment grounded in data to identify their most critical learning needs and use that data to inform the creation of their STEPS plan. It also suggests that LEAs include a logic model or theory of action as a part of their plan development process to support evaluation as a lever for school improvement.

Components of a STEPS Plan

An LEA's STEPS plan will include the following elements:

- I. NYS Teaching Standards and Educational Leadership Standards
- II. Educator Groups
- III. Multiple Measures
- IV. Scoring
- V. Formal Professional Learning System
- VI. Training Evaluators
- VII. Training on the STEPS plan

I. NYS Teaching Standards and Educational Leadership Standards

Developing a meaningful plan requires a strong understanding of the expectations of Teaching and Leadership Standards in New York State. LEAs will evaluate all NYS Teaching Standards and Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSELS, NYS Version) across an educator's evaluation cycle. LEAs are not required to evaluate every indicator within a standard, but instead may focus on priority indicators to drive practice in the LEA's areas of focus.

Suggested steps for this process:

1. Carefully read the resources NYSED has designed to increase your familiarity with the standards and assist you in identifying indicators that align most closely with instructional priorities and goals established through needs assessment and planning processes:
 - [NYS Teaching Standards with Indicators in Actionable Language](#); and
 - [PSELS \(NYS version\) with Indicators in Actionable Language](#).
2. Determine the priority indicators within each standard that will support educator practice aligned with your target areas and further student, teacher, school, and district-wide goals.

II. Groups of Educators

The STEPS plan process allows LEAs to differentiate their evaluation systems to better support the professional growth and learning of all educators based on factors such as grade level, subject area, and tenure status. Once priority indicators within the standards are established, LEAs should consider whether differentiation is needed in evaluating different groups of educators. Please note, there is no requirement to evaluate groups of educators differently, but it is a key decision in the STEPS plan design.

Guiding questions:

- Do specific groups of teachers or leaders (e.g., elementary, secondary, general education, special education) have different needs and goals?
- If groups of teachers or leaders have different needs and goals, will the same evaluative measures be effective in giving the district the information needed to provide professional learning?
- What are the potential benefits and challenges of evaluating teachers and leaders in the same manner across groups?

Sample Teacher Groups

Figure 1: Teacher groups that may have a different STEPS plan design based on needs and goals, taken from the [STEPS Plan Form](#).

	Type of teacher(s) *	Tenure status*
TEACHER GROUP 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary teachers <input type="checkbox"/> High school teachers <input type="checkbox"/> All core teachers <input type="checkbox"/> All non-core/elective teachers <input type="checkbox"/> All teachers based on tenure status (please indicate status in the next column) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please provide additional information in the box below)	<input type="checkbox"/> Probationary <input type="checkbox"/> Tenured <input type="checkbox"/> All teachers listed in the previous column, regardless of tenure status

Sample Principal Groups

Figure 2: Principal groups that may have a different STEPS plan design based on needs and goals, taken from the [STEPS Plan Form](#)

Type of principal(s) *		Tenure status*
PRINCIPAL GROUP 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary principals	<input type="checkbox"/> Probationary
	<input type="checkbox"/> Middle school principals	<input type="checkbox"/> Tenured
	<input type="checkbox"/> High school principals	<input type="checkbox"/> All principals listed in the previous column, regardless of tenure status
	<input type="checkbox"/> All principals based on tenure status (please indicate status in the next column)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please provide additional information in the box below)	

Related Requirements:

- Evaluators must rate probationary teachers and principals on each standard on an annual basis and give an overall rating on an annual basis.
- Tenured teachers and principals must be rated on each standard and receive an overall rating, but may do so on an annual or multi-year evaluation cycle. A multi-year evaluation cycle is permitted, so long as evaluators can collect evidence and provide teachers and principals with timely, actionable feedback on their practice aligned to each NYS Teaching Standard or Educational Leadership Standard.

III. Multiple Measures

A STEPS plan requires that multiple measures be used to assess teacher and principal practice across the standards. One of the measures in the STEPS plan must be observations for teachers and school visits for principals. When selecting additional measures, you should consider the strengths and limitations of each measure type and how the measure supports educators in meeting school goals.

