**Introduction**

The appraisal and development process revolves around three yearly conferences between teachers and their appraisers: the Goal Setting Conference, the Progress Conference, and End of Year Conference.

Each conference provides an opportunity for teachers and appraisers to discuss continuous professional improvement and ways to effectively guide students toward greater achievement.

During the conferences, appraisers and teachers discuss the teacher’s past and present performance, the teacher’s areas of strengths and improvement, and individualized professional development opportunities that support the teacher’s continued learning and professional growth.

### Appraisal and Development Conferences (2011-2012 only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference Type</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Main Responsibilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal Setting Conference</td>
<td>by October 7, 2011</td>
<td>• Review prior teacher and student performance that includes information from prior observations and student performance data</td>
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<td>• Identify professional targets for the coming year</td>
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<td>• Build development plans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Progress Conference</td>
<td>by January 17, 2012</td>
<td>• Provide teacher with comprehensive, written feedback on all Instructional Practice (IP) and Professional Expectations (PE) criteria</td>
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<td>• Provide teacher with formative IP and PE ratings</td>
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<td>• Discuss development plan, modifying as needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>End of Year Conference</td>
<td>by May 2, 2012</td>
<td>• Provide teacher with comprehensive, written feedback on all Instructional Practice (IP) and Professional Expectations (PE) criteria</td>
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<td>• Provide teacher with final IP and PE ratings, and with a Summative Appraisal Rating</td>
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<td>• Review development plan and set goals for following year</td>
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Ongoing feedback conversations based on multiple observations, targeted development activities and other information

This Progress Conference Guide is intended as a resource for teachers and includes information on:

- How to **prepare for the Progress Conference**, including recommended actions that appraisers and teachers may take prior to each conference

- What to expect **during the Progress Conference**, including recommendations on how to structure each conference, as well as sample guiding questions

- Action steps to take **after the Progress Conference**
# Progress Conference: Overview

## Prior to the Progress Conference

The **teacher** should:
- Reflect on his or her teaching practice to date *(recommended activity)*
- Come prepared to review development plan and progress made toward professional targets *(recommended activity)*

The **appraiser** should:
- Schedule time with the teacher for the Progress Conference
- Complete at least one walkthrough of at least 10 minutes in length and one observation of at least 30 minutes in length prior to the Progress Conference—each followed by written feedback and in-person feedback for the observation
- Collect information and assign formative ratings for all Instructional Practice and Professional Expectations criteria
- Complete the *Progress Conference Form*
- Review teacher’s development plan and consider progress made toward professional targets

## During the Progress Conference

The **teacher** may bring:
- Current version of development plan
- Written feedback from observation(s) and walkthrough(s)
- Teacher Self-Reflection form *(for personal use only)*
- Planning materials
- Copy of IP/PE rubric
- Calendar (to schedule follow-up meetings or development plan check-ins)

The **appraiser** may bring:
- Current draft of development plan
- Written feedback from observation(s) and walkthrough(s)
- Progress Conference Form
- Copy of IP/PE Rubric
- Calendar (to schedule follow-up meetings or development plan check-ins)
- Appraisal and Development Implementation Manual

**Appraiser** may:
- **Communicate objectives** for the conference and establish norms for communication
- **Engage with teacher in a reflective conversation** about the teacher’s practice to date, including teacher’s strengths and areas for improvement
- **Provide formative ratings and comprehensive feedback** for Instructional Practice and Professional Expectations
- **Review and discuss progress made on the teacher’s development plan**, making adjustments as necessary
- **Establish clear next steps** for the appraiser and teacher after the conference

## After the Progress Conference

- Finalize any modifications to the teacher’s development plan.
Progress Conference: In Detail

By the time you meet with your appraiser for the Progress Conference, you will have received at least one observation and one walkthrough, with feedback for both. The objectives of the Progress Conference are to:

- **Discuss and reflect on your performance to date** using the performance expectations set forth in the Instructional Practice and Professional Expectations rubrics
- **Provide you with formative Instructional Practice and Professional Expectations ratings**
- **Revisit your development plan** and modify if necessary

Preparing for the Progress Conference

In order to meet the Progress Conference’s objectives, consider taking the following steps.

1. **Engage in a self-reflection of your practice to date (optional).** Self-reflection is not required, but is highly recommended. The Self-Reflection Form\(^1\) provides you with a framework to help guide your self-reflection. This form will not be included in your appraisal and is for your personal use only.

