

FAQs on the piloting of PEPG systems

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As educators across the state know, the last two years have been abundant with conversation, revision and activity related to developing and implementing Performance Evaluation and Professional Growth (PEPG) systems so that all students have access to effective teachers and principals.

Now on the threshold of the pilot year, all school administrative units will test-run parts of their PEPG systems. The pilot is a great opportunity to study PEPG system elements for feasibility and intended effects and organizational needs. In order to maximize the potential for all SAUs, the Department answers below the most frequently asked questions about the pilot year.

Question: *What if we are behind in developing our system and won't be ready to pilot in September?*

Answer: The Department is aware that circumstances resulted in delays in development of PEPG systems for some districts, and that not all SAUs will be ready to begin piloting in September. Local development committees should prioritize aspects of the system that are of concern and plan to pilot these elements for a long enough period to assess their functionality and quality and make adjustments prior to submitting the PEPG plan for approval.

The Department encourages SAUs that are still in the development phase of any aspect of their PEPG system to look to the recently released state **teacher** and **principal** PEPG models and the state Student Learning Objective **(SLO) Handbook** for guidance and possible adoption. These and other resources are available on the **Educator Effectiveness webpage**.

Question: *We are considering piloting our professional practice framework in the fall and then piloting our student learning and growth element beginning in January. Is this acceptable?*

Answer: Yes. The Department strongly encourages districts to include student learning and growth measures in the pilot once the measures are developed, even if this means introducing the measures later in the pilot year.

Question: *Does the pilot have to include all teachers and principals in the district?*

Answer: No. The pilot does not have to include all teachers or all schools in the district, nor does the pilot negate existing evaluation systems or related activities. Districts are advised that no official action related to employment or compensation may be taken based on a PEPG system that has been developed in accordance with Revised Maine Statute, **Title 20-A: Education, Chapter 508: Educator Effectiveness** until that system has been approved by the Department. Since approval can only occur after the system has been piloted and the system plan submitted to the DOE for review, it may be advisable to continue existing evaluation cycles for some educators during the pilot.

Question: *Our SAU is planning to adopt the state teacher/principal PEPG Model. Do we still have to pilot the model?*

Answer: Yes. Just as SAUs are expected to make adjustments to their PEPG systems based on a pilot, the Department expects to make adjustments to the state models based on piloting in districts that adopt them. To that end, we are requesting that any district who chooses to use one of the state models please contact the **Educator Effectiveness Coordinator**. In addition, any model is likely to play out differently among districts of varying size and composition; the pilot will help SAUs tailor the state model to local needs.

Note: If an SAU defaults to a state model for teachers or principals on June 1, 2015 in accordance with Rule Chapter 180, the SAU will forfeit the opportunity to pilot the model because it will be too late. For this reason, the Department strongly encourages SAUs to avoid defaulting to a state model by either adopting one voluntarily in time to run a pilot in 2014-15 or by completing the development of a local PEPG system in time to run a pilot.

For more information on PEPG systems please contact the Department's Educator Effectiveness Coordinator, Mary Paine at mary.paine@maine.gov or 207-624-6748.

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