Guiding Questions:

- Which measures will provide the most meaningful evidence of a teacher's or a principal's practice for the targeted standard?
- Is the measure implemented in a manner to collect sufficient evidence to assess the applicable standard?

NYSED Resources on using a Need Analysis to Create a Meaningful STEPS plan for your LEA:

- [Webinar: Using a Needs Analysis to Select Teacher Measures](#)
- [Webinar: Using a Needs Analysis to Select Principal Measures](#)

Required: Observations/School Visits

All teachers and principals must receive *more than one* observation/school visit across their evaluation cycle. Regulations require that these observations/school visits occur in a sufficient number and duration such that the evaluator can collect meaningful evidence of teaching and leadership, to evaluate the applicable standard.

- Probationary educators are required to have an annual evaluation cycle.
- Tenured educators may have an annual or multi-year evaluation cycle.

Teacher Observations

For teachers, classroom observations are especially effective for assessing certain NYS Teaching Standards that rely heavily on observable teacher-student interactions, instructional practices, and classroom environment.

Observations provide real-time evidence of teaching strategies, differentiation, and the physical and emotional climate of the classroom. Observing teachers in action allows administrators to directly evaluate how effectively instructional methods are applied, how teachers adjust their approaches to meet diverse student needs, and how they manage and foster a supportive learning environment.

Many of the teaching standards have aspects that can be assessed in a classroom observation, but some standards are challenging to see during a classroom observation -- such as Standards VI and VII, and LEAs should consider using a different measure to assess those standards.

Principal School Visits

High-quality school visits are an essential component of an evaluation system designed to provide meaningful information that can support the continual development of principals.

Periodic, purposeful school visits offer critical opportunities for evaluators to observe, collect evidence, and analyze the work of principals to facilitate ongoing feedback, dialogue about principal practice, and continual improvement efforts.

Evaluators gather evidence of principal practice through school site visits and observations of principals in action. Though this observation may not include direct instruction, sample activities an evaluator may observe include tasks such as leading meetings, interacting with staff, students, or parents, coordinating school events, or managing safety procedures. School visits may be appropriately and accurately implemented as a measure to effectively assess many of the PSELs (NYS Version).

Required: Additional Measures

In addition to designing a system of observations/school visits, LEAs must also select one or more additional measures to assess each standard. Additional measures can provide meaningful information that can support the continual development of teachers and principals.

Additional Measures include:

Professional Portfolios

- A collection of materials documenting or reflecting on an educator's practice, which may include samples of work, artifacts supporting learning outcomes, goal attainment, professional learning, and other relevant data.

Surveys and Feedback

- Perception-based evaluation tools used to obtain stakeholder experiences with various aspects of an educator's practice.

Goal setting and Attainment Report

- A process for identifying goals in educational practice and measuring progress toward those goals.

Teacher or Principal Projects

- A research-based inquiry which demonstrates alignment of professional practices in teaching and learning.

Student Outcome Data

- A measure of educator practice, which uses student assessment results or student classwork to demonstrate academic growth and/or achievement.

Student Portfolios

- A collection of materials documenting student performance which measure performance of an educator's practice that may or may not be observable through classroom observations or summative student assessments.

Other LEA-developed Measure

- LEAs may develop their own measure(s) to evaluate an educator's performance aligned to the standards.

Selecting Measures to Support School Goals

To create a meaningful evaluation plan, we suggest LEA's identify student, teacher, school, or district goals and then select measures appropriate to collect evidence in target areas of the standards to meet these goals. The chart below suggests some measures that could be used in your STEPS plan that would be well suited to collect the evidence needed to support the specific goals.

Sample Goals	Suggested Measures
Reduce the number of students needing Tier 3 interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student outcome data• Goal setting and attainment
Implement culturally responsive teaching strategies across all units	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional portfolio
Integrate formative technology tools to personalize instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher project
Increase student engagement and sense of belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Surveys & Feedback

Sample STEPS Plans: Selecting Measures to Assess the Standards

LEAs are required to select the measure(s) used to evaluate each standard, and these selections may vary across different groups of educators. Below are examples of how and why a district might design this section of their STEPS plan.

