Principal and Teacher Perceptions of Performance Evaluation and Professional Growth (PE/PG) System Implementation

Prepared by:

Ian M. Mette, Ph.D.

Janet C. Fairman, Ph.D.

Patricia L. Lech, M.D., M.S.

Maria C. Frankland, M.S., M.S.C., NCC

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Maine Education Policy Research Institute

University of Maine

Orono, Maine

THE UNIVERSITY OF **MAINE**
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Executive Summary

Why was this study conducted?

In 2012, the 125th Maine State Legislature enacted new legislation through LD 1858 which directed Maine school districts to develop Performance Evaluation and Professional Growth (PE/PG) Systems for teachers and school principals. While many school districts were piloting or implementing their PE/PG systems in limited ways since 2012, districts were required to fully implement these systems in fall 2017. In 2018, the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs requested the Maine Education Policy Institute (MEPRI) to conduct a study to investigate the challenges and successes schools are having as they strive to fully implement Maine's PE/PG policy since last year. This report follows several previous MEPRI reports since the inception of the PE/PG law.

What do you need to know to put this study into context?

Previous MEPRI studies of the PE/PG initiative from 2014 to 2016 found both progress and challenges in the early stages of developing, piloting and implementing these systems (Fairman & Mette, 2017; Mason & Porter, 2014; Mason & Tu, 2015; Mette & Fairman, 2016). These studies also found mixed levels of support for the PE/PG policy among school and district administrators. These studies collected the perspectives of administrators through a small number of interviews as well as statewide surveys.

The current study, conducted in fall 2018, captures the perspectives of both principals and teachers, including Career and Technical Education teachers. Through a statewide survey of principals, assistant principals, and heads of schools (referred to collectively as "principals" in this report) and a survey of a representative sample of PK-12 teachers, the current study allows for a comparison between administrator and teacher perspectives. The study also allows for perspectives and PE/PG district practices to be examined in relation to demographic variables such as: district enrollment, locale (urban/ suburban/ rural), grade level configuration of schools, Title 1 status of schools, and percentage of students eligible for free and reduced school lunch. Given the move toward full implementation in the prior year, it is an appropriate time to hear from both principals and teachers how this major initiative is being implemented and what additional supports they may need.

What did we learn from this study?

Part I. Perceptions of PE/PG System Implementation

Broadly, the results from this statewide survey provide evidence that school districts are continuing to make progress in their efforts to implement their PE/PG systems. The results also indicate that school districts are making some substantive changes in their PE/PG systems that depart from the plans submitted to and approved by the MDOE. The evolving PE/PG systems signal that districts are trying to both strengthen and streamline their systems, to meet their own educational purposes and needs. Compared to a recent MEPRI study (Fairman & Mette, 2017) that comprehensively reported on district PE/PG plans, results from this study suggest that districts continue to rely primarily on building administrators to evaluate teachers but some districts also use trained teachers and other evaluators. Further, districts use a broad range of sources of data or information to evaluate both principals and teachers that takes into account staff, student and parent feedback. Generally speaking, these kinds of changes in PE/PG systems serve to make the evaluation process of educators more open and transparent.

While a majority of educators indicated positive views about their districts' teacher evaluation systems, we found that a sizeable percentage of teachers responding to the survey (nearly a third) expressed negative views. Overall, teachers were significantly less positive in their views than principals. For example, 10% of responding principals compared to 30% of responding teachers felt their systems did <u>not</u> allow administrators or evaluators to "evaluate teachers accurately," and 10% of the principals compared to 32% of the teachers felt their systems did not allow administrators or evaluators to "evaluate the effectiveness of teachers." However, the more negative views about the evaluation systems were largely dispersed across the districts and not concentrated within any district. Among the districts with more than one educator responding, there was no district where all responding principals and teachers felt their teacher evaluation system was not accurate.

Large gaps were also found between principals' and teachers' level of awareness about components of their districts' evaluation systems. For example, teachers indicated a higher level of uncertainty than did principals about what sources of evidence may be used for teacher evaluation in their districts. Further, a much higher percentage of teachers (24%) than principals (9%) believed that trained teachers are used to evaluate teachers and provide summative feedback. One possible explanation for this discrepancy may be that teachers may have confused formative peer observation and feedback with summative observation and feedback from peers. These findings suggest teachers may be less aware than principals about the components of teacher evaluation systems and additional communication may be needed to ensure teachers understand how they are being evaluated.

Part II. Perceptions of Professional Growth and Formative Feedback

The survey also collected data on principal and teacher perceptions about the ways their PE/PG systems were supporting their professional growth, how administrators and evaluators were providing formative feedback, and whether their systems made a distinction between formative feedback and summative evaluation. Part of the intent of this MEPRI study was to see if there were perceptual differences between principals and teachers, but also to examine whether perceptions differed based on certain demographics, and we found many. We found principals indicated statistically significantly higher levels of agreement than did teachers that administrators are able to provide professional growth and formative feedback for teachers. This means that while principals are more positive about the feedback capabilities of administrators, teachers are statistically significantly less positive about the ability of principals to provide formative feedback to help teachers grow. Additionally, teachers were statistically significantly more positive about the use of peer observation to support professional growth than were principals. These are perceptual differences that are crucial to consider in moving forward with any updates to PE/PG policy or implementation, whether at the state or local levels.

In addition to perceptual differences between teachers and principals regarding feedback and professional growth, there were also statistically significant differences in educators' perceptions based on district enrollment size, locale, and school grade configuration. First, regarding district size, school districts with less than 500 students were statistically significantly more positive about their districts' provision of providing formative feedback than were respondents from school districts that had more than 2000 students. Second, regarding

where districts are located, rural remote school districts were statistically significantly more positive about their perceptions to help teachers professionally grow and provide formative feedback than most other school districts with larger population bases. Third, regarding perceptions of educators based on school grade configuration type, educators working in elementary schools were statistically significantly more positive about their districts' PE/PG systems providing summative evaluation and formative feedback than were educators in high schools. These are important findings for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers to consider.

Part III: Themes from Principal and Teacher Comments on PE/PG Systems

The many comments from principals and teachers to the open-ended survey questions in many instances confirmed findings from the scaled items and quantitative data, but also provides some additional insights as educators were able to elaborate on their perceptions about their districts' PE/PG process and implementation. Additionally, the open-ended questions also gave principals and teachers the opportunity to make specific suggestions about supports needed to fully implement their systems with fidelity. More recently hired teachers also had the opportunity to comment on how well their pre-service preparation programs had prepared them to engage in the PE/PG process. The broad themes emerging from our analysis of the respondents' comments are highlighted below:

What is working well?
- There is broader engagement of teachers and other personnel in the process of peer observation, evaluation and developing professional growth plans. (Confirms quantitative results described in Part I of this report.)
- Teachers feel they have more agency over developing their own growth goals.
- Formal evaluation is more widespread now and is more consistent within districts, compared with more informal and less consistent practices in the past.
- There is a shared or common language around the PE/PG process and professional practice models.
- Districts are providing supports such as instructional coaches. (Confirms quantitative results.)
- Teachers appreciate the emphasis on professional growth over evaluation in their districts.
- Teachers feel supported and respected for their professional knowledge by their principals. (The quantitative results revealed some mixed views on supports from principals and districts and less positive views from teachers than principals.)

