



## Your Virtual **PERA Coach**

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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,

Although the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) officially retires at the end of June 2017, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) will continue to support the work of PEAC and implementation of PERA. There is pending legislation for PEAC's new charge that includes gathering feedback, promoting best practice and making recommendations to ISBE.

This issue of *Your Virtual PERA Coach* focuses on the continuous improvement aspect of the process. The evaluation process, when implemented with fidelity, should be an integrated system that incorporates reflecting, planning and analyzing.

Much information can be gained from all the sources of data used in a comprehensive performance evaluation system. This information should be analyzed and used to plan professional development opportunities and goals for the district, school, teacher, and students. The cyclical process continues to repeat with the end result being improved instructional practice and increased student achievement.

Thank you for taking us with you on your PERA journey. We wish you much success and growth as you continue to refine your performance evaluation system.

Sincerely,

The Performance Evaluation Advisory Council

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## The Road to PERA: Continuing the Journey

This year three-quarters of Illinois districts implemented new teacher evaluation systems incorporating student growth. As schools finish their first year using the new systems, it's a good time to pause, first

to look back and then to look forward.

In January 2010, the Illinois legislature passed the Performance Evaluation Reform Act. This legislation gave Illinois educators an opportunity to increase the amount of high quality performance feedback our state's teachers and principals receive.

PERA called for district joint committees, made up of teachers and administrators, to develop plans for incorporating student growth into the evaluation process. With input from PEAC, ISBE developed guidance and a "default model" that provided joint committees with answers to the question, "What happens if our joint committee can't come to an agreement on an element of our plan for incorporating student growth?"

Joint committees continued to meet, and eventually adopted plans for their new evaluation systems. In most districts the joint committee discussions also raised other important questions: Do we have the right assessments? Are our assessments aligned with what we're teaching? How can we find time for our teachers to work together? But at the end of the process, the overwhelming majority of joint committees reached agreement without having to default to the state model.

This year, most districts implemented their evaluation plans for the first time. Teachers worried about SLOs, types of assessments and measures of growth. Evaluators wondered how they would find the time for the conferences, the formal and informal observations and all the paperwork.

But you did it! Teachers developed their SLOs, students completed assessments, classes were observed, teachers and evaluators met, and summative ratings were assigned. Based on what we heard in our interviews with joint committee members from districts across the state, it wasn't perfect but it was a big step in the right direction. Here's some of what we heard:

- **"For the first time, we're really talking about teaching."**
- **"The process has forced us to get serious about our assessments."**
- **"It was a lot of time, but it was worth it."**

And we also heard lots of good questions:

- **"How can we develop stronger SLOs?"**
- **"Are we treating our non-classroom staff fairly with this new evaluation system?"**
- **"How can we get better at measuring growth for students with disabilities?"**

### A Continuous Improvement Approach

Implementing a new evaluation system is a process, not an event. We need to stay focused, keep listening and keep learning so we can keep improving.

So now that you've completed a year, it's time for your joint committee to reconvene, answer a few basic questions and develop a process to keep refining your system over time.

First, did you implement your plan with fidelity? Start by collecting some data on the process, and then have an honest discussion about what you did and when you did it to identify points in the process that need more attention. Consider basic questions like, did conferences take place? Were SLOs prepared and agreed upon? Also consider system-level questions, like did our district provide all resources, supports, and training outlined in our implementation plan? Moving forward, has our district budgeted adequate resources to support continued implementation with fidelity?

Second, is the evaluation system making a difference? Do teachers think they are getting good feedback? Do evaluators see changes in practice? Do teachers and evaluators believe the SLO's are accurate reflections of growth? How can the evaluation system be improved to offer even more high quality feedback that is actionable and meaningful for teachers?

After you've discussed implementation and impact, consider what's next. Do we need more training? Do we need more team planning time? How can we use the evaluation data to inform plans for

professional development? Are we using the right assessments?

What process do we have in place to continue assessing implementation and impact over time? Will the joint committee continue to meet?

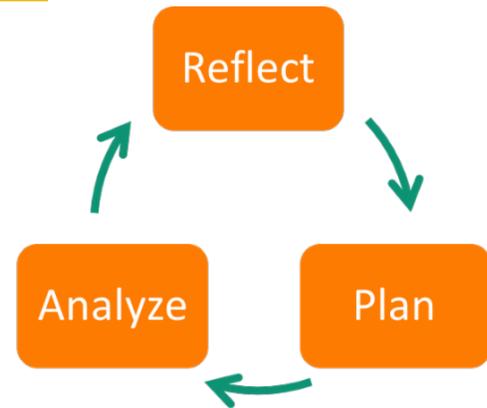
We've updated many of PEAC's guidance documents to mention this focus on continued improvement and look forward to further refinements as districts continue to implement.