Teacher Examples

EXAMPLE A

All teachers are evaluated using the *same measures* to assess the *same standards*. There are no “groups” using different measures in this plan design. All teachers are evaluated using observations and a professional portfolio. Professional portfolios will collect evidence related to the district goals of using data-informed instruction and culturally relevant curricula.

NYS Teaching Standards	Observations	Professional Portfolios
I	✓	
II	✓	✓
III	✓	✓
IV	✓	
V		✓
VI		✓
VII		✓

EXAMPLE B

This plan design creates two different groups of educators based on tenure status. The groups of teachers are evaluated using *different measures for different standards*.

Group 1: Probationary Teachers

Probationary teachers are evaluated using two measures to assess the standards selected below. Probationary teachers are evaluated using observations and professional portfolios. The LEA selected a portfolio for their second measure so probationary teachers can showcase lessons, assessments, and professional learning that are discussed in the new teacher mentoring program.

NYS Teaching Standards	Observations	Professional Portfolios
I	✓	
II	✓	
III	✓	

IV	✓	
V		✓
VI		✓
VII		✓

Group 2: Tenured Teachers

Tenured teachers are evaluated using three measures to assess the standards selected below. The additional measures of goal setting and attainment, and a teacher research project were selected to support tenured teachers in continual learning within select areas of the standards. This plan design for tenured teachers will also be implemented over a two-year evaluation cycle.

<u>NYS Teaching Standards</u>	Observations	Goal Setting and Attainment	Teacher Research Project
I	✓		
II	✓		✓
III	✓		
IV	✓	✓	
V			✓
VI		✓	
VII		✓	

EXAMPLE C

This plan design creates two different groups of educators based on content area. The groups of teachers are evaluated using *different measures* to assess *different standards*.

Group 1: Core Content Teachers

Core content area teachers are evaluated using three measures that reflect the district's focus on raising student achievement scores.

<u>NYS Teaching Standards</u>	Observations	Student Outcome Data	Professional Portfolios
I	✓		
II	✓	✓	✓
III	✓		
IV	✓		✓
V	✓	✓	
VI			✓
VII			✓

Group 2: Non-core Content Teachers

Non-core content area teachers are evaluated using two measures for the standards selected below. A professional portfolio allows teachers of subjects that do not have an associated standardized test to include their classroom assessment results and reflections on their teaching practice.

NYS Teaching Standards	Observations	Professional Portfolios
I	✓	
II	✓	✓
III	✓	✓
IV		✓
V		✓
VI		✓
VII		✓

Principal Examples

EXAMPLE A

All principals are evaluated using the *same measures* for the *same standards*. There are no “groups” of principals in this plan. The use of surveys and goal-setting reports reflect the need for principals to consider stakeholder feedback and their work toward defined school improvement goals.

PSELs	Principal school visits	Professional Portfolios	Surveys and Feedback
1	✓		
2	✓	✓	
3	✓		
4		✓	✓
5	✓	✓	
6	✓		✓
7		✓	
8	✓		
9		✓	
10		✓	✓

EXAMPLE B

This plan design creates two different groups of principals based on building or program area. The groups of principals are evaluated using *different measures* for *different standards*.

Group 1: Elementary School Principals

Elementary principals will use school visits to assess leadership on the standards selected below. The LEA selected a research project to help elementary principals explore new methods for serving ELL families' needs. All elementary principals will meet throughout the school year and discuss various texts they are reading. Through this inquiry, principals will design additional opportunities for school involvement, strengthening communication, and connection between home and school. A staff and family survey will be used to provide data on the effectiveness of their current program and new initiatives.

<u>PSELs</u>	Principal school visits	Principal Project	Surveys and feedback
1	✓		
2	✓		
3	✓	✓	
4			✓
5	✓	✓	
6	✓		✓
7			✓
8	✓		✓
9			
10			✓

Group 2: Middle/High School Principals

Middle/High school principals will use school visits to assess the same standards as the elementary school principals. Instead of a principal project, middle/high school principals will focus on academic achievement and will use student outcome data. A survey of teachers will be used to focus on building initiatives aligned to the standards.

