



## Your Virtual **PERA Coach**

Issue Number 14 - January 2018

A publication created by the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council and the Illinois State Board of Education to guide you in implementing the *Performance Evaluation Reform Act*.



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Dear Illinois Educator,

Happy New Year! We hope 2018 is filled with many learning opportunities for your students and staff. Professional development and growth are important for all learners. Now is the time of year when many of you are having mid-point reflective conversations about student growth. This issue of the *Virtual PERA Coach* provides you with examples of reflective questions you might ask during these conversations as well as key takeaways from our recently hosted webinar with Bensenville School District #2.

Please continue to let us know if there are specific topics or questions you would like to see addressed in upcoming issues of the PERA Coach by using this [link](#) or the one at the bottom of this issue.

Sincerely,

The Performance Evaluation Advisory Council

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PEAC partnered with the Midwest Comprehensive Center and Bensenville School District 2 in November to host a webinar to help support school districts in the ongoing implementation and refinement of their educator evaluation systems.

**Bensenville's Experience**

Bensenville School District 2 was a Race to the Top district and, therefore, an early implementer of PERA - the Performance Evaluation Reform Act. They have been working under its tenets since 2012.

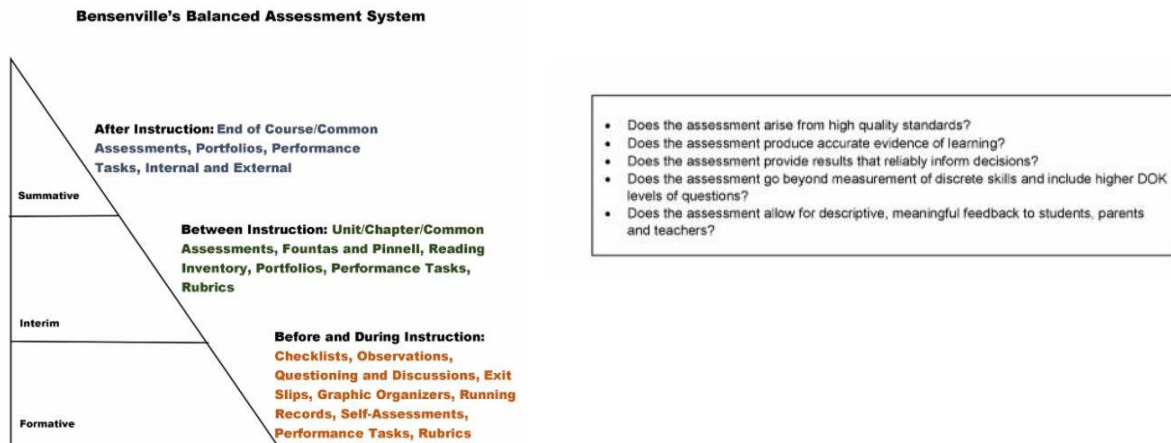
The performance evaluation process led to two major by-products:

- 1) Establishment of a system-wide assessment literacy
- 2) Job-embedded professional development.

## **Assessment Literacy**

Bensenville staff members looked at their assessments to ensure that they had a balance of literal, multiple choice question items as well as performance task questions.

They designed five questions to use to determine the value of their assessments and whether they should be included into their assessment system. Now their teaching, assessing, and learning are all connected.



Click [here](#) for a larger view of Bensenville's balanced assessment model and the five questions they use to evaluate their assessments.

## **Job-embedded Professional Development**

Professional development opportunities in Bensenville now emerge from data collection through Professional Learning Communities.

The performance evaluation system inspired systemic monitoring protocols such as demonstration classrooms and the use of Instructional Rounds. It also changed the nature of the conversations held at professional learning community meetings so they became focused on student growth and instructional impact.

Previous to the performance evaluation system, staff members were engaged in random, fragmented, often off-site workshops with no return on student outcomes. Now they focus on their students' learning needs to develop a professional development plan.

Members of the Bensenville School District realize that the key to sustaining any initiative lies in the extent to which schools have internalized district-wide goals and engage the whole school in focusing on the essentials of improving teaching and learning for all students.

## **View a Recording of the Webinar**

Click [here](#) to view a recording of the webinar.

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## Our Readers Ask

Dear PERA Coach,

**What type of goals are required to meet the professional practice portion of the evaluation? In my district, we are required to have two professional SMART goals per evaluation cycle. This seems like more than is necessary according to Administrative Code Part 50.**

Dear Reader,

This is a district decision that should be made by your district's PERA Joint Committee.

Illinois Administrative Code Part 50 establishes the minimum requirements for the establishment of valid and reliable performance evaluation systems. The components and decisions related to a district's performance evaluation system must comply with the requirements of PERA but should align to the school's and district's school improvement goals and occur within a context of continuous improvement.

It is PEAC's recommendation that Joint Committees meet several times a year to review feedback about implementation and make any necessary adjustments.

In situations in which a joint committee cannot reach agreement on one or more aspects of student growth within the timeline established under Section 24A-4(b) of the School Code, the school district shall adopt the State model plan with respect to those aspects of student growth upon which no agreement was reached.

Click [here](#) for a reminder of the Part 50 student growth and assessment type requirements.

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## About Learning Goals

Learning goals/targets for student growth should reflect high expectations for student learning and be developmentally appropriate. The targets should be rigorous yet attainable. Teachers should identify a goal(s) for student growth (ideally, they should be SMART goals -goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound).

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## Reflective Conversations

Schools and districts need to use the data that is collected to learn about their students

and inform instruction. To do this, reflective conversations should be held throughout the year between teachers and evaluators and/or within professional learning communities. These conversations should take place at the beginning of the year when teachers identify their learning goals, at a mid-point check-in to discuss whether students are on track to meet their growth targets, and toward the end of the year to discuss learning results.

Some suggestions for questions to ask during the mid-point review include the following:

- Are the students on track to meet the targets you have set? Who is struggling? Who is exceeding?
- What instructional adjustments could you make to ensure all students can reach the established targets?
- How might the growth targets be adjusted based on the mid-point data? What evidence do you have to support this need?
- What have you learned so far about your students? What have you learned so far about your instruction?

Click [here](#) for additional suggestions for reflective questions to use during professional conversations throughout the year.



## Questions and Sharing

### We Want to Hear From You

We want our upcoming issues of the PERA Coach to be responsive to your needs and to reflect the work that is occurring in school districts throughout the state.

What questions do you have about PERA implementation?

Would you be willing to share any success stories or lessons learned as you have implemented PERA in your district ?

Use this [link](#) to submit your questions or to provide contact information to share your PERA story.

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### Additional Resources

[Illinois State Board of Education Webpage - Educator Evaluations - PEAC web page](#) This site contains links to guidance documents, resources, and past PERA Coach Newsletters to help teachers, administrators, PERA Joint Committees, and School Boards implement the Performance Evaluation Reform Act.

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### Questions or Topic Suggestions

Use this [link](#) to submit questions or topic suggestions for future issues

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