What is challenging?
- Overwhelmingly the challenge of finding time was emphasized by both principals and teachers. Principals struggle to observe and give feedback to teachers. Teachers struggle to document their work. (Confirms quantitative results.)
- Some teachers and schools are still struggling to understand and find time to develop Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and assessments.
- Some teachers feel more professional development is needed in their schools to support PE/PG work and development. (Confirms quantitative results.)

- Concerns about reliance of PE/PG systems on quantitative measures of teaching, such as student achievement testing results.
- Some principals and teachers feel the emphasis on summative evaluation and implications for job security have created additional stress for teachers and reduced teacher morale.

What big changes have districts made?
- Districts have continued to revise their PE/PG systems in part to streamline the process to meet the time and staffing constraints that are challenging. Some examples of this include:
  - fewer observations of teachers,
  - shorter observations,
  - staggered cycles for teacher evaluation across multiple years, and
  - focusing on fewer domains from their professional practice model.
- Districts have also added new components or are beginning to implement components that were planned within their PE/PG systems, including:
  - engaging and training more district and school personnel in the process of observation and evaluation, such as peer observation of principals and teachers (confirms quantitative results),
  - including a broader range of staff in evaluation (e.g., educational technicians and para-professionals),
  - expanding the focus on a broader range of domains in the professional practice models,
  - continuing or adding more training on systems and calibration for observation and evaluation, and
  - adding or selecting different data management systems for PE/PG documentation and communication.

What additional supports are needed?
- Related to the challenges described by educators, principals and teachers emphasized the need for more time and personnel to implement their PE/PG systems with fidelity, which require funding resources.
- Also related to the challenges, teachers emphasized the need for time and professional development to engage in the development of their PE/PG systems and to meet the requirements of the process. More comments from teachers in smaller, rural districts indicated a need for professional development than in larger districts. (By contrast, the quantitative survey results indicated more positive views about professional development supports from educators in small, rural districts than in larger districts.)
- Educators predominantly called for consistency in the state and local policy or to "stay the course", but noted more time and supports are also needed for this initiative. They generally feel they are making positive progress and there are positive changes from this policy.

How well do pre-service programs prepare teachers for PE/PG?

- Overwhelmingly responses from teachers recently hired (within past five years) by their districts expressed the view that their pre-service preparation programs had not included information or prepared them to engage in the PE/PG process. A few teachers felt their student training experience gave them some preparation for PE/PG. Some specific topics teachers suggested to include in pre-service training included the following:
    - o Components of PE/PG and the process,
    - o How to document student learning through assessments and other ways,
    - o How to document professional growth and practice, and
    - o More training on classroom management.

What do we conclude overall from this study?

Based on the survey responses from principals and teachers who represent schools and districts from across the state, we can make some broad observations and conclusions about the ways that PE/PG systems area currently being implemented and how they have continued to evolve and change since the deadline for full implementation last year. The results also reveal some important gaps – one being a significant difference in opinion between administrators and teachers about how systems are being implemented, the degree to which systems allow for accurate evaluation of teachers and evaluation of teacher effectiveness, and whether or not teachers are provided with various types of support and formative feedback to improve their practice and professional growth. Overall, principals indicated significantly more positive views than did teachers about their PE/PG systems. Another gap revealed in the data are significant differences in perceptions about implementation and supports based on the size and locale of school districts. In fact, these findings were somewhat surprising, revealing that educators in some smaller, more rural school districts felt more supported in their professional growth and with formative feedback than in larger and less rural districts. We describe some of the broad conclusions from this study in the paragraphs below.

Overall, this study highlights that school districts in Maine have continued to make progress in their implementation efforts and continued development of their PE/PG systems. Data from teachers and principals highlight the evolutionary process of districts creating more formal, consistent PE/PG systems. Additionally, school districts have added broader sources of information to inform both teacher and principal evaluation (such as parent, student and staff climate surveys), and seemingly have attempted to streamline their respective PE/PG systems.

However, there are large gaps in perception between teachers and principals understanding the possible components of their respective PE/PG systems. This confusion in sources of teacher evaluation could be problematic, particularly in creating clear and transparent teacher evaluation systems. Additionally, there are statistically significant perceptual differences based on demographics regarding professional growth and formative feedback. Specifically, educators in smaller, more rural schools tend to be more positive about professional supports and feedback than in larger districts. Additionally, educators in elementary schools are more positive about professional supports and feedback than educators in high schools.

This study also confirms that time and personnel continue to be major challenges for schools to fully implement their PE/PG system with fidelity. Due to these time demands, principals noted they were struggling to meet observation requirements and provide timely feedback to teachers, and teachers noted they were struggling to document their work and continued confusion over SLO development and assessment. Participants' comments suggested

that this can have negative impact on the climate of a school building, as teachers struggle to receive supports and feedback to help improve instruction.

To help address these challenges, educators have repeatedly called for consistency in the state's PE/PG policy to avoid further demands of time or on personnel. One way to help with this might be to increase the use of peer observations to help drive professional growth improvement efforts and increase the frequency of formative feedback. While peer evaluation should likely remain stratified based on formal teacher leadership positions (i.e., department chairs or grade-level team leaders), increased use of peer observation to promote increased formative feedback to help drive professional growth seems like a valuable use of teachers' expertise, especially to promote the human resource development of teachers.

What are some implications for policy and practice?

Drawing on a large and representative sample of principals, assistant principals, heads of schools and teachers from across the state of Maine, this survey study provides substantial data evidence of both progress and challenges in efforts to implement PE/PG systems at the district and school levels. Many of the challenges persist from prior years of piloting these systems, such as time, personnel, and training to support the effort. With the expectation of full implementation last year, districts made some decisions about streamlining and focusing their PE/PG systems to accommodate the time and staffing challenges and to align more closely with their desire to focus more on supporting the professional growth of educators than on summative evaluation. Both state and local education policymakers can draw on the findings of this study to reflect on ways to overcome the challenges and support the important work happening in schools. We describe here some potential implications for policy and practice based on the survey findings.

