Letter from Chancellor Carmen Fariña

Dear Colleagues,

As educators, we are united by a single goal: ensuring that all our students will be ready for the next stage of their education and, ultimately, for college, a career, and a future as a productive adult. Common Core Standards raise the bar for our students and underscore the power of high-quality teaching as a tool for helping students reach these higher standards. That’s why, in order to help our students reach their fullest potential, we are also committed to supporting teachers in continuous development and reflection over time.

Advance is our City’s teacher development and evaluation system. We believe that, in order to accurately assess and strengthen our own effectiveness and for teachers to thrive as professionals, we must first be honest about what we see. For that reason, Advance considers both what teachers do in the classroom and how students respond. We believe that when our teachers and administrators look at what’s happening in the classroom together, with shared goals for student success, it is possible for schools to accelerate student progress in new ways. Advance also helps the DOE recognize the most effective instructional strategies and use that knowledge to strengthen teacher practice by systematically providing teachers rich feedback they can use to develop their practice.

Our vision for achieving success for all students, summarized in our Framework for Great Schools, shines a light on all of the moving parts of a school that work together to support student learning and growth. Through the Vision for School Improvement, school communities will apply the Framework to their collective work of identifying strengths and weaknesses, setting clear goals, and engaging in cycles of learning in service of achieving success for all students. Advance is a critical part of this work - it’s one of the engines that moves the quality of instruction in our schools forward and, ultimately, helps students succeed. For more information on how it connects to the Framework, please see Alignment across the NYCDOE.

The first year of implementation, 2013-2014, marked a significant year of growth and change for all of our schools. Now, as we enter the third year of Advance, we are able to build on successful best practices and continuously see improvement. One of my top priorities as Chancellor has always been to listen and learn from the talented professionals leading this work in their schools and classrooms. As we look forward to a new year, I’m excited to expand the strong foundation we have built together.

This year may also be a year of changes for Advance. New York State Education Law 3012-d, passed this spring, mandates that districts negotiate and implement new teacher development and evaluation systems by November 15, 2015 or apply for a hardship waiver to delay implementation in four-month increments. We are working diligently with the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) to come to agreement on a system that builds on our prior successes, and we will keep you updated this fall as we plan for implementation. Until we have more information to share, please continue the good work you are doing under our current system.

This guide explains the key features of Advance and where you can find support. I encourage you to take the time to review it and refer back to it throughout the year.

In this guide, you will find:

- A detailed explanation of the components of Advance
- A graphic representation of the scoring components
- An timeline so you know what to expect and when
- Suggested steps you may take during the school year
- A hyperlinked list of resources and supports to guide you in getting the most out of Advance

Thank you for your tireless work to continually improve and to work collaboratively to improve teaching and learning in ways that will ensure a lifetime of success for all students.

Sincerely,

Carmen Fariña
## Advance Guide for Educators

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Introduction to Advance

The New York City Department of Education is focused on ensuring that all students graduate ready for college, a career, and a future as a productive adult. A large part of meeting this goal requires us to prepare our students to think for themselves and pursue questions instead of answers. Great teaching is key to achieving these goals, and Advance is an integral part of how we recognize and strengthen teaching practice. As we enter the 2015-16 school year, we reaffirm our shared commitment to ensuring the work of Advance supports improvements in teaching and learning in our schools.

Guided by Chancellor Carmen Fariña’s vision for all students to achieve success summarized in our Framework for Great Schools, we believe Advance facilitates authentic learning in our schools that can accelerate student progress. The Vision for School Improvement, which guides school leaders in applying the Framework, asks school teams to engage in cycles of learning by addressing problems, adjusting practice, and measuring impact—all while purposefully taking time to reflect and revise practice across the school community. In the same way, Advance provides teachers and school administrators across our City with a common lens to work collaboratively to strengthen teaching and learning by engaging in cycles of continuous improvements. To do this, the work of Advance must be aligned and integrated with our daily work by supporting our school-wide goals and fostering collaboration and learning throughout the school community.

New York State Policy and Context

In 2010, New York State passed Education Law 3012-c, introducing significant changes to the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) for teachers and principals. This law laid the foundation for a more meaningful evaluation system that:

- Incorporates multiple measures of a teacher’s effectiveness;
- Uses a 4-point “HEDI” (Highly Effective, Effective, Developing, Ineffective) rating scale;
- Provides teachers with more specific feedback; and
- Supports school administrators to connect evaluation to professional development.
In 2015, New York State passed Education Law 3012-d, which further alters the APPR for teachers and principals. The New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) and the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) are working together within the parameters of the new legislation to develop and improve Advance. You will receive more information on the new system this school year. In the meantime, please continue to implement the existing system described in this guide.

NYC Voices

“Advance encouraged me to become a better teacher and to perform my teaching task more appropriately.”
– NYC Teacher

The Importance of Multiple Measures in Advance

Because teaching is a complex and multi-faceted skill, measuring teacher effectiveness and providing developmental opportunities to teachers is a complex and multi-faceted process. No single tool or method can fully measure a teacher’s impact on students. That’s why Advance uses multiple measures – both Measures of Teacher Practice (MOTP) and Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) – to provide teachers with access to various sources of feedback and more support to develop as educators. Using multiple measures allows us to get a more complete picture of what’s happening in each classroom and helps to ensure fairness and accuracy of teachers’ ratings. Additional research supporting this approach can be found on the Advance website.

