

TEPG Frequently Asked Questions

Overview

1. What is the TEPG program?

The Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth (TEPG) program calls for an ongoing series of conversations and activities that emphasize formative feedback and professional growth throughout an annual cycle of evaluation. The process can be illustrated in four overlapping steps. (Teachers should refer to their TEPG handbook for detailed descriptions of each step). Throughout the cycle, teachers reflect and self-assess against standards grounded in the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) Five Core Propositions (MSFE TEPG rubric).



2. Why is my district participating in the TEPG program?

Maine Schools for Excellence (MSFE) and your district partnered, applied for and received federal Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant dollars to design and implement an educator effectiveness model that supports professional growth and development through a comprehensive, best practice human capital management system that supports and recognizes educators as professionals and rewards their hard work and dedication. The grant provides extensive resources to ensure that the benefits of the program are realized, most importantly: improving teaching and learning.

3. What are the benefits of participating in the TEPG program?

The research is clear- teachers and principals are the first and second, respectively, most important in-school factors influencing student performance. Through evidence-based feedback, goal-setting, and reflection, educators' practice will improve which will positively impact student performance over time. In addition to improving student performance, teachers will improve their own professional practice and have career opportunities that will align with their strengths and skills.

4. How does the evaluation process work? What is included in my final rating?

The TEPG involves a 4-stage process. Details of this process and the multiple measures that inform the rating, including e.g., professional practice, professional goals, student growth, student perceptions of classroom environment, etc., are found in your district's TEPG handbook. Generally, the process incorporates goal-setting, observations with feedback and evidence gathering, reflection and rating, and planning. At its core is an ongoing series of conversations and activities that emphasize formative feedback and professional growth throughout an annual cycle of evaluation.

5. When will I have time to participate in the TEPG program, the other district & school initiatives, and my regular responsibilities?

The TEPG program aligns with the work that is already going on in your school and every attempt possible is being made to integrate this work into initiatives and practices already in place.

Acclimating yourself to the new requirements and expectations has been built into the professional development calendar for you. This program was designed by practitioners who were thoughtful enough to build upon practices that already exist.

6. Will I receive recertification credits for this extra training and work?

You will receive contact hours for participation in all TEPG professional development activities that might be applied to recertification (subject to approval by district certification committee).

7. How does the TEPG program impact my pay?

The MSFE program includes a Recognition and Reward component in which every teacher has the opportunity to earn significant performance-based compensation. Every teacher has the same opportunity, which is in addition to one's regular salary and has no impact on your contractual compensation. Performance based pay is distributed at the end of the school year and based on multiple, weighted measure performance targets and instructional leadership roles a teacher might assume. A summative effectiveness rating (TEPG Rating) of effective or higher is required to be eligible for any recognition and reward. Teachers should refer to their district's Recognition and Reward framework for more detailed information on the design of their district's specific program.

8. How long does the grant last?

We are fortunate that this is a five-year grant that runs through 2017. The intent is to use grant funds to build district capacity over the course of the grant period so this program will be embedded in the work of educators and districts beyond the end of the grant funding.

Given the resources available, on-going support, research-based best practices, and commitment by the administration to the project – the evaluation system and other procedures should have staying power and should lead to positive outcomes for teachers and students.

9. What professional development will be available?

There will be ongoing professional development throughout the grant, delivered primarily through your TEPG Facilitators and supported by MSFE staff. Topics will include, e.g., understanding the TEPG process and the TEPG Rubric, writing SLOs, participating in peer-observations, understanding the summative rating, and understanding how the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards' Core Propositions and related TEPG standards are evidenced in teacher practice.

Outcome Measures

1. What is a Student Learning Objective (SLO)?

An SLO is a measurable goal that:

- Is set by a teacher for his or her students at the start of a course or period of study;
- Targets the specific learning needs of students;
- Contains growth targets—quantifiable amounts of student learning expected by the end of the course, usually measured as growth between pre-assessment and post-assessment; and
- Should be written as a collaborative effort whenever possible.

2. What happens if my students or I don't reach the goal?

You will reflect on these results and use this data to inform your future practice; perhaps identifying resources you might need to assist you in your professional growth. The percentage of your students reaching the pre-set goal on the SLO will be calculated into your overall summative rating (see TEPG handbook for Summative Evaluation Rating details).

Effective teaching results in student growth. It is not expected that 100% of students will reach their growth target. Baseline data for and understanding of your particular group of students will be used to set a target that will be ambitious, but attainable.

3. Who will help me with my SLO?

Your school administrators and the TEPG Facilitators are receiving extensive training in both the writing of SLOs and how to train and support their colleagues in SLO writing. During the SLO professional development, you will learn how to walk through the SLO process. Also, the Maine Schools for Excellence website (<http://www.maine.gov/doe/excellence/>) has resources for writing SLOs that have been created by practitioners from across the state

4. What is a learner perception survey? See the following site:

http://www.metproject.org/downloads/Student_Perceptions_092110.pdf for more information about the Tripod Student Survey.

Summative Ratings and Growth Plans.

1. What if I don't agree with the final scoring of my performance?

Discuss this with your evaluator. If you can't work it out through this, use your district's usual steps for appealing administrator decisions.

2. How will I know where I stand on the Rubric?

With each observation, you will receive feedback from your evaluator during your conference and you will have access to his or her final observation notes and preliminary ratings.

3. How will I know that I am being evaluated fairly?

Evaluators will be receiving extensive training to ensure rater-agreement and that the evaluation process is as objective as possible.

Peer Observation

1. Will my peers be evaluating me? What will they be looking for?

No. Peer observations are purely supportive, not evaluative. All teachers will participate in a reciprocal peer observation annually and will be able to choose the peer observer so it is a comfortable and meaningful experience. In your TEPG cohorts, you will learn how to conduct peer observations; including feedback and questioning techniques. The focus will always be on the TEPG rubric standard indicators that you identify prior to the observation. The information that your peer observer gathers and shares with you is non-evaluative and is not shared with your evaluator.

Recognition and Reward

1. Will recognition and rewards lead to competition among teachers in buildings?

In an environment where teachers and leaders work together toward common goals in the interest of students, the TEPG, LEPG and Recognition and Reward programs are designed to reinforce such teamwork and collaboration. These programs have been carefully designed by the districts to encourage competition against commonly held goals for student success, and not between teachers and schools. Through the Recognition and Reward program, teachers will have equal opportunity to

earn performance based compensation based on frameworks for calculating performance pay that include several group measures.

See your districts' TEPG and SLO handbooks and Recognition and Reward frameworks for detailed information on each program.