Policy:
- Principals and teachers generally felt positive about the improvements made in their evaluation process and the majority of comments indicated support to maintain the state policy or "stay the course". They called for consistency and an effort to minimize changes in the policy at the state or local levels. Educators noted that time and patience is needed for these systems to be fully developed and implemented.
- Challenges of time, personnel and training to support this effort continue to be significant obstacles and have negative impacts for administrator and teacher workload, stress and morale, all of which could inadvertently contribute to the state's shortage in teachers and high turnover rates among administrators and teachers. State and local policymakers will need to find ways to both make these systems manageable as well as to fully fund the time, personnel and training necessary to support them.
- State policy initiatives could be used to fund regional collaboratives that share training and resources to support both principal and teacher professional development on aspects of PE/PG systems including: SLO and assessment development, peer observation and formative feedback, and using a variety of ways to document both student learning and teaching practice. Some districts continue to use facilitators to support their work and find this helpful, as indicated in educators' comments.
- In looking for ways to support districts and educators, the state will need to recognize that a "one size fits all" approach won't address the varied needs across the state. Small, rural and larger, less rural districts have different capacities and needs. Principals in larger schools may need more assistance to conduct observation and give feedback to

teachers which could mean adding additional trained evaluators. Teachers in smaller, rural schools may lack access to training on PE/PG systems that more urban schools can access. Similarly, district leaders may need to examine the different capacity and needs of their schools and grade levels.

- Districts have de-emphasized their use of the state assessment and have chosen to rely more on local assessments to inform evaluation. Given the continued concerns and lack of support to use the state's learning assessment as a source to evaluate educators, changes in the state policy may need to be made to reflect the reality in practice.

Practice:
- The survey results indicated higher levels of uncertainty among teachers than principals about what sources of evidence can be used for teacher evaluation in their districts. This finding indicates a lack of communication within districts to help teachers understand their evaluation systems.
- The survey results also indicated that a significant portion of teachers (about a third of responding teachers) disagreed that their teacher evaluation systems allow principals and evaluators to accurately evaluate teachers, and to evaluate teacher effectiveness. This finding indicates a lack of confidence in both teacher evaluation systems and in administrators to conduct teacher evaluation accurately and for evaluations to capture teaching effectiveness with the measures used. More work is needed at state and local levels to address these concerns.
- This study revealed that teachers feel less positive about the supports they receive for professional growth and formative feedback. Principals and district leaders will need to examine their practices to address this gap. More time or personnel may be needed to ensure that observations and feedback to teachers happen. More training may be needed in giving formative feedback to teachers to ensure feedback is specific and helpful.
- Data also identified gaps and confusion between formative and summative types of feedback. Districts may need to provide more intensive training around these concepts and best-practice models for principals and teachers to observe and give feedback to others. Districts could partner with other districts, higher education, or regional collaboratives to build their capacity and effectiveness in this important area.
- Some districts provide instructional coaches to support teachers' professional growth and improved practice, while other districts may struggle to fund coaching positions. Principals noted the addition of instructional coaches has been helpful. The need for instructional coaches across content areas and equitable access to instructional coaching across districts in the state is a need that may be addressed through both policy and practice.
- Teachers overwhelmingly stated in their written comments that their pre-service preparation programs had not included information on the PE/PG process or prepared them for this process. Higher education institutions in the state that provide these programs may need to examine their courses and programs to ensure that both principals and teachers have opportunities to learn about the components of PE/PG and are ready to engage effectively in that process.

What research methods were used to conduct this study?

Survey methods were used to collect data on the perceptions of principals, assistant principals, heads of schools and teachers about the PE/PG systems in their schools (see Appendix A for the survey instrument). The broad research questions investigated in this study were:

- What is working well with the PE/PG systems?
- What challenges are principals and teachers experiencing with their PE/PG systems?
- What changes or adjustments have districts made in their systems since fully implementing them in 2017-18?
- What are the different types of evidence districts are using for evaluation?
- To what extent are teachers observing and providing feedback to their peers?
- To what extent are districts using their PE/PG systems to evaluate other school staff?
- How are new principals and teachers learning about their PE/PG systems?
- What further supports do districts need from the state?

An attempt was made to survey all principals and assistant principals in Maine SAUs that have PE/PG systems using an email list from the Maine Department of Education (MDOE). Private schools, charter schools, state schools and public-private schools that are not part of the state PE/PG plan were not included in this survey. A total of 769 surveys were sent to principals/ assistant principals in 199 School Administrative Units (SAUs). The web survey showed 724 were sent to valid email addresses. A total of 315 principals/assistant principals opened the survey (43.5%) and 282 (39.0%) answered questions on the survey. Thus, the response rate for completed surveys for principals/assistant principals was 39%.

Given the large number of teachers across the state (14,034), a random sample of Maine's PK-12 teachers (2,000) were surveyed with the goal of obtaining a final sample of approximately 10% of all teachers statewide and expecting a total of 500 completed surveys. This number was felt to be adequately powered to reflect differences between groups within the sample. Teachers sampled were in 188 of the 199 SAUs. Some emails on file with the MDOE were not valid, resulting in a total of 1,928 surveys sent to valid teacher email addresses. A number of teachers (7.9%) opened the survey but did not enter any responses. A total of 556 teachers (28.8%) responded to the survey by answering most of the survey questions. The final sample of responding teachers represents 314 of the 579 schools in Maine and 135 of the 199 SAUs. Special education teachers (13.1%) and technical education teachers (5.6%) were represented. The confidential survey was administered through Qualtrics, a web-based survey tool. To allow comparison of perceptions, the same survey was given to both principals and teachers with a few questions differing. More information describing the obtained survey sample demographics is found in Appendix B.

The format of the survey included both forced-choice response items for demographic information, a four point Likert scaled items (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree) to measure the level of agreement with statements on perceptions of district PE/PG practices, and open-ended questions inviting participants to provide comments. Most teachers (n=369) and principals (n=200) responded to the open-ended questions. Participants received emailed reminders to encourage a stronger response rate.

Quantitative data were summarized using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages). Additionally, data were analyzed using inferential statistics (Chi square, independent *t*-test, and ANOVA). Qualitative data from the open-ended comments were analyzed by coding of themes expressed in the comments, and were examined against the type of locale for schools (urban/ suburban/ rural). Due to the large number of teachers and principals responding to the survey, after an initial review of the data showing many comments were similar, a random sample of about one third of the teachers' and one third of the principals' comments were coded as representative of the larger dataset. This sampling approach is consistent with the practice of data analysis (Boddy 2016, Saunders et al. 2018). All comments from newer teachers regarding pre-service training on PE/PG were coded as this was a smaller group and thus fewer comments.

How robust are the findings?