Advance provides teachers and administrators with several opportunities to collaborate and reflect:

- Initial Planning Conference
- Measures of Teacher Practice
  - Multiple classroom observations, followed by verbal and/or written feedback
- Two different Measures of Student Learning
  - State Measures
  - Local Measures
- Summative End-of-Year Conference

Multiple Measures used in Advance

- 60% Measures of Student Learning
- 20% Measures of Teacher Practice
- 20% Initial Planning Conference
- 20% Summative End-of-Year Conference

Advance encouraged me to become a better teacher and to perform my teaching task more appropriately.
– NYC Teacher
Multiple Measures Working Together in Advance

Measures of Teacher Practice and Measures of Student Learning are mutually reinforcing processes. Research supports our belief that a successful system of teacher evaluation and development is one that combines actionable feedback from evaluators at multiple points throughout the year and a clear understanding of what students learn over the course of a semester or year. These two subcomponents of Advance complement each other to provide a more holistic understanding of what’s happening in classrooms. Each one contributes different aspects to Advance, strengthening the system overall and ensuring that everyone is working together to support teachers in the areas that will most impact student learning.
Introduction to Measures of Teacher Practice (MOTP)

Through MOTP, educators engage in a collaborative cycle of observation, feedback, and reflection. By establishing a shared language about instruction, MOTP provide a framework for school communities to support teacher development. Teachers can use this framework to reflect on their practice and discuss their professional growth with their school administrators and other colleagues. School administrators can use this framework to better understand where teachers in their schools excel and where they need additional support and to provide meaningful feedback that supports their growth.

MOTP comprises 60 percent of each teacher’s annual Advance Overall Rating. As part of MOTP, teachers are observed multiple times over the course of the year and each observation is accompanied by feedback. Evaluators score observations, rating observable evidence related to eight key components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching (2013) for evaluative purposes. The remaining components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching (2013) may be used for non-evaluative (i.e., developmental) purposes.

At the beginning of the year, school leaders and teachers engage in the Initial Planning Conference (IPC), an in-person individual meeting to reflect on student data from the previous year and discuss areas of development for the year ahead. Further information and key requirements of the IPC are provided below.

Similar to the IPC, school administrators and teachers meet again at the end of the year for the Summative End-of-Year Conference. This is an opportunity to reflect on the teacher’s Evaluator Forms from the current school year and to review available student data, with the goal of informing ways to improve teaching practice. Further information and key requirements of the Summative End-of-Year Conference are provided below.

**NOTE:** When a teacher is absent between the last Friday of April and the last Friday of June and the absence was unforeseen (e.g., extended leave) and therefore the evaluator could not conduct the Summative Conference ahead of time, Advance-eligible teachers must meet with their school administrator by **October 30, 2015**. Evaluators shall have the discretion to conduct the IPC and Summative Conference at the same time but must fulfill all the requirements of both conferences.

**MOTP Timeline, 2015-16**

- **Initial Planning Conferences**
  - (September 8-October 30)

- **Summative EOY Conferences**
  - (April 29-June 24)

- **Formal and informal observations**
  - (After Initial Planning Conference and ending June 3)

*Note that all timelines must be adhered to absent extraordinary circumstances (e.g., certain types of leaves).
The Danielson *Framework for Teaching*

*Advance* uses a focused version of Charlotte Danielson’s *Framework for Teaching* (2013), a research-based rubric of teacher practice, to assess teachers’ professional skills, behavior, and knowledge. The full *Danielson Framework* is comprised of 22 Components spanning four Domains: Planning and Preparation, The Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities. While the entire Danielson *Framework* may be used for formative purposes, teachers will only receive ratings on the following eight prioritized components:

2015-16 Components:

- 1a: Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy
- 1e: Designing Coherent Instruction
- 2a: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport
- 2d: Managing Student Behavior
- 3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques
- 3c: Engaging Students in Learning
- 3d: Using Assessment in Instruction
- 4e: Growing and Developing Professionally

Components in Domains 2 & 3 are weighted more heavily (85%) than components in Domains 1 & 4 (15%)

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**NYC Voices**

“I am a big believer that teachers need to construct next steps with the administrators. We try to present the observation evidence to our teachers in a way that allows them to highlight the most important next steps to focus on. We ask what key things they want to work on between observations and note those next steps for the teacher and the coaches that work with them. When an instructional coach visits the teacher to offer support, the teacher can feel confident that the coach is aware of the collaboratively set next steps and is there to help them.”

—NYC Principal
Initial Planning Conference (IPC)

The IPC is a mandatory one-on-one meeting between the teacher and evaluator that is held at a mutually agreed upon time and occurs prior to any formal or informal classroom observations required by Advance.

Key Requirements of the IPC:
- This meeting must be held before the last Friday in October (October 30 in 2015).
- During the IPC, the evaluator and teacher meet face-to-face to discuss expectations for the year ahead.
- The teacher selects an observation option (see below).
- At the conclusion of the IPC, the teacher will submit the completed MOTP Observation Option Selection Form. The signed form must be kept in the personnel file of the teacher to serve as a record of the teacher’s observation option selection and whether or not the teacher consents to have observations videotaped (see below). The teacher should be given a copy of this form for his or her records.

At the IPC, each teacher chooses between the below observation options:

**Option 1**
- At least 1 formal observation
- At least 3 informal observations

**Option 2**
- At least 6 informal observations

**Option 3**
- For teachers with an overall “Highly Effective” rating in the previous year:
  - At least 3 informal observations
  - 3 classroom visits by colleagues (teacher may consent to more)

**Option 4**
- For teachers with an overall “Effective” rating in the previous year:
  - At least 4 informal observations

**Guidelines for Videotaping and Photographing**
- All observations will be conducted in person. However, a teacher may consent to have his or her observations videotaped. The teacher and evaluator may mutually consent to evaluators not being present when videotaping. Teachers will indicate whether they consent to be videotaped on their MOTP Observation Option Selection Form.
- If a teacher chooses to have his or her observations videotaped he or she shall select among the following options:
  - The evaluator will choose which observations, if any, will be videotaped; or
  - The evaluator shall videotape the observations in the following manner:
    - For Observation Option 1, the formal observation shall be videotaped;
    - For Observation Option 2, two of the informal observations shall be videotaped (at the evaluator’s option);
    - For Observation Option 3, one of the informal observations shall be videotaped (at the evaluator’s option); or
    - For Observation Option 4, one of the informal observations shall be videotaped (at the evaluator’s option).
- Evaluators who take photographs during Advance observations, should, to the extent practicable, be unobtrusive (for example, photographs may be taken at the end of the observation).