2. **Review any relevant information on your prior performance, including previous year’s observations and any relevant student learning data (optional).** Part of the self-reflection process will allow you to reflect on your performance in the previous year. Consider reviewing the following sources of information:
   - Prior year student assessment results
   - Appraiser notes from prior year’s observation
   - Attendance records, pass/fail rates, grade distribution, discipline, and classroom management records

3. **Submit evidence to include in your appraisal.** Your appraiser will assess this evidence and decide if it will be used to inform the appraisal rating. If so, the evidence will be documented at the Progress Conference. **You must submit the information no later than 20 instructional days prior to the end of the Progress Conference period. The 2011-12 deadline for submitting support materials to an appraiser is December 2, 2011.** (If a teacher has his or her progress conference scheduled for a date prior to December 2\(^{nd}\), he or she will need to provide support materials to his or her appraiser at least 5 instructional days before the date of the scheduled conference.)

\(^1\) The Self Reflection Form can be accessed on the HR portal at the following link:
[http://www.houstonisd.org/portal/site/HumanResources/menuitem.ad2660175a2a37a580bea611e041f76a/?vgnextoid=150c2eaa5d6f1310VgnVCM10000028147fa6RCRD&vgnextchannel=3c75ebf3ba8d1310VgnVCM10000028147fa6RCRD](http://www.houstonisd.org/portal/site/HumanResources/menuitem.ad2660175a2a37a580bea611e041f76a/?vgnextoid=150c2eaa5d6f1310VgnVCM10000028147fa6RCRD&vgnextchannel=3c75ebf3ba8d1310VgnVCM10000028147fa6RCRD)
4. **Prepare to provide your appraiser with an update on your development plan.** You may ask yourself the following questions when preparing for the Progress Conference:

- **Did you meet/make progress towards your professional targets?**
  - i. If so, how do you know? If not, what supports will you need?
- **Are there any modifications you feel need to be made to your development plan?**

**During the Progress Conference**

Effective Progress Conferences can be structured in many different ways. The following agenda and guiding questions illustrate one way a Progress Conference can be structured.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Progress Conference Agenda</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction and Overview</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appraiser sets the purpose of the conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Teacher and appraiser discuss the teacher’s questions on the appraisal and development system</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher Self-Reflection on Performance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher reflects on his/her practice to date and the impact he/she is having on student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Receive Formative Instructional Practice and Professional Expectations Ratings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appraiser reviews overall formative Instructional Practice and Professional Expectations ratings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appraiser provides comprehensive feedback on teacher’s strengths and areas for growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Review and Update Teacher Development Plan</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher discusses and reviews progress made toward professional targets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher and appraiser identify new targets and activities to promote professional growth, if necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Next Steps and Closing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appraiser and teacher ensure the following documents are complete and signed by January 17, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Progress Conference Form</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- The teacher’s development plan, if transitioned to a new development plan or if revised</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Suggested Talking Points/Guiding Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction and Overview</strong></td>
<td>Appraiser explains the purpose of the conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Appraiser sets expectations for the feedback that the teacher will receive during this conference.</strong> Your appraiser should have already given you comprehensive feedback after at least one 30-minute observation, which took place before this conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Discuss questions on the appraisal and development system.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Teacher Self-Reflection on Performance | Teacher self-reflects on performance to date. Your appraiser may ask you to share your self-reflection on your practice. You should also expect to share your thoughts on your areas of strength and areas for growth. It is recommended that you ground your self-reflection in the language of the Instructional Practice and Professional Expectations rubric, and cite as many specific examples from your practice as possible. One way you can structure this conversation is as follows:  
- One area of strength is [Instructional Practice/Professional Expectations criteria]. An example of why this is an area of strength is _______.  
- One area I would like to develop is [Instructional Practice/Professional Expectations criteria]. An example of why this is an area I would like to develop is _______.  
Some other possible sentence starters that you may use during this conversation include:  
- Over the past several months I learned _______.  
- In the coming weeks/months, I am planning to do _______ because _______.  
- I was/was not satisfied with the impact that I have had on my students over the past several months because _______. |
| Need:  Teacher Self-Reflection Form (optional) |  |
| Receive Formative Instructional Practice and Professional Expectations Ratings | Appraiser will provide you with your formative Instructional Practice/Professional Expectations rating and provide you with comprehensive feedback on your strengths and areas for growth.  
Appraiser will encourage you to respond to the feedback and propose next steps that you can take to make progress toward your professional targets. Sample questions that you may be asked are located in Appendix A of this document. |
| Review and Update Teacher Development Plan | Identify whether modifications should be made to your development plan. Some sentence starters you may use during this conversation are:  
- I have made/not made progress toward my professional learning target/development target because _______.  
- Some examples that illustrate the progress I made toward my professional learning target/development target are _______.  
- Because I did not make as much progress as I had hoped, I would like to modify my professional learning target to _______.  
- I believe that [name kinds of supports] to help me accomplish [professional learning/development target].  
- I would like to add [focus area/activity] to my development plan. |
| Need:  Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) or Prescriptive Plan for Assistance (PPA) |  |
| Next Steps and Closing | Appraiser and/or teacher will summarize any goals set and next steps that have been established to ensure that you leave with a clear understanding of what was agreed upon.  
Appraiser will clarify the next steps in the appraisal and development process so you know what to expect.  
Teacher will ask any final questions. |
After the Progress Conference