<u>PSELs</u>	Principal school visits	Student Outcome Data	Surveys and feedback
1	✓		
2	✓		
3		✓	
4		✓	
5	✓		
6	✓		
7			✓
8	✓		
9			✓
10			✓

IV. Scoring

Defining Expectations

With the framework of the STEPS evaluation system, LEAs will design a scoring system based on their own district's expectations for teaching and learning.

Teachers and principals will receive a rating on each standard and will receive an overall rating of 1-4, consistent with the following guidelines:

Level 1	Indicates performance significantly below an LEA's expectations aligned to teaching/educational leadership standards
Level 2	Indicates performance that partially meets an LEA's expectations aligned to teaching/educational leadership standards
Level 3	Indicates performance that meets an LEA's expectations aligned to teaching/educational leadership standards
Level 4	Indicates performance that exceeds an LEA's expectations aligned to teaching/educational leadership standards

Within the framework of the Level 1-4 rating system, the criteria and cut points for ratings will be determined by the LEA based on their expectations for each performance level.

ASK: What does Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, or Level 4 look like in our LEA?

Suggested steps for this process:

1. Meet with stakeholders to discuss what good teaching and leadership looks like in your LEA.
2. Carefully review the standards and develop specific examples that illustrate performance for each scoring level and the components.
3. Establish a clear and specific scoring range for each level, ensuring distinctions between categories.

Sample Scoring Ranges

Actual scoring ranges will be determined by each LEA.

Ratings		Numerical Ranges
Level 1	Significantly below LEA expectations aligned to standards	0 - 1.49
Level 2	Partially meets LEA expectations	1.5 - 2.49
Level 3	Meets LEA expectations	2.5 - 3.49
Level 4	Exceeds LEA expectations	3.5 - 4.0

Scoring the Measures and Rating the Standards

LEAs will design a scoring system for each selected measure, which may include using a rubric or a different instrument to score the measure(s).

ASK: Which rubrics / scoring instruments should be used to measure each standard?

Suggested steps for this process:

1. For observations/school visits, use a rubric that clearly defines the educator's performance and will easily convert to a Level 1-4 rating.
2. To score additional measures, consider using a rubric or scoring instrument that results in a whole number of 1-4 or create a simple conversion chart that translates to a final rating of Level 1-4 for each standard.
3. Select/design instruments that all evaluators can be trained on and checked for bias and inter-rater reliability.

Converting Measure Scores to Standard Ratings

Depending on how the measure(s) selected are scored, LEAs may need to create a conversion chart to convert the "measure score" to a Level 1-4 final rating for each standard.

Sample Conversion Chart (Actual conversion chart(s) to be developed by LEA)

Overall Rating	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Measure Score	0% - 59%	60% - 74%	75% - 90%	91% - 100%

For example, an LEA decides to use a portfolio as an additional measure. The portfolio will be scored on a scale of 0-100. A teacher receives a measure score of 80% on their portfolio. Using the sample conversion chart above, the LEA will convert the teacher's portfolio measure score of 80 to a rating of Level 3 for the applicable standard(s). If the LEA uses multiple measures to assess a standard, they will need to develop a method to convert multiple measure scores into a final rating of Level 1-4 for each standard.

Combining the Standards Ratings to get an Overall Rating

The STEPS plan requires LEAs to develop a process for combining final ratings from each standard to reach an overall rating. LEAs should ensure their process accurately reflects the value of each standard based on the amount/type of evidence collected and reflects district priorities. For example, LEAs may weigh the standards at values that reflect district priorities or may design a decision matrix that can quantify and compare the performance of each rating based on multiple criteria and different weightings.

Sample A

Sample A: Each standard is weighted at negotiated values.			
Standard	Measure	Rating	Percentage (weight) of Overall Rating
Standard I	Observations	3	10%
Standard II	Observations	2	10%
Standard III	Observations	3	20%
Standard IV	Portfolio	3	20%
Standard V	Portfolio	4	15%
Standard VI	Portfolio	2	15%
Standard VII	Portfolio	3	10%
Weighted Average		2.9*	100%

* The weighted average of 2.9 would then be applied to the LEA-determined scoring ranges to get a Level 1-4 overall rating.