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1 A teacher who selects Observation Option 1 may request that the IPC serve as his or her Pre-Observation Conference. If the evaluator grants this request, the IPC must occur between one and 20 school days prior to the formal observation. An evaluator may also choose to hold the Pre-Observation Conference closer to when he or she plans to hold the observation.
The Observation and Feedback Cycle

Evaluative observations of a teacher may begin as soon as the teacher has completed his or her IPC and must be completed by the first Friday in June (June 3 in 2016). No more than one evaluator and two school-based observers (i.e., the superintendent or assistant superintendent or trained administrator of the teacher’s school) may be present during a formal or informal observation.

Before an observation...

✓ Teachers who select Observation Option 1 participate in an individual, face-to-face Pre-Observation Conference as part of each formal observation. This conference must be held within 20 school days preceding the scheduled date of the formal observation. The purpose of the Pre-Observation Conference is to review the objectives, activities, and expectations for the lesson that will occur during the teacher’s formal observation.

During an observation...

✓ The evaluator gathers specific evidence of teacher’s practice, which the evaluator then aligns to the Danielson Framework and records on the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) Evaluator Form.

✓ The specific components assessed during a given observation will depend upon what is observed in the classroom during the visit, but may include any or all of the eight components of the Danielson Framework evaluated as part of Advance and must include ratings for all components that have been observed.

✓ Evidence related to components 1a, 1e, and/or 4e that is observed by the evaluator during the 15 school days immediately preceding a teacher’s observation may also be included on the Evaluator Form.

After an observation...

✓ Timely, specific feedback that is tailored to the teacher’s strengths and growth areas is a critical feature of Advance. This feedback is what establishes the link between evaluation and development. Feedback must be provided after every observation. Evaluators are required to deliver feedback that is evidence-based and aligned to the eight Danielson components within 15 school days of the observation. The format of feedback is at the evaluator’s discretion (e.g., in-person professional conversation, email, or note).

✓ A completed Evaluator Form must be provided to the teacher within 45 school days following each observation. The Evaluator Form shall contain a score on any component that is observed during the observation. Evidence related to components 1a, 1e, and/or 4e that is observed by the evaluator during the observation or during the 15 school days immediately preceding the observation may also be included on the Evaluator Form. From the time an observation is conducted until the time the teacher receives the Evaluator Form for that observation, only one additional observation (formal or informal) may be conducted for that teacher.

✓ For teachers who select Observation Option 1, the Post-Observation Conference must be held at a mutually agreed upon time within 20 school days after the formal observation occurs. The Post-Observation Conference provides the teacher and evaluator the opportunity to discuss the observation and engage in a meaningful conversation about the teacher’s practice and discuss next steps for development. The Evaluator Form should be completed and provided to the teacher after the Post-Observation Conference (Note: the completed Evaluator Form must be provided to the teacher within 45 school days following the formal observation).

“One thing that I found to be very useful was the precision of some of the feedback. I was able to know where I needed to put more effort, as well as knowing what my strengths were, which often get ignored.”

—NYC Teacher
Mid-Year Professional Conversations

Mid-Year Professional Conversations are an additional opportunity for teachers and evaluators to reflect on teachers’ growth as they engage in collaborative cycles of observation, reflection, feedback, support, and development and revisit expectations for the rest of the year. They are required as the mid-year meeting for teachers with Teacher Improvement Plans (TIPs) and are an optional best practice for other teachers.

In preparation for these conversations, school administrators should communicate ahead with teachers to schedule the meetings, review prior evaluator reports, shared feedback, and related student data and work to establish an inviting environment in which to host the conversation. Further suggestions for a successful Mid-Year Professional Conversation can be found in the At a Glance: Best Practices for Mid-Year Professional Conversations resource.

Summative End-of-Year Conferences

The Summative End-of-Year Conference is a mandatory face-to-face meeting between the Advance-eligible teacher and his/her principal and/or other evaluator. The purpose of this collaborative conversation is to review feedback and ratings from observations of practice and to identify successes, areas for improvement, and next steps toward the teacher’s continued professional growth. It is also an opportunity to reflect on available student data that may inform ways to improve teaching practice so students learn and grow.

In order to support teachers with their end-of-year reflection and planning, evaluators should consult the Summative End-of-Year Conferences Toolkit, posted on the Advance Archive Intranet. This toolkit will be updated in winter 2016 to reflect guidance for the current school year.

Evaluators are expected to take the following steps:

Key End-of-Year Evaluator Actions:

✓ Hold a Summative End-of-Year Conference with each teacher between the last Friday in April (April 29, 2016) and the last Friday school is in session (June 24, 2016).

✓ Have copies of all completed evaluator forms available for review at the conference. Note that all evidence used to inform teacher ratings must be captured on the evaluator form.

✓ Deliver MOTP Final Summary Forms to teachers, obtain teachers’ signatures, and place in teachers’ personnel files by the last day of school (June 28, 2016).

Teacher Improvement Plans (TIPs)

Any teacher who receives an Advance Overall Rating of “Developing” or “Ineffective” for the prior year will work with their evaluator to develop and implement a Teacher Improvement Plan (TIP) early in the school year. The purpose of a TIP is to assist teachers to work to their fullest potential. In creating the TIP, evaluators will consult with teachers to identify specific improvement areas as well as a timeline and plan for assessing improvement in teacher practice. Evaluators and teachers should consider the types of support teachers need to be successful.

- Evaluators will support teachers who receive an Advance Overall Rating of “Developing” or “Ineffective” with a TIP no later than 10 school days from the first day of school (September 28 in 2015). The TIP will be discussed as a part of the Initial Planning Conference (IPC), to be held by teachers receiving a TIP by September 28, 2015. Teachers may request
the attendance of a union representative at these TIP planning meetings. The TIP may be subject to further discussion at an additional Mid-Year Professional Conversation as described below.