After the Progress Conference, please remember to take care of the following items:

- **Sign Progress Conference Form.** The Progress Conference Form must be signed by you and your appraiser by January 17, 2012.

- **Finalize modifications or revisions to Teacher Development Plan.** You and your appraiser must finalize any modifications or revisions to your teacher development plan.
  
  o **Note:** If you are starting a new development plan (e.g., you were on a PPA and are transitioning to an IPDP), make sure that your new development plan is complete and signed by you and your appraiser.

- **Follow up on any next steps** established between you and your appraiser during the conference.

**TIP:** Immediately following the Progress Conference, remind yourself of any follow up action you agreed to take by scheduling a reminder on your Outlook calendar.
Appendix A: Key Questions

Appraisers may ask you these questions during any one of the three conferences to prompt a joint discussion on your performance.

I. Level 4
   a. Given your strength(s) in ____, would you be willing to coach, allow observations by, or co-teach with teachers who are struggling in these areas?
   b. How best can I support you in continuing to have such a positive impact on student learning outcomes?
   c. What types of learning opportunities would you like to participate in to further develop your leadership skills?
   d. As you think about your professional learning and the needs of your students, have you identified any action research to implement this school year? What support do you need to accomplish this research?
   e. In your opinion, what are the most successful strategies you have implemented since the beginning of the year?
   f. As you move into the next phase of the school year, what are your 3 highest priorities for your students?

II. Level 3
   a. What types of learning opportunities do you think you need to further improve your student’s learning outcomes?
   b. What types of learning opportunities would you like to participate in to further develop your leadership skills?
   c. As you think about your professional learning and needs of your students, have you identified any action research to implement this school year? What support do you need to accomplish this research?
   d. Are there any leadership roles currently available that are of interest to you?
   e. In your opinion, what are the most successful strategies you have implemented since the beginning of the year?
   f. As you move into the next phase of the school year, what are your 3 highest priorities for your students?

III. Level 2
   a. What types of learning opportunities do you think you need to improve the learning outcomes of your students?
   b. Are there teachers in the building you would be interested in learning from?
   c. As you plan for the individual needs of students in your classroom, what data sources do you currently use to identify the academic performance of each student?
   d. As you plan your lessons, what resources are you using? How are you identifying appropriate learning outcomes for your students? And how far in advance are you planning your lessons?“
   e. How best can I support you in improving your instructional practice?
   f. In your opinion, what are the most successful strategies you have implemented since the beginning of the year?
   g. As you move into the next phase of the school year, what are your 3 highest priorities for your students?
IV. Level 1
a. What types of learning opportunities do you think you need to improve the learning outcomes of your students?
b. As you plan your lessons, how do you utilize HISD’s written curriculum to determine instructional strategies and learning outcomes? What type of support do you need related to these tools?
c. What types of formative assessments are you using in the classroom? (daily quizzes, student work samples, etc.)
d. Are there teachers in the building you would be interested in learning from?
e. As you plan for the individual needs of students in your classroom, what data sources do you currently use to identify the academic performance of each student?
f. How best can I support you in improving your instructional practice?
g. In your opinion, what are the most successful strategies you have implemented since the beginning of the year?
h. As you move into the next phase of the school year, what are your 3 highest priorities for your students?