## Continuous Improvement

### Reflect, Plan and Analyze

The evaluation process fits nicely into a Reflect, Plan and Analyze format. This model can be used at all levels as teachers reflect upon their students' data and their lessons then plan appropriate instruction and analyze the results. Teams of teachers or departments can do the same with their shared data and team goals. School-level evaluators and district administrators analyze the data for school or district-wide trends. Lastly, the PERA Joint Committee uses the district's quantitative and qualitative data to assess the evaluation process system-wide.



### End of the Year Meeting Suggestions for the PERA Joint Committee

The end of the year is an ideal time for districts' Joint Committees to reflect upon how the performance evaluation system functioned and to discuss any modifications that need to be made to the process. Reflection time should also be included as a regular part of end-of-the year discussions held at the individual, department/team and school levels.

**Reflect** upon the year and how the evaluation process went for teachers and administrators.

- What were the success stories?
- What were the challenges?
- What lessons were learned?
- What changes need to be made to the process, forms, timelines, etc. to make the evaluation system run as effectively and efficiently as possible?
- Who will make these changes and how will the changes be communicated?

**Analyze** the data (both student growth and instructional practice information) gained from the evaluation process;

Look for trends in the evaluation data. Trends can be found in assessment data, from coded/aligned observation evidence, or from recurring themes that are discussed during pre/post observation conferences.

**Plan** the timelines for the year, adjusting if needed, for changes in the starting or ending dates of school.

Use the trend data found in the analysis component to plan for goal-setting (individual, department/team, school and district) and professional development opportunities.

As an example, it might be noticed that students score low in critical thinking or that teachers are not asking many higher level thinking questions in their classes. A meaningful professional



year summative conversations run smoothly and provide documentation for the teacher and district about the teacher's evaluation. The forms should be easy to understand and provide guidance to ensure accuracy of determining final evaluation ratings.

\*Click [here](#) to see a full-size editable copy of an end-of-year conference form Bensenville School District #2 uses to record teacher's progress toward their professional practice and student growth goals. The form contains charts for determining the teacher's student growth rating.

Note: Bensenville's form was created based on their Joint Committee discussions and is not intended to replace your local Joint Committee's work.

Name of Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

This form is exactly the same as the teacher's End-of-Year Conference Pre-work Form. The teacher completes this form and brings it to the End-of-Year Conference Meeting. The Evaluator's Form simply provides the evaluator with a guide as to what the teacher is completing in preparation of the meeting; the evaluator may document notes on his/her copy prior to the meeting. During the meeting the evaluator and teacher discuss progress towards the teacher's Professional Practice and Student Growth goals; it is at this time that the evaluator completes this form.

\*The Illinois Professional Teaching Standards discussed throughout the evaluation process informs the strength and growth area data.

**Professional Practice Component**

Cite specific areas from the Framework for Teaching Rubrics to complete the chart below.

Strengths	Growth Areas

**Student Growth Component**

**Type II Assessment**

No Growth/Negative Growth 1	Minimal Growth 2	Meets Growth 3	Exceeds Growth 4	Teacher Type II Rating
Below 25% of students advanced 1 column or regressed	25-49% of students advanced 1 or more columns	50-77% of students advanced 1 or more columns	78-100% of students advanced 1 or more columns	<input type="checkbox"/> No Growth/Negative Growth <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal Growth <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Growth <input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Growth <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Apply
6/25	6/25 12/25	13/25 19/25	20/25 25/25	

A form used in Bensenville School District #2

### Additional Website Link and Resources

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

### Previous PERA Coach Issues

Click the following links to view previous issues of Your Virtual PERA Coach

[January 2017 Issue](#) - Student Learning Objective example, reflective conversations about student growth, Spotlight on Ball-Chatham District

[October 2016 Issue](#) - evaluator certification renewal Information, conducting observations, reflective conversations and time management

[August 2016 Issue](#) - start of the year requirements, an evaluation timeline and time management

[May 2016 Issue](#) - how to use evaluation data and sustainability

[April 2016 Issue](#) - getting ready for implementation and preparing an on-going communications plan

[March 2016 Issue](#) - spotlight on two district's journey to PERA implementation

[February 2016 Issue](#) - focus on optional weightings and determining Summative Ratings

[January 2016 Issue](#) - continued focus on assessing student growth and student learning objectives

[December 2015 Issue](#) - focus on assessing student growth

[November 2015 Issue](#) - focus on developing a communication plan and evaluating teacher practice

[October 2015 Issue](#) - focus on getting started and the work of the PERA joint committee

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