- The TIP outlines a plan of assistance for the teacher and establishes a timeline for assessing progress.
- The TIP should in no way be construed as disciplinary in nature and should be seen by all parties involved as a way to improve educator effectiveness through professional development.
- For the 2015-16 school year only, the TIP may be subject to further discussion at an additional meeting in accordance with the following:
  - Teachers rated “Ineffective” in the previous school year may request, in writing, a separate meeting to further discuss the TIP. If requested, such meeting shall occur at a mutually-agreed upon time, but no later than 20 school days from the first day of school (October 13 in 2015). Based on the feedback received from the teacher at this meeting, the principal may modify the TIP prior to 20 school days from the first day of school (October 13 in 2015).
  - Teachers rated “Developing” in the previous school year may request, in writing, a separate meeting to further discuss the TIP and such request shall not be unreasonably denied. This meeting shall occur at a mutually-agreed upon time, but no later than 20 school days from the first day of school (October 13 in 2015). Based on the feedback received from the teacher at this meeting, the principal may modify the TIP prior to 20 school days from the first day of school (October 13 in 2015).
- As part of the TIP, the teacher and evaluator will engage in the following meetings:
  - Meeting #1: To occur in the same meeting as the Initial Planning Conference (by September 28 in 2015).
  - Meeting #2: To occur from January 2 – April 30.
  - Meeting #3: To occur in the same meeting as the Summative End-of-Year Conference.

At each one of the scheduled meetings, the teacher is responsible for presenting evidence to his or her evaluator that demonstrates the progress the teacher has made/is making towards achieving improvement on the outlined activities. It is the evaluator’s responsibility to maintain copies of all documents used in the development and implementation of the TIP, and document the completion of each activity for improvement on the TIP form while the plan is in progress. The documentation must be accessible to both the evaluator and the teacher.

Upon successful completion of all activities outlined for improvement, and upon conclusion of the final meeting between the teacher and his/her supervisor, the TIP shall be deemed complete. The supervisor will inform the teacher through verbal and written communication that the TIP has been successfully completed. The evaluator will then place copies of all documents used in the development and implementation of the TIP in the teacher’s personnel file within 10 school days of the completion of the TIP process. For more information and support, review TIP: At a Glance and the TIP Toolkit.

**Student Surveys**

Research has revealed that student surveys can be another way of measuring a teacher’s contribution to student learning. New York City piloted student perception surveys for all schools in 2014-15 for formative purposes. Though student perception surveys will not factor into a teacher’s Advance Overall Rating in 2015-16, student surveys have the potential to provide your students with a voice in their own learning process and provide valuable feedback. Teachers and principals will receive a formative report detailing 2014-15 student perception survey results in September 2015.

For additional resources and information about MOTP, see the Advance MOTP Intranet.
Introduction to Measures of Student Learning (MOSL)

Understanding how students are performing is a crucial step toward recognizing outstanding teaching and encouraging meaningful improvements in teaching and learning. Measures of Student Learning allow educators to better understand their students’ strengths and how best to support student growth. The work of Advance provides the opportunity for schools to measure student learning in meaningful ways that reinforce their instructional priorities. This happens when members of the school community collaboratively make thoughtful decisions about how to measure student learning at their school, including which assessments to use, which student groups to target, how to calculate student growth, and how to norm and score assessments.

Students enter our classrooms at very different levels. This is why all Measures of Student Learning used in Advance are based on student growth over the year, not absolute proficiency levels. This focus on student growth is what drives instructional decision-making toward the goal of preparing all students for college and careers.

MOSL Timeline*

State and Local Measures of Student Learning

Measures of Student Learning account for 40% of a teacher’s Advance Overall Rating. Since we know that multiple measures offer a more valid, robust picture of teacher performance and provide teachers with multiple sources of feedback, each teacher will have two different Measures of Student Learning: State Measures and Local Measures. Note that, in order to best represent yearly efforts, teachers who teach more than one grade/subject will have a state and local measures for each grade/subject taught.

- **State Measures** (20%) include state-determined measures (e.g., state tests), and for some grades and subjects, a list of allowable assessments (which are selected by principal when available).
- **Local Measures** (20%) include options chosen from a state-approved list by the school’s Local Measures Committee and submitted to the principal, who may accept the recommendation or opt for the Local Measures default (school-wide) measure.
MOSL Components
Each State or Local Measure includes three components: an assessment, target population, and growth measurement.

For both State and Local Measures, schools have the autonomy to select options that best match their school’s culture and needs. The principal and the School Local Measures Committee (SLMC) work together to determine the best measures for each grade and subject in their school based upon available options approved by the state. Making selections at the grade/subject-level ensures that Measures of Student Learning are applied consistently and fairly across all teachers of similar programs at a school.

For the State Measures, the principal determines the assessments, target populations, and growth measurements for each grade/subject. For Local Measures, the SLMC recommends assessments, target populations, and growth measurements and the principal either accepts all of these recommendations or opts for the Local Measure Default (a school-wide measure that includes all applicable assessments administered within the building for State Measures with the lowest third of performing students as a subgroup, as applicable) within 10 school days from the first day of school (September 28 in 2015). The process of selecting State and Local Measures is repeated annually; this ensures that schools can adjust selections to reflect lessons learned, new assessments, and evolving student needs. Principals should notify teachers of the finalized grade/subject State and Local Measures selections by October 13. For more information on school-level MOSL selections, please review the 2015-16 MOSL School-Level Selections Guide.

Once school-level selections have been made, teacher-level selection is completed to determine which assessments and target populations will be included in a teacher’s MOSL calculations. A more detailed explanation of teacher-level selections, can be found in the 2015-16 MOSL Teacher-Level Selections Guide.