Sample B

Sample B: Each measure is weighted at negotiated values.			
Measure	Standard	Rating	Percentage (weight) of Overall Rating
Observations	Standard I	3	60% (Standards I - III are weighted equally)
	Standard II	2	
	Standard III	3	
Portfolio	Standard IV	3	40% (Standards IV - VII are weighted equally)
	Standard V	4	
	Standard VI	2	
	Standard VII	3	
Weighted Average		2.8*	100%

* The weighted average of 2.8 would then be applied to the LEA-determined scoring ranges to get a Level 1-4 overall rating.

Frequency of Scoring the Standards and Providing an Overall Rating

In a STEPS plan, probationary teachers and principals must receive a final rating of Level 1-4 on each standard, and an overall rating of Level 1-4 on an annual basis. Tenured teachers and principals are subject to these same requirements, but LEAs are permitted to rate the standards across an annual or multi-year evaluation cycle and provide an overall rating at the end of the evaluation cycle.

Multi-year evaluation cycles for tenured educators

- LEAs may determine the length of the evaluation cycle for tenured educators if the evaluation cycle allows evaluators to collect evidence and provide teachers and principals with timely, actionable feedback on their practice aligned to each NYS Teaching Standard and PSEL in each year of the cycle.
- Tenured teachers and principals must be evaluated on at least one standard in any given year of the cycle.
- Tenured teachers and principals' overall rating must be based on all final ratings for each standard.

ASK: How frequently should we assess each standard for tenured educators?

Steps for this decision-making process:

1. Decide if tenured educators should be evaluated differently from probationary teachers on some or all the standards.
2. If considering a multi-year evaluation cycle for tenured educators, ask:
 - How much evidence do we need to collect to accurately assess the standards?
 - Per regulations, are we conducting a sufficient number of observations/school visits such that the evaluator can collect meaningful evidence of teaching and leadership to evaluate the applicable standard?
 - How frequently should we assess the standards to ensure we provide timely, actionable feedback to educators?
 - Based on these questions, what standards will be assessed in each year of the evaluation cycle?
 - How many years will the evaluation cycle be?

Example: Tenured Teachers Rated Across a 3-year Evaluation Cycle

In a multi-year evaluation cycle, **LEAs must rate at least one standard in *each* year of the cycle.** This chart illustrates which standards will be rated in each year of the evaluation cycle. LEAs must submit the following types of data to SED:

- Any yearly ratings for a standard
- A final rating for each standard
- An overall rating, based on the final ratings for each standard.

More information on data submission requirements can be found on the [OEQPD website](#).

YEARS STANDARDS WILL BE RATED				
	YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO	YEAR THREE	Final Rating for each Standard (LEA determines how to combine standard scores across evaluation cycle)
Standard I	Rating = 3 Teacher observations	Rating = 2 Teacher observations		Based on yearly ratings assigned in year 1 & year 2
Standard II	Rating = 2 Teacher observations	Rating = 3 Teacher observations		Based on yearly ratings assigned in year 1 & year 2
Standard III	Rating = 3 Teacher observations	Rating = 4 Teacher observations		Based on yearly ratings assigned in year 1 & year 2
Standard IV	Rating = 3 Teacher observations	Rating = 4 Teacher observations		Based on yearly ratings assigned in year 1 & year 2
Standard V	Rating = 2 Student portfolio	Rating = 3 Student Portfolio	Rating = 3 Student portfolio	Based on yearly ratings assigned in year 1 & year 2 and year 3
Standard VI			Rating = 3 Teacher Portfolio	Based on rating assigned in year 3
Standard VII			Rating = 3 Teacher Portfolio	Based on rating assigned in year 3
OVERALL RATING				Overall Rating Calculated (based on combining all ratings across the standard according to a process negotiated at the local level)

V. Formal Professional Learning System

The STEPS plan requires that LEAs maintain a comprehensive system of professional learning for all educators that is supported by data, to improve their practice and support the success of all students. LEAs must design a professional learning system that addresses the needs of teachers and principals as identified from a variety of sources including: a formal needs analysis, data from the STEPS plan evaluation process, and other available student and educator information. The LEA will monitor student progress data, sustain professional growth, inform, plan, and assess the effectiveness of their professional growth system. LEAs should consider leveraging existing systems and processes, such as their Professional Learning Plan (PLP) required by section 100.2 of the Regulations.