Both the principal and teacher surveys obtained representative samples that reflect the geographic and demographic diversity of schools across the state of Maine. Schools responding included all Maine counties, urban/ suburban/ rural locations, a range of district enrollment size, and different grade level configurations for schools. The response rates (39% for principals and 29% for teachers) are within expected ranges based on similar statewide surveys conducted by MEPRI on similar education topics. The numbers of principals participating (282) and teachers (556) are large and include a broad range of content areas as well as Career and Technical Education. Thus, we are fairly confident that the study samples and the views expressed in the surveys are representative of schools and educators across the state.

One factor that may have limited the overall response rates and completion of surveys that were merely opened was the length of the survey and number of questions in total. While the survey was expected to take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete (median completion time was nine minutes) and primarily relied on a format that allowed for quick responses to fixed choice items, there were many sections and questions on the survey and there were also several open-ended questions that asked educators to share their comments. Some educators may have decided they did not have time to take the survey and, indeed, time was mentioned as the major challenge for PE/PG implementation by both principals and teachers in their comments. Another factor that could have affected the response rate was that this survey asked educators to provide their views about their district's PE/PG practices, and asked teachers to give feedback about administrators' evaluation and feedback practices and supports. Thus, despite the reassurance that this was a confidential survey, some educators, particularly more recently hired teachers, may have felt reluctant to share their views.

Introduction

In 2012, the 125th Maine State Legislature enacted new legislation through LD 1858 which directed Maine school districts to develop Performance Evaluation and Professional Growth (PE/PG) Systems for teachers and school principals. While many school districts were piloting or implementing their PE/PG systems in limited ways since 2012, districts were required to fully implement these systems in fall 2017. In 2018, the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs requested the Maine Education Policy Institute (MEPRI) to conduct a study to investigate the challenges and successes schools are having as they strive to fully implement Maine's PE/PG policy since last year. This report follows several previous MEPRI reports since the inception of the PE/PG law.

Previous MEPRI studies of the PE/PG initiative from 2014 to 2016 found both progress and challenges in the early stages of developing, piloting and implementing these systems (Fairman & Mette, 2017; Mason & Porter, 2014; Mason & Tu, 2015; Mette & Fairman, 2016). These studies also found mixed levels of support for the PE/PG policy among school and district administrators. These studies collected the perspectives of administrators through a small number of interviews as well as statewide surveys.

The current study, conducted in fall 2018, captures the perspectives of both principals and teachers, including Career and Technical Education teachers. Through a statewide survey of principals, assistant principals, and heads of schools (referred to collectively as "principals" in this report) and a survey of a representative sample of PK-12 teachers, the current study allows for a comparison between administrator and teacher perspectives. The study also allows for perspectives and PE/PG district practices to be examined in relation to demographic variables such as: district enrollment, locale (urban/ suburban/ rural), grade level configuration of schools, Title 1 status of schools, and percentage of students eligible for free and reduced school lunch. Given the move toward full implementation in the prior year, it is an appropriate time to hear from both principals and teachers how this major initiative is being implemented and what additional supports they may need.

Research Methods and Response Rates

Survey methods were used to collect data on the perceptions of principals, assistant principals, heads of schools, and teachers about the PE/PG systems in their schools (see Appendix

A for the survey instrument). As such, our intent was to understand the perceptions of Maine educators, broadly, and study their perceptions of the feedback systems that have been created to help with the evaluation and development of human resources. The broad research questions investigated in this study were:

- What is working well with the PE/PG systems?
- What challenges are principals and teachers experiencing with their PE/PG systems?
- What changes or adjustments have districts made in their systems since fully implementing them in 2017-18?
- What are the different types of evidence districts are using for evaluation?
- To what extent are teachers observing and providing feedback to their peers?
- To what extent are districts using their PE/PG systems to evaluate other school staff?
- How are new principals and teachers learning about their PE/PG systems?
- What further supports do districts need from the state?

An attempt was made to survey all principals, assistant principals, and heads of schools in schools that are part of Maine's PE/PG initiative using an email list from the Maine Department of Education (MDOE). Principals and teachers in School Administrative Units (SAUs) that are not required to develop PE/PG systems were not surveyed for this study. Private schools, public-private schools, charter schools, state-operated or special purpose schools were excluded as they do not participate in district performance evaluation and professional growth systems. In thirteen schools, no principal was listed so the individual listed by MDOE as Dean was surveyed. These were primarily technical schools. There were 579 schools in 199 SAUs included in this survey study. Note that throughout this report we refer to principals, assistant principals and head of schools collectively as "principals". A total of 769 surveys were sent to principals in all 199 School Administrative Units (SAUs). The web survey showed 724 were sent to valid email addresses. A total of 315 principals opened the survey (44%) and 282 (39%) answered questions on the survey. Thus, the response rate for completed surveys for principals was 39%. Principals from 135 of the 199 SAUs surveyed responded (68% of the SAUs surveyed).

Given the large number of teachers across the state (14,034), a random sample of Maine's PK-12 teachers (2,000) were surveyed with the goal of obtaining a final sample of approximately 10% of all teachers statewide and 500 completed surveys. Based on expected responses, 500 was felt to give the study enough power to provide representative data and detect differences between sub-groups. Teachers sampled were in 188 of the 199 SAUs. Some emails on file with the MDOE were not valid, resulting in a total of 1,928 surveys sent to valid teacher email addresses. A number

of teachers (8%) opened the survey but did not enter any responses. A total of 556 teachers (29%) responded to the survey by answering most of the survey questions. The final sample of responding teachers represents 314 of the 579 schools in Maine and 135 of the 199 SAUs (68% of the districts surveyed). Special education teachers (13%, n=73) and technical education teachers (6%, n=31) were also represented in the survey sample. Collectively, across both the principal and teacher survey, a total of 164 of the 199 SAUs surveyed (82%) are represented in the dataset for this study.

The confidential survey was administered through Qualtrics, a web-based survey tool. To allow comparison of perceptions, the same survey was given to both principals and teachers with a few questions differing. Participants received emailed reminders to encourage a stronger response rate. More information describing the obtained survey sample is presented in tables in Appendix B.

The format of the survey included both forced-choice response items for demographic information, four point Likert scaled items (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree) to measure perceptions about district PE/PG practices, and open-ended questions inviting participants to provide comments. Forced-choice Likert scaled questions explored educators' opinions on three different constructs: professional growth, summative evaluation, and formative feedback. In total, 16 items were used. To establish internal reliability of the survey, a Cronbach alpha coefficient was calculated ($\alpha = 0.90$). Additionally, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated on the three constructs which included the six professional growth items (0.69), the five summative evaluation items (0.93), and the five formative feedback items (0.87).