Example of MOSL Selections
On the following page is an example of what MOSL selections may look like for a 4th grade ELA teacher. Note: this is an example only – actual measures are dependent upon each school’s selections. All teachers should understand which measures apply to their evaluation. If there is any uncertainty, teachers are encouraged to speak to their principal, UFT chapter leader, and/or a member of their School’s Local Measures Committee for clarification.

The School Local Measures Committee is responsible for recommending decisions about the items in BLUE (with principal approval). The items in RED are pre-determined by the state.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>GRADE/SUBJECT</th>
<th>STATE MEASURE (TO BE DECIDED BY THE PRINCIPAL, WHEN APPLICABLE)</th>
<th>LOCAL MEASURE (TO BE RECOMMENDED BY THE SCHOOL LOCAL MEASURES COMMITTEE)</th>
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Baseline Assessment Administration

Assessment is an integral tool to knowing your students’ strengths and supporting their growth, and baseline assessments can provide valuable information about where students are starting the year. The administration of baseline assessments also requires the commitment of operational resources and teacher time for norming and scoring. Administration of fall baseline assessments for MOSL is optional in most cases for 2015-16. This provides schools with more autonomy to implement Advance in accordance with their school’s context and instructional priorities.

In the early grades there is limited historical student achievement data available for teachers to review. **For this reason, the administration of baseline assessments in grades K-2 is strongly encouraged.** Please note that the K-2 assessments that are MOSL-eligible are performance-based assessments, designed to authentically measure students’ abilities through tasks like Running Records, NYCPTs, reading inventories in kindergarten and math inventories in grades K-1.

For kindergarten students there is no historical student achievement data for teachers to review and the NYCDOE to use when calculating growth. **For this reason, if the NYCDOE growth model is selected with an individual target population, the administration of baseline assessments is required for all kindergarten grade/subjects.** If goal-setting is selected, administration of a fall baseline is strongly encouraged but not required.

Because baseline assessments can be instructionally valuable, schools may also choose to administer fall baseline assessments even if they choose not use the scores for MOSL purposes. For the 2015-16 school year, the fall baseline assessment administration window is **September 9 – October 30.** Additional information on baseline assessments is available in the [2015-16 MOSL School-Level Selections Guide](#) and the [2015-16 MOSL: Assessment Administration Handbook](#).

The Importance of Norming Scoring Practices

New York City Performance Assessments will be scored locally by teachers within each school. Teacher teams should norm their scoring practices, as these assessments present a valuable opportunity to support collaborative professional development. By discussing assessment prompts, student work, rubric language, and student scores, teachers can establish a common understanding of what students need to know and be able to do. This information can inform planning and instruction.

Additionally, norming scoring practices helps to ensure that all scorers are calibrated to the rubric to ensure fair grading practices across students, teachers, and schools. School administrators or assessment coordinators will work with their instructional teams to develop a plan for norming and scoring. Teachers and school administrators can access [professional learning resources](#) to support norming processes among teacher teams on the [Advance MOSL Intranet](#).

For additional resources and information about MOSL, see the [Advance MOSL Intranet](#).

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2 This policy refers to the administration of baseline assessments for MOSL purposes only. Any assessments that are a required component of Response to Intervention must still be administered.
As educators, we know that the beginning of the school year is a crucial time for building relationships with students and setting the right tone in a classroom. This time of year is just as important for teachers and school administrators to step back and think holistically about the year ahead, discuss professional development goals, and align on a plan for support. This section highlights several activities, opportunities, and suggestions that educators can take to start the year strong.

Beginning-of-Year Teacher Checklist
By October 30, 2015, teachers and evaluators hold an Initial Planning Conference (IPC) to meet and discuss instructional priorities, student needs, and ensure that Advance supports each individual teacher. To best prepare for this important meeting:

 ✓ Ensure that you and your administrator have a shared understanding of the courses you are teaching and your instructional priorities. Reflect together on your practice and develop strategies for improvement to further support student learning.

 ✓ Consider reviewing your historical Advance data and completing a self-assessment of teaching practice: In preparation for your IPC, it may be useful to log onto the Advance Web Application and reflect on your professional strengths and areas for growth. In addition, while not required, you might consider reviewing the Danielson Framework and completing a self-assessment of teaching practice.

 ✓ Identify two to four formative professional goals: Before or during the IPC, the teacher may consider self-assessing on the Danielson Framework and prioritizing two to four formative professional goals for the school year. Professional goal-setting can help the teacher establish clear intentions about the instructional decisions and pedagogical approaches they want to work on in order to maximize academic achievement for all students. Teachers’ self-assessments, reflections on peer and school administrator feedback, and students’ learning objectives (where applicable) can inform these priorities. Completing a self-assessment and reviewing feedback and other data from the previous year may help you to prioritize two to four formative professional goals for the new school year. (Note: professional goal-setting in the IPC is at the teacher’s sole discretion.) Consider discussing your professional goals with your evaluator during your IPC, in order to lay a foundation for future developmental conversations. For a guided activity on establishing goals aligned to the Framework for Great Schools see here.

 ✓ Identify Opportunities for Support: Before the IPC, the teacher may consider identifying supports and resources that can aid in their development over the course of the year. During the IPC, the teacher and the principal should discuss these supports and resources, as well as any additional the principal can provide.

 ✓ Decide on your preferred observation option and record this at your IPC using the MOTP Observation Option Selection Form.

 ✓ Decide whether or not you want to be videotaped for evaluative purposes and record this at your IPC using the MOTP Observation Option Selection Form.

 ✓ Prepare to discuss your Measures of Student Learning (MOSL): The IPC is an opportunity for the teacher and evaluator to discuss the assessments used for a teacher’s MOSLs and upcoming MOSL-related activities (e.g., administering and scoring baseline assessments, making connections to MOSL data from the previous year, etc.). Once MOSL selections are made later this fall, you will be able to review your individual teacher-level MOSL selections in the Advance Web Application and should discuss any questions you have with your principal to better understand the rationale for your school’s MOSL selections.