Steps for this decision-making process:

1. Review data from needs assessment and data from the evaluation plan to identify specific growth areas for educators and develop targeted professional learning pathways that address those needs.
2. Routinely review evaluation data across different educator demographics and school types to verify consistent application of evaluation measures and PL support, promoting fair and equitable professional growth for all educators.
3. Consider incorporating identified professional learning needs from the STEPS plan evaluation process into your existing PLP developed under Section 100.2 of the Regulations.

Requirement to Provide Personalized Professional Support

Teachers and principals who receive an overall rating of Level 1 or 2 from their STEPS plan evaluation must have a personalized Teacher Support Plan (TSP) or Principal Support Plan (PSP) issued and implemented by October 1 of the following school year or as soon as practicable thereafter. Such a professional support plan focuses on individualized, intensive support areas critical to helping teachers and principals meet evaluation expectations. These plans customize support for the individual educator, targeting specific skill deficits or instructional gaps, and may include increased frequency of observations, mentoring, and access to tailored resources.

Regulations require that a TSP or PSP shall include:

- a plan for improvement,
- timelines,
- measurable goals, and,
- how the LEA will support a teacher's or principal's improvement in identified areas.

VI. Training of Evaluators

To qualify as an evaluator, individuals shall successfully complete a training course and be trained on the following seven elements found in section 30-4.6 of the Department's regulations, which include:

- the NYS Teaching Standards and Educational Leadership Standards and their related elements and performance indicators;
- evidence-based observation techniques that are grounded in research, including controlling for evaluator bias;
- the LEA's process for maintaining inter-rater reliability amongst evaluators, if applicable;
- application and use of any locally selected methodology to evaluate its teachers or principals;

- application and use of any instrument(s) selected by the LEA for use in evaluations, including training on the effective application of such instrument(s) to evaluate a teacher or principal's practice;
- the scoring methodology used by the LEA to evaluate a teacher or principal, including how overall ratings are generated within the framework for the four designated rating categories;
- specific considerations for evaluating teachers and principals, based on their specific context (e.g., student populations served, content areas taught, grade levels).

Steps for this decision-making process:

1. Review the training requirements and determine who is best to conduct such training (the LEA, the BOCES, another third-party, etc.).
2. Determine the frequency of these training courses and ensure they are conducted periodically.
3. Ensure all evaluators will be trained before they conduct a teacher's or principal's evaluation.

VII. Engagement Training on the STEPS Plan

Regulations require that all classroom teachers, building principals, and any individual who conducts all or part of an evaluation are required to receive periodic training on the LEA's STEPS plan. The training course shall include, but not be limited to:

- An overview of the purpose of the STEPS plan and evaluation system, consistent with the LEA's goals and beliefs,
- The options for developing the LEA's STEPS plans found within EL §3012-e and the Department's regulations,
- The decisions made by the LEA and its collective bargaining units for evaluating teachers and principals, and
- An overview of how the STEPS plan will be used to support the professional learning of educators within the district.

Steps for this decision-making process:

1. Review the requirements and determine who is best to conduct such training (the LEA, the BOCES, another third-party, etc.)
2. Determine the frequency of these trainings and ensure they are conducted on a periodic basis
3. Ensure the training will support authentic engagement in the STEPS plan

Additional Considerations

Annual Review Component

Although not a required component of a STEPS plan, LEAs might consider adding an annual review of data and determining whether the design and implementation of the STEPS plan process provides the necessary information to support identified goals for educator practice and student outcomes.

For a more thorough discussion on how to create a continual cycle of assessment and improvement, please see [Designing a NYS STEPS Plan – a Preliminary Guide](#).

Steps for this decision-making process:

1. Convene your data team to analyze the findings of the STEPS plan
2. Survey teachers and leaders to get feedback on whether STEPS plan process felt supportive in meeting goals
3. Gather stakeholders to explore findings and discuss possible adjustments to the STEPS plan to drive school improvement