The six professional growth items on the survey asked educators for their perceptions about whether or not their PE/PG systems support professional growth through: peer mentoring, peer observations, professional learning communities, individualized growth plans, funding for coursework, and funding and time for conferences and training. It should be noted here that changes in the law in 2018 and the Chapter 180 administrative rules re-affirmed the expectation that PE/PG systems would include peer support and mentoring for all principals and teachers that includes formative feedback, and support through mentoring/coaching for teachers newly hired in the district and teachers with conditional certification. The changes also attempted to more clearly distinguish between peer support and evaluation. The five summative evaluation items on the survey asked educators for their perceptions of whether or not their PE/PG systems: accurately evaluate teachers, evaluate teacher effectiveness, address areas to improve instruction, use a variety of evidence to evaluate teachers, and use multiple observations to evaluate teachers. The five formative feedback items on the survey asked educators for their perceptions of whether or not

their PE/PG systems: provide formative feedback to help teachers grow, provide formative feedback not tied to summative evaluation, distinguish between formative feedback and summative evaluation, provide teachers with individualized professional development, and provide teachers with instructional coaching to meet the individualized needs of teachers.

Quantitative data were summarized using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages). Additionally, data were analyzed using inferential statistics (Chi square, independent *t*-test, and ANOVA). In addition to the demographic data on districts provided by the survey respondents, demographic data were also obtained from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) data base that included information on school locale classification, district enrollment size and whether a school was classified as a Title I school. These demographic variables were used in the analysis to examine whether district PE/PG practices varied by district size, degree of urban/ rural location, or by level of poverty.

Three open-ended items asked educators to provide comments on what is working well with their district's implementation of PE/PG, what the biggest challenges are, and what additional supports are needed. Principals were also asked to comment on what big changes were made in their district's PE/PG systems, and teachers within their first five years of employment in the district were asked what they wish they had learned in their pre-service preparation program about the PE/PG process. Most teachers (n=369) and principals (n=200) responded to the open-ended questions.

Qualitative data from the open-ended comments were analyzed by coding of themes expressed in the comments, and were examined against the type of locale for schools (urban/ suburban/rural). Comments that did not provide a meaningful statement (e.g., "nothing" or "not sure") could not be coded. Due to the large number of teachers and principals responding to the survey, after an initial review of the comments, it was felt that saturation was reached, a point where no new information was being obtained from additional comments occurred. The questions were specific so adequate information power was achieved by using one third of the comments. So as not to bias the sample toward early responders, a random sample of about one third of the teachers' and one third of the principals' comments were coded as representative of the larger dataset. This sampling approach is consistent with the practice of data analysis (Boddy 2016, Malterud 2016, Saunders, 2018). All comments about what was learned about the PE/PG process during pre-service from the teachers in their first five years of teaching were coded as this was a smaller group and thus fewer comments.

Overall, both the principal and teacher surveys obtained representative samples that reflect the geographic and demographic diversity of schools across the state of Maine. Schools responding included all Maine counties, urban/ suburban/ rural locations, a range of district enrollment size, and different grade level configurations for schools. The response rates (39% for principals and 29% for teachers) are within expected ranges based on similar statewide surveys conducted by MEPRI on similar education topics. The numbers of principals participating (282) and teachers (556) are large and include a broad range of content areas as well as Career and Technical Education. Overall, we heard from practitioners in 82% of the 199 SAUs surveyed for this study. Demographic information is presented in Appendix B. Thus, we are fairly confident that the study samples and the views expressed in the surveys are representative of schools and educators across the state.

One factor that may have limited the overall response rates and completion of surveys that were merely opened was the length of the survey and number of questions in total. While the survey was expected to take approximately10-15 minutes to complete (median completion time was nine minutes) and primarily relied on a format that allowed for quick responses to fixed-choice items, there were many sections and questions on the survey and there were also several open-ended questions that asked educators to share their comments. Further, some educators may have decided they did not have time to take the survey and, indeed, time was mentioned as the major challenge for PE/PG implementation by both principals and teachers in their comments.

Another factor that could have affected the response rate was that this survey asked educators to provide their views about their districts' PE/PG practices, and asked teachers to give feedback about administrators' evaluation and feedback practices and supports. The introductory statement told educators that this survey was being conducted at the request of Maine Legislature. This may have created a sponsor bias. Despite the reassurance that this was a confidential survey, some educators, particularly more recently hired teachers, may have felt reluctant to share their views. After questions were viewed other teachers may have felt that they had no interest in the specific topics covered. Some may have felt the topic provoked negative emotions and chose not to respond. Non-response can be due to multiple reason (Groves, 2008).

Findings

This section of the report is organized into three parts, each highlighting findings from either quantitative or qualitative survey data on Maine school districts' implementation of PE/PG

systems from the perspective of practitioners. In Part I, we describe perceptions educators had about the sources used to evaluate teachers and principals and who evaluates educators, which provides updated information from the last MEPRI report on PE/PG systems (Fairman & Mette, 2017) which was based on district-level information that nearly all SAUs in Maine had submitted to the MDOE. In Part II, we present survey data on the perceptions of teachers and principals about support for professional growth, summative evaluation, and formative feedback. Part III describes the themes identified by practitioners in their comments responding to open-ended questions, reflecting on different aspects of PE/PG implementation.

Part I. Perceptions of PE/PG System Implementation

This first section of the survey collected information on the perceptions of teachers and principals about the implementation of PE/PG systems. In this section, we describe which professionals are involved in evaluating educators, sources used in evaluation, frequency of observations, and perceptions of summative evaluation were examined. Part of the design of the study was to examine whether perceptions differed based on position (teacher or principal), and we found several based on position.

Teacher Evaluation

This study collected survey data on PE/PG implementation in October 2018, two years after the last MEPRI report on PE/PG systems in Maine, and thus presents a current picture of PE/PG implementation. This section of the report presents results from survey questions that asked educators about who evaluates teachers and principals in their districts and what sources of data or information are used for evaluation. In addition, results from the teacher survey are presented that describe how frequently teachers were observed by peers or principals/evaluators, whether or not teachers observed other peers in their schools and, if so, how many peers they observed.

Professionals used to evaluate teachers. Regarding who evaluates teachers, the survey results indicate a broader range of personnel are now involved in teacher evaluation than was reported two years ago by districts in a prior MEPRI study (Fairman & Mette, 2017). The PE/PG plans of two years ago emphasized the use of a building administrator to evaluate teachers and some use of trained teachers. In the current study, we found there is still a larger reliance on using administrators to evaluate teaches and some districts also use trained teachers. From the survey data collected in the fall of 2018, overall 18% of educators (responding principals and teachers combined) reported their PE/PG systems include the use of trained teachers as evaluators.

However, there was a discrepancy in the percentage of teachers (24%) and principals (9%) who reported the use of trained teachers as evaluators. One possible explanation for this discrepancy may be that teachers may have confused formative peer observation and feedback with summative observation and feedback. Principals in larger districts (2000 students or more) also were more likely to indicate they use trained teachers as evaluators for teachers. The reported level of use of external evaluators for teacher evaluation remains virtually the same as it was two years ago. Table 1 presents the findings related to who evaluates teachers, combining both principal and teacher responses.