 ✓ Discuss opportunities for collaboration in teacher teams to support the administration and norming and scoring of assessments selected as MOSLs using the 75-minute block after the regular instructional day.
Our vision for *Advance* stems from our goal of ensuring that every child graduates a critical thinker, prepared for college, a career, and a future as a productive adult. One key to achieving this long-term goal lies in the day-to-day actions of teachers, school administrators, and NYCDOE staff. By integrating the practices of *Advance*—ongoing observation and feedback cycles in the context of Common Core Standards and curricula combined with a collaborative focus on student outcomes, we can ensure that all of our efforts are truly aligned with our vision.

Both MOTP and MOSL are designed to strengthen the efforts of teachers, teacher teams, school administrators, and support staff throughout the entire year. While the Initial Planning Conference and the Summative End-of-Year Conference serve as critical bookends for teachers and school administrators to step back and discuss teacher practice, student progress, and professional learning, the most critical work takes place during the months of school in between these conferences. The effort that educators invest each day in their classrooms is what truly impacts student learning, and *Advance* is most effective when teachers and school administrators find ways to connect it to daily practice.

**Best Practices: Integrating MOTP**

Here are some best practices that have emerged across the City as teachers and administrators have integrated new MOTP structures and practices into their daily work:

✓ **Use rubric language from the Danielson Framework to anchor conversations about teacher practice:**
  - Teachers are using the Danielson *Framework* to talk to each other in the hallways and during formative peer classroom visits. Some teachers are incorporating the Danielson *Framework* into self-reflection and planning for professional learning.

✓ **Build a culture of formative observation and feedback:**
  - School administrators conduct formative observations to support teacher development, in addition to evaluative observations. Teachers also participate in peer inter-visitations.

✓ **Conduct regular feedback meetings:**
  - Principals and instructional teams meet daily to discuss observations, feedback, and planned support.

✓ **Communicate frequently and collaboratively set next steps:**
  - Teachers and school administrators review multiple sources of information and collaboratively determine areas for growth and appropriate next steps. These steps include both professional learning steps and classroom practice steps, as well as frequent professional conversations about progress.
Best Practices: Integrating MOSL

Here are some best practices that have emerged during the first two years of Advance implementation as teachers across the City began to integrate new MOSL structures and practices into their daily work:

- **Review student work and assessment results in vertical and horizontal teacher teams:**
  - Teams of teachers engage in collaborative review of student work to better understand the needs of individual students as well as grade-level, subject area, or school-wide trends.

- **Use norming exercises to plan instruction across grades or subjects:**
  - Some schools use the assessment norming and scoring processes to increase collaboration and ensure that teachers share a common understanding of student mastery levels, their strengths, and growth areas.

- **Use MOSL NYC Performance Task rubrics to review student work throughout the year.**

- **Use MOSL NYC Performance Task rubrics to spark conversations among students about their own progress:**
  - Some teachers share NYC Performance Task rubrics directly with students to build their academic vocabulary, encourage them to self-assess their own work, provide feedback on their peers’ work, and inform teacher-student conversations.

- **Use baseline assessments to determine student starting points:**
  - Some teachers who administer baseline assessments review the results early in the year to adjust their instructional plans for the year based on the individual needs of their students.

- **Use benchmark and formative assessments to regularly check-in throughout the year to assess student progress:**
  - In addition to the baseline assessment and end-of-year assessments, some teachers choose to access centrally-provided, or create their own, mid-year benchmark assessments that serve as critical check-points for assessing student learning.
  - This year, teachers will continue to access the NYC Performance Tasks in addition to centrally-provided CCLS-aligned benchmark options through Schoolnet. Prior year NYC Performance Tasks may be used as informal benchmarks since they are aligned in structure and skills to this year’s NYC Performance Tasks.
The end of the school year is a critical time for teachers and school administrators to assess student progress over the course of the year and to reflect upon each teacher’s individual professional growth. *Advance* processes offer an important opportunity to collect critical student learning data, and to slow down and reflect upon teachers’ hard work as school communities begin to wrap up the current year and begin planning for the one ahead.

**End-of-Year MOSL Assessment Administration**

Since all MOSL ratings require the administration of an end-of-year assessment, many teachers will need to take specific steps related to MOSL at the end of the year. The comprehensive [2015-16 MOSL: Assessment Administration Handbook](#), available in the fall, contains detailed information to support teachers and school administrators as they prepare to administer assessments, norm and score them properly, and submit student scores for the NYCDOE to calculate ratings.

Remember, just like during the baseline assessment administration window in the fall, schools will be able to dedicate the 75-minute block after the regular instructional day to MOSL-related work during the End-of-Year assessment administration window in the spring.

**Summative End-of-Year Conferences**

As described earlier in this document, the **Summative End-of Year Conference** occurs between the school administrator and the teacher, prior to the end of the current school year. Evaluators are required to hold a Summative End-of-Year Conference with each teacher between the last Friday in April (**April 29 in 2016**) and the last Friday school is in session (**June 24 in 2016**). Evaluators are also required to bring copies of all completed Evaluator Forms to this meeting.

**Key End-of-Year Evaluator Actions:**

- **Hold a Summative End-of-Year Conference with each teacher between the last Friday in April (April 29, 2016) and the last Friday school is in session (June 24, 2016).**

- **Have copies of all completed evaluator forms available for review at the conference. Note that all evidence used to inform teacher ratings must be captured on the evaluator form.**

- **Deliver MOTP Final Summary Forms to teachers, obtain teachers’ signatures, and place in teachers’ personnel files by the last day of school (June 28, 2016).**
MOTP Weighting for End-of-Year Ratings

A weighted average of all component scores will determine final MOTP scores (see chart to the right). Components in Domains 2 and 3 are weighted more heavily (85%) than components in Domains 1 and 4 (15%). Scores from informal and formal observations will count equally.

Advance Overall Ratings

Measures of Teacher Practice, State Measures, and Local Measures will each have a point value. Taken together, these multiple measures lead to an Advance Overall Rating for each teacher on the HEDI scale – “Highly Effective,” “Effective,” “Developing,” or “Ineffective.”

Key Question: When will teachers receive their 2015-16 Advance Overall Rating?

MOTP rating 60%
Communicated to each teacher by June 28, 2016.

MOSL ratings 40%
Communicated to each teacher by September 1, 2016.

Advance Overall Rating 100%
Combines MOTP and MOSL ratings and is communicated to teachers by September 1, 2016.
In-Person Supports

Teacher Development and Evaluation Coaches (TDECs)
The Teacher Development and Evaluation Coach (TDEC) is a member of the Superintendents’ team and the principal’s first point of contact with questions about Advance. These colleagues play a prominent role in implementation and professional learning by supporting school-based professional learning and providing resources to ensure schools effectively implement Advance across the district.

Each school’s TDEC will:
- Ensure that school leaders have the information and support they need to meet the expectations of the Framework for Great Schools through effective implementation of Advance and Common Core Learning Standards.
- Offer job-embedded support for all aspects of Advance implementation, differentiated based on school needs.
- Co-observe in classrooms to support rating accuracy and meaningful feedback practices.
- Check-in with evaluators and gather feedback to inform system-wide implementation.
- Help make connections between Advance and district-specific priorities.

Borough Field Support Center (BFSC)
BFSCs work closely with schools and Superintendents to provide integrated supports to address instructional, operational, and student service needs. The BFSC Deputy for Teaching and Learning and Advance Points support TDECs by coordinating data reporting, resolving operational issues, and providing technical assistance.

Online Resources

Advance Support Help Desk- AdvanceSupport@schools.nyc.gov
The Advance Support Help Desk is a team of NYCDOE staff dedicated to addressing inquiries about Advance from NYCDOE educators. Teachers, school administrators, field support staff, and superintendents can email the Help Desk with any questions about Advance.

Advance Intranet
This online hub houses documents and resources designed to support teachers and school administrators implementing Advance. Here, you’ll find up-to-date announcements with detailed information about all aspects of Advance including a comprehensive library of policy questions and answers. This site will be the home of all Advance-related resources and guidance released throughout the year.

Teachers and school administrators, use your regular NYCDOE login information to access this site. If you do not know your log-in information, please use the password recovery and account confirmation tool.
A Vision for School Improvement: Applying the Framework for Great Schools

The Vision for School Improvement highlights a process for schools to engage in as they embed the Framework for Great Schools into ongoing cycles of learning in support of the growth and success of all students.

This site supports teachers, school administrators, and school support teams with resources and tools for developing a shared understanding of the Framework, assessing needs and establishing goals, and engaging in cycles of learning. A collection of facilitation guides for professional learning activities are available to support teacher leaders and school administrators in guiding teams to deepen knowledge and strengthen practice.

Learn

Learn provides a centralized place where NYC DOE teachers and school administrators can explore the Danielson Framework through a self-assessment tool and find aligned professional learning resources, including teaching videos, facilitator guides and protocols to use with teacher teams, tools, and articles. NYC DOE educators can access Learn by logging in using your NYCDOE ID and password at https://learn.arisnyc.org.

Schoolnet

In the 2015-16 school year, NYC Performance Tasks and other Periodic Assessments, as well as results from certain NYC Performance Assessments and 3rd Party Assessments will be available to all schools in Schoolnet. Schools will be able to view the results of baseline assessments in Schoolnet. Assessment results will be available to all schools that administer them, regardless of whether the baseline assessment results will be used for MOSL purposes.

School administrators use your regular NYCDOE login information to access this site. If you do not know your log-in information, please use the password recovery and account confirmation tool.

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3 These include Periodic Assessments that can also be selected as a MOSL and other assessments from the Periodic Assessment portfolio. For more information about Periodic Assessments available in Schoolnet, review the 2015-16 Periodic Assessment Guide.
3rd Party Assessments: Assessments developed by vendors. Many have previously been used in schools across NYC. Some of these assessments are closer to performance tasks than standardized, multiple choice-only assessments.

Advance: NYC’s teacher development and evaluation system, as required by the New York State Education Department and negotiated by the NYCDOE and the UFT.

Advance Web Application: The online application that supports Advance implementation. School administrators and other groups can use this application to make MOSL selections, enter goals, submit teacher ratings and monitor progress over the course of the year. It is recommended that schools use this data entry system to simplify data collection and reporting.

Baseline Assessment: An assessment of student performance designed to show growth over time. The baseline is administered during the fall and paired with an end-of-year assessment in the spring to measure growth. The administration of baseline assessments is not required for MOSL purposes except in cases of Kindergarten assessments selected for MOSL purposes along with the growth model; rather, Local Measures Committees and principals decide whether or not teachers will administer them for MOSL purposes. Because baseline assessments are instructionally valuable, schools may also choose to administer fall baseline assessments even if they choose not use the scores for MOSL purposes. Baseline assessments are available for all schools to use for their periodic assessment plans regardless of if they choose to administer them for MOSL purposes.

Evaluator: Any authorized district superintendent, assistant superintendent, principal, or assistant principal (or other trained administrator) of the observed teacher’s school who has received the requisite training to properly observe, evaluate, and/or score the teacher’s Advance Overall Rating in accordance with Education Law 3012-c and as outlined in the NYC’s APPR plan.