Table 1: Professionals That Evaluate and Provide Summative Feedback to Teachers.

	Number of Responses	Total Number of Teachers and Principals	Percentage
Only a Building Administrator	545	691	79%
Both Building and District Administrator	216	568	38%
Trained Teachers	92	526	18%
Only a District Administrator	79	514	15%
External Evaluators	13	506	3%

Sources used in teacher evaluation. The survey results also indicate that districts have made important changes in the sources of data or information used to inform educator evaluation in the past two years. Consistent with the data collected by MEPRI in 2016, announced and unannounced observations remained the most popular source of evidence districts are using to evaluate teachers. By contrast, there appears to be less reliance on the use of portfolios for evaluation in current PE/PG systems than was indicated on PE/PG plans two years ago (Fairman & Mette, 2017). Additionally, locally developed district assessments continue to be seen as a more popular source of teacher evaluation than Maine state student assessments, a finding consistent with another recent MEPRI report on educator perceptions of testing (Fairman, Johnson, Mette, Wickerd, & LaBrie, 2018). It is also interesting to point out that peer feedback and videos of classroom instruction are increasingly used as sources to inform teacher evaluation as well. Traditionally, the teaching profession has been based on autonomy and was considered a highly individualized practice. As more school districts and professional learning communities increasingly value the sharing of instructional practices, it is not surprising to see an increased use

of peer feedback and videos of classroom instruction, all of which suggests a deprivatization of the 'black box' of classroom instruction (Black & William, 1998; Cuban, 2013). This trend also mirrors the changes in the law and rules cited earlier, which encourage districts to include peer mentoring and feedback in their PE/PG systems. Table 2 provides an overview of the sources that teachers and principals combined believe their districts are using for teacher evaluation, while Table 3 compares teacher and principal perceptions about the use of sources.

Table 2: Sources Used to Evaluate Teachers.

	Number of Responses	Total Number of Teachers and Principals	Percentage
Announced/Planned Classroom Observations	670	720	93%
Unannounced Classroom Observations	624	715	87%
Local Student Assessment Results (commercially developed, e.g. NWEA, etc.)	385	662	58%
Course-based or Teacher Developed Assessments	362	657	55%
Portfolios	290	633	46%
Maine State Student Assessment Results (e.g. eMPowerME, SAT)	278	647	43%
Observations and Feedback from Other Teachers	227	647	35%
Videos of Classroom Lessons/Instruction	187	638	29%
Student Surveys	181	639	28%
Parent Surveys	82	619	13%

Looking more closely at the results presented in Table 3 below, there are some fairly large discrepancies between the perceptions of teachers and principals about what sources are used in teacher evaluation in their districts. Consistently, a larger percentage of principals were able to indicate whether or not a particular source is used than were teachers. Accordingly, a larger

percentage of teachers than principals said they were "unsure" whether or not a source was used in teacher evaluation.

	Total Number of Teachers	Teacher Percentage "Yes"	Teacher Percentage "Unsure"	Total Number of Administrators	Administrator Percentage "Yes"	Administrator Percentage "Unsure"
Announced/Planned Classroom Observations	479	92%	1%	231	94%	0%
Unannounced Classroom Observations	470	83%	7%	235	95%	0%
Local Student Assessment Results (commercially developed, e.g. NWEA, etc.)	428	53%	24%	223	67%	4%
Course-based or Teacher Developed Assessments	427	50%	23%	219	65%	4%
Portfolios	408	39%	22%	214	57%	4%
Maine State Student Assessment Results (e.g. eMPowerME, SAT)	420	38%	31%	218	52%	6%
Observations and Feedback from Other Teachers	427	35%	21%	210	34%	5%
Videos of Classroom Lessons/Instruction	412	21%	30%	217	45%	10%
Student Surveys	419	30%	20%	210	28%	5%
Parent Surveys	408	11%	24%	202	18%	6%

Table 3: Sources Used to Evaluate Teachers by Position.

About 20-30% of the teachers indicated they were "unsure" about most sources of teacher evaluation, compared with 10% or fewer for principals. Further, we found that 43% of teachers checked the response "unsure", and 72% of teacher respondents either checked the option of "unsure" or made no response for at least one of the evaluation sources listed, which indicates that many teachers may not be fully aware of what sources are used in teacher evaluation in their

districts. New teachers with one to two years of experience in the district (58%,) were more likely to indicate they were "unsure" of the sources used to evaluate teachers in their district. However, 39% of the most experienced teachers in districts, those with over twenty years of experience, selected "unsure" for at least one of the methods. Principals were less likely to check "unsure" (16%) for at least one source of teacher evaluation, but 47% either checked "unsure" or left at least one source of teacher evaluation blank.

In addition to differences between teachers and principals in how sure or aware they were about the sources used in teacher evaluation, we also found some large differences in the percentages of teachers and principals who indicated different sources were used. For every possible source of potential information that could be used in teacher evaluations, more principals than teachers indicated that it could be used in their district. Notably, 45% of principals indicated that videos are a source of information for teacher evaluation, while only 21% of teachers indicated that source is used. Of those who answered "yes" or "no" as to whether portfolios were used as a source of information, 60% of principals compared to 51% of teachers answered "yes".

Further, we found some differences in perceptions about sources used for teacher evaluation that reflect differences between rural/non-rural school settings. For example, among principals there was a difference between the rural and non-rural responses regarding the use of videos. Rural remote and rural distant principals (57%) were more likely than city-suburb (42%) town, or rural fringe principals (41%) to indicate video as a source in teacher evaluations. There also was a rural/ non-rural divide in perceptions about the use of portfolios in teacher evaluation. Portfolios were more commonly identified as a source in teacher evaluations by principals in rural distant and rural remote schools (65%) than in city-suburb schools (53%) or rural fringe schools (45%).

Frequency of teacher observations. Regarding the frequency of teacher observations, 42% of teachers reported being observed two to three times per year, while 25% of teachers reported being observed four or more times per year. Almost 1/5 of teachers (19%) reported not being observed at all, but this could be due to evaluation cycles that alternate summative evaluation years. Teachers reported peer observation occurs at least once a year in 31% of schools, while 23% of teachers reported making observations of other teachers in relation to their performance (summative) evaluation. It should be noted that the survey asked teachers how many times they had been observed for "performance evaluation purposes" and did not distinguish

between observations for peer mentoring versus evaluation. One item asked about evaluation by peers, and another asked about observation by a principal or evaluators. Teachers may have found these questions unclear. Table 4 provides a detailed look at the survey results on these questions.

Table 4: Number of Observations Reported by Teachers for the Purpose of Performance Evaluation.

	Teacher Percentage "None"	Teacher Percentage "1"	Teacher Percentage "2-3"	Teacher Percentage "4-5"	Teacher Percentage "6-9"	Teacher Percentage "10 or more"	Total Number of Teachers
Times observed by an Administrator, Principal, or non-peer evaluator	19%	15%	42%	14%	8%	3%	465
Times observed by a Teacher peer	69%	13%	15%	2%	1%	<1%	470
Observations they made of other teachers for their performance evaluation	77%	14%	33%	1%	0%	<1%	395

Principal Evaluation

      Sources used in principal evaluation. Regarding principal evaluation, the survey results indicate districts have made some changes in the sources used to inform the evaluation of principals. Consistent with MEPRI's review of PE/PG plans in 2016, district administrators' observation of principals' leadership activities continues to be the most popular source of information used to evaluate principals as indicated by the principal survey responses of 2018. That said, the landscape of sources of evidence used to evaluate principals appears to be changing, with somewhat greater use of staff and student climate surveys than was indicated in district PE/PG plans submitted to the MDOE two years ago (Fairman & Mette, 2017). Additionally, principals indicated that feedback from other staff (40%) as well as observations and feedback from peer principals (23%) were other sources used in many PE/PG systems. As with the survey results for teacher evaluation sources, the data collected about sources used to evaluate principals suggest that the evaluation process for principals is becoming more open, with information provided from a broader range of district personnel including peers, teachers, staff, students and

parents. Table 5 provides an overview of these findings.

Table 5: Sources Used to Evaluate Principals.

	Number of Responses	Total Number of Principals	Percentage
Observations of Faculty Meetings or Other Leadership Activities	145	214	68%
Local Student Assessment Results	122	208	59%
Maine State Student Assessment Results	113	214	53%
Staff Climate Surveys	109	212	51%
Portfolios	92	207	44%
Other Feedback from Staff	85	211	40%
Student Climate Surveys	70	203	35%
Parent/Family Surveys	63	198	32%
Other Feedback from Parents/ Families/ Community	63	201	31%
Observations and Feedback from Other Principals	47	201	23%
360 Evaluation Tool	44	196	22%

It should be pointed out that there was also some uncertainty among principals as to the sources used for their own evaluation. A sizeable percentage of responding principals (39%) indicated they were "unsure" for at least one of the sources that could be used for principal evaluation. Almost two thirds of principals did not respond to a question asking about a method of evaluation or responded "unsure" if the method was used in their district. (64%). New principals with one to two years in the district had the highest rate of responding "unsure" on a least one source (50%). For principals, there was no pattern in responding "unsure" based on district size or location.

More principals in larger schools and schools in city or suburban locations reported their districts use community feedback, staff feedback and surveys of staff, family, and students in their district evaluation of principals than those in more rural districts. Additionally, a higher percentage

of small (61%) and remote rural (63%) principals reported portfolios being used for principal evaluation.

General Perceptions about PE/PG Systems

The survey collected information about the general perceptions of principals and teachers about their districts' evaluation system. While a majority of educators indicated positive views about their districts' teacher evaluation systems, we found that a sizeable percentage of teachers responding to the survey (nearly a third) expressed negative views about teacher evaluation in their districts. Overall, teachers were significantly less positive in their views than were principals. For example, 10% of responding principals compared to 30% of responding teachers felt their systems did not allow administrators or evaluators to "evaluate teachers accurately," and 10% of principals compared to 32% of teachers felt their systems did not allow administrators or evaluators to "evaluate the effectiveness of teachers." However, the more negative views about the evaluation systems were largely dispersed across the districts and not concentrated within any district. For districts with more than one educator responding, there was no district where all responding principals and teachers felt their teacher evaluation system was not accurate.

Using a Chi square test, administrators were statistically significantly more positive than teachers about these aspects of teacher evaluation in their districts. These survey results are presented in Table 6. Specifically, administrators were statistically significantly more positive about the summative evaluation process: a) *evaluating teachers with multiple observations* ($\chi^2 = 61.679$, *p* < .001); b) *addressing areas to improve instruction* ($\chi^2 = 51.492$, *p* < .001); c) *evaluating teachers accurately* ($\chi^2 = 56.013$, *p* < .001); d) *evaluating the effectiveness of teachers accurately* ($\chi^2 = 56.679$, *p* < .001); and e) *evaluating teachers using a variety of evidence* ($\chi^2 = 65.066$, *p* < .001).

Table 6: Perceptions of How District's PE/PG System Allows Administrators and/or Evaluators to Provide Summative Feedback.

	Total Number of Teachers	Teacher Response Percentage Agree/ Strongly Agree	Total Number of Administrators	Administrator Response Percentage Agree/ Strongly Agree
Summative Evaluation Items (α = 0.93)				
Evaluate teachers using multiple observations***	446	78%	231	93%
Address areas to improve teacher instruction***	445	76%	231	92%
Evaluate teachers accurately***	442	70%	231	90%
Evaluate effectiveness of teachers ***	444	68%	231	90%
Evaluate teachers using variety of evidence***	445	65%	231	94%

*** < .001; ** < .01; * < .05

Broadly, the results presented in this section provide evidence that school districts are continuing to make progress in their efforts to implement their PE/PG systems. The results also indicate that school districts are making some substantive changes in their PE/PG systems that depart from the plans submitted to and approved by MDOE. The evolving PE/PG systems signal that districts are trying to both strengthen and streamline their systems, to meet their own educational purposes and needs. Compared to a recent MEPRI study (Fairman & Mette, 2017) that comprehensively reported on district PE/PG plans, results from this study suggest that districts continue to rely primarily on building administrators to evaluate teachers, but some districts also use trained teachers and other evaluators. These may include department heads or other lead teachers. Further, districts use a broad range of sources of data or information to evaluate both principals and teachers that takes into account staff, student, and parent feedback. Generally speaking, these kinds of changes in PE/PG systems serve to make the evaluation process of educators more open and transparent.

Additionally, there were fairly large and statistically significant differences in the perceptions of teachers and principals regarding the evaluation of teachers. Overall, teachers indicted significantly less positive views about the system of evaluating teachers in their districts

than did principals. Teachers also indicated significantly higher levels of uncertainty than did principals about what sources of evidence may be used for teacher evaluation in their districts. These large discrepancies in perceptions suggest that additional communication is needed to ensure teachers are fully informed about how they are being evaluated, and more effort is needed to build teachers' confidence in their districts' teacher evaluation systems.

Part II. Practitioners' Perceptions of Professional Growth and Formative Feedback

The survey also collected data on principal and teacher perceptions about the ways their PE/PG systems were supporting their professional growth, as well as how administrators and evaluators were providing feedback to teachers and making the distinction between formative feedback and summative evaluation. The intent of this study was to see if there were perceptual differences between principals and teachers. However, the study was also designed to examine whether perceptions differed based on certain demographics, and we found many.

As reported in the last MEPRI report on PE/PG implementation (Fairman & Mette, 2017), many PE/PG plans combined professional growth and summative evaluation, causing conflict for teachers who require non-evaluative feedback and a sense of safety to strengthen skills and knowledge that improve practice. Thus, what can occur is a sense of high-stakes evaluation that conflates professional growth and formative feedback with summative evaluation (Mette, et al., 2017). What this tension can lead to is a sense of teachers selecting professional growth items that are safe rather than challenging, as well as dramatic differences of opinions between teachers and administrators about agreement of the purpose and function of summative evaluation and formative feedback.

As stated previously, for districts with more than one educator responding to the survey, there was no district where all responding principals and teachers felt their teacher evaluation system was not accurate. However, there were statistically significant differences in how teachers and principals perceived professional growth and formative feedback. Specifically, administrators were statistically significantly more positive than teachers about their districts' support of professional growth through**:** a) *funding to pursue advanced coursework* ($\chi^2 = 25.433$, *p* < .001); b) *funding and time to attend conferences and training* ($\chi^2 = 46.965$, *p* < .001); and c) *providing teachers with individualized professional development* ($\chi^2 = 66.554$, *p* < .001). Principals were also statistically significantly more positive than teachers about the provision of the following types of feedback and support: a) *formative feedback to help teachers grow* ($\chi^2 = 73.701$, *p* < .001); b)

formative feedback not tied to summative evaluation (χ^2 = 58.509, *p* < .001); c) *instructional coaching to meet individualized teaching needs* (χ^2 = 27.724, *p* < .001); and d) *the ability of their PE/PG system to distinguish between formative and summative feedback* (χ^2 = 66.015, *p* < .001). It should be noted that teachers were statistically significantly more positive than administrators about one item, that being the *use of peer observations to support professional growth* (χ^2 = 13.479, *p* < .01). This should not be surprising, as there is a wide variety of literature in the field that supports the use of peer observations for professional growth purposes (Costa & Garmston, 2002; Knight, 2016; Zepeda, 2017). Table 7 highlights these differences between teachers and administrators.

To summarize, the survey results from principals and teachers regarding district supports for professional growth indicate that principals were much more likely than teachers to agree that their districts are providing a variety of supports. Further, findings related to the role of feedback indicate a similar gap between the perceptions of teachers and principals. Principals were much more likely than teachers to agree that their PE/PG systems allow administrators and evaluators to provide formative feedback to teachers and to distinguish between formative and summative types of feedback to teachers. These findings have relevance for policy and practice, specifically as they target opportunities to address these significant gaps and ensure that teachers are adequately supported in the PE/PG process.

Table 7: Perceptions of Professional Growth, Summative Evaluation, and Formative Feedback.

	Total Number of Teachers	Teacher Response Percentage Agree/ Strongly Agree	Total Number of Administrators	Administrator Response Percentage Agree/ Strongly Agree
Professional Growth Items (α = 0.69)				
Funding to pursue advanced coursework***	415	87%	221	95%
Individualized growth plans	444	81%	228	82%
Funding and time to attend conferences and training***	448	74%	230	90%
Professional learning communities (PLCs)	406	81%	200	75%
Formal peer mentoring program	368	72%	190	63%
Peer observations**	368	69%	191	54%
Formative Feedback Items (α = 0.87)				
Provide formative feedback to help teachers grow***	440	79%	228	92%
Distinguish the difference between formative feedback and summative evaluation***	435	63%	226	88%
Provide formative feedback that is not tied to summative evaluation***	437	63%	227	84%
Provide teachers with individualized professional development***	434	55%	227	84%
Provide teachers with instructional coaching to meet individualized needs of teachers***	376	61%	216	95%

*** < .001; ** < .01; * < .05

While our review of the PE/PG plans revealed a significant number of differing opinions between teachers and administrators, this report also provides interesting findings on the relationship between educators' perceptions and certain school demographic variables, including: a) Title I district status; b) free and reduced lunch percentage; c) district enrollment size, d) locale;

and e) school grade configuration type (elementary, middle school, high school, multi-level). Traditionally, Title I district status and free and reduced lunch are socioeconomic indicators that are sometimes correlated with teachers' perceptions about issues of instructional capacity (Farrell & Marsh, 2016), however this has been questioned more recently (Domina et al., 2018). In our analysis of the survey data, we found no statistically significant difference between mean responses of educators working in school districts with Title I status compared to non-Title I status (see Table 8), and no significant difference between mean responses of educators working in school districts with a span of free and reduced lunch percentage (see Table 9). Essentially, this is a positive finding indicating that perceptions about the provision of supports and formative feedback do not significantly differ by levels of student poverty in districts.

Table 8: Perceptions of Educators Based on Title I District Status.

		Title I District Status	
	Overall mean	Title I District-Wide	Non-Title I District Wide
Professional Growth Items (α = 0.69)	3.02	3.02	3.02
Summative Evaluation Items (α = 0.93)	2.89	2.92	2.91
Formative Feedback Items (α = 0.87)	2.88	2.91	2.87

Note: Scale ranges from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*

Table 9: Perceptions of Educators Based on Free and Reduced Lunch Percentage.

		Free and Reduced Lunch Percentage			
	Overall mean	0% - 25%	26% - 50%	51% - 75%	76% - 100%
Professional Growth Items (α = 0.69)	3.02	2.97	3.02	3.05	2.94
Summative Evaluation Items (α = 0.93)	2.89	2.93	2.86	3.00	2.96
Formative Feedback Items (α = 0.87)	2.88	2.83	2.86	3.00	2.87

Note: Scale ranges from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*

However, we did find statistically significant differences in educators' perceptions of feedback based on district enrollment size, locale, and school grade configuration. Regarding

district size, there was a statistically significant difference between groups regarding perceptions of formative feedback as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F(3,588) = 2.757$, $p = .042$). A Tukey post hoc test revealed that respondents from school districts with less than 500 students were statistically significantly more positive about their districts' provision of providing formative feedback than were respondents from school districts that had more than 2000 students ($p < .05$). It may seem surprising that educators in smaller districts feel they are receiving more feedback than those in larger districts. However, one possible explanation is that many districts in Maine are, in fact, small – almost 50% of the districts in the state have enrollments under 500 students. Another possible explanation is that in smaller districts, schools also tend to have smaller enrollments and staff sizes. It may be easier for principals to provide feedback to teachers when there are significantly fewer teachers in the school than in larger schools. Thus, educators in small school districts were much more positive about the provision of feedback through their districts' PE/PG systems. Table 10 provides an