Evaluator Form: The form completed by the evaluator within 45 school days of a teacher’s evaluative observation for Advance. The Evaluator Form shall contain lesson-specific evidence for components observed during an observation and teacher-specific evidence for components relating to professionalism and preparation that may have been observed within fifteen (15) school days prior to the observation. The Evaluator Form also has a space for additional evaluator notes, which are optional. The report can be prepared by entering teachers’ ratings in the Advance Web Application or off-line by printing a blank form from the Advance Web Application. The form must be signed by the teacher and the evaluator and placed in the teacher’s file in accordance with the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Evidence: Specific, observable features of teaching practice captured by evaluators taken during any formal or informal classroom observation; it may also include direct observations of practice related to components 1a, 1e, and/or 4e captured within 15 school days preceding an observation. Any notes are the sole property of the evaluator and do not constitute a record of the teacher observation process and, therefore, will not be included within a teacher’s file. Evidence is drawn from the observation process, including notes recorded on the evaluator form.

Feedback: Evidence-based commentary that is aligned to the Danielson Framework. The primary purpose of feedback is to reinforce strengths and to help teachers improve; for example, evaluators may note areas of growth that were observed and also note one or two areas for improvement. Evaluators must provide teachers with feedback in any format (verbal or written communication) within 15 school days following an evaluative observation.

Formal Observation: A full-period observation scheduled at a mutually agreed upon date and time. Formal observations must be preceded by a Pre-Observation Conference held no more than 20 school days before the observation is
scheduled to occur and followed by a Post-Observation Conference held no later than 20 school days after the observation occurs.

**Goal-setting:** Measurement method that examines students’ progress in relation to goals set for students at the beginning of the year. For some assessments, suggested goals are provided by the NYCDOE. For individual target populations, goals are set by the teacher and submitted to the principal for approval. For grade and school target populations, goals are either set by the Local Measures Committee or the principal (depending on the Committee’s selections). If the principal is responsible for setting these goals, then he/she sets the goals and submits them for approval to the superintendent.

**Growth models:** Growth models measure the extent to which the students included in a teacher’s measure grow academically over the course of the year. Students’ growth is always compared to that of similar students. The NYCDOE or NYSED will provide student growth scores and the accompanying teacher rating to teachers and principals after assessments have been administered.

**HEDI Rating:** The numerical value a teacher receives based on the evaluator(s) scoring of the components within each of the four Danielson Domains. The 1-4 HEDI score represents the numerical value associated with the four performance rating categories (Ineffective, Developing, Effective, and Highly Effective) established by the Commissioner.

**Informal Observation:** An observation lasting a minimum of 15 minutes; it does not require prior notification to the teacher. All can be unannounced and at least one must be unannounced.

**Initial Planning Conference (IPC):** A mandatory one-on-one meeting between the teacher and evaluator that is scheduled at a mutually agreed-upon time and occurs prior to any formal or informal classroom observations required by Advance. During the IPC, the evaluator and teacher discuss expectations for the year ahead and the teacher selects his or her Observation Option. This year, the IPC must be held no later than Friday, October 30, 2015.

**Local Measures:** One subcomponent of Advance. The category of Measures of Student Learning that includes options recommended by the School Local Measures Committee and approved by the principal (or default chosen). Options include State Assessments, 3rd Party Assessments, and NYC Performance Assessments. If the committee cannot reach consensus, or the principal does not approve their recommendation, a default, school-wide measure will be used. The default would include all assessments administered at the school used for State Measures, a school-wide target population, with the measurement option (e.g. goal-setting or growth model) used in State Measures. When necessary, the lowest third of performing students subgroup will apply for the Local Measures default.

**Measures of Student Learning (MOSL):** Two subcomponents of Advance. All teachers will receive two MOSL ratings: one based on State Measures and one based on Local Measures. State Measures account for 20 percent of a teacher’s Overall Rating, and Local Measures account for 20 percent of a teacher’s Overall Rating.

**Measures of Teacher Practice (MOTP):** One subcomponent of Advance. All teachers will receive a rating on MOTP, based on classroom observation ratings on eight components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching (2013). MOTP ratings account for 60 percent of a teacher’s Overall Rating.

**NYC Performance Tasks:** Open-ended item type assessments (e.g., evidence-based essay) developed by NYC teachers, NYCDOE, and assessment experts and scored against common rubrics. NYC Performance Tasks are one type of assessment option that is eligible for MOSL purposes.

**Observation Option:** The choice a teacher makes about how he or she will be observed and rated. The four options to choose from are the same as last year: Option 1 (at least one formal and at least three informal observations); Option 2 (at least six informal observations); Option 3, which is only available to teachers rated Highly Effective in the prior year
(at least three informal observations, plus three classroom visits by a colleague); and Option 4, which is only available to teachers rated Effective in the prior year (at least four informal observations).

**Peer Validator:** A teacher who was selected through a joint NYCDOE-UFT process, who observes and rates teachers who received an “Ineffective” rating in the previous year. To ensure objectivity, the validator does not have contact with the teacher or evaluator as part of the evaluation process, and provides his/her independent assessment of the teacher’s practice for comparison with the school-based evaluator’s assessment at the end of the rating period.

**State Measures:** One subcomponent of Advance. The category of Measures of Student Learning that includes State Assessments or, where there are no State Assessments, the list of allowable assessments that can be used. Where there are choices in State Measures, the principal makes the choice.

**Target Population:** The students who may be included in the State or Local Measures for a given assessment:

- **Individual:** Only those students that a teacher teaches.
- **Grade:** Students in a given grade level.
- **School:** All students within the school.
- **Linked:** Includes only the teacher’s students who take an assessment administered *in another teacher’s course* (e.g., a HS Theater teacher is evaluated based on the growth of only his/her students on the 9th and 10th grade NYC Performance Tasks in ELA).

**Teacher Improvement Plan (TIP):** A plan provided by an evaluator to a teacher rated “Developing” or “Ineffective” in the previous school year. The plan identifies specific improvement areas as well as a timeline and plan for assessing improvement. As a part of the TIP, the teacher and his/her evaluator will engage in three meetings throughout the school year to discuss and assess the progress the teacher has made/is making towards achieving improvement on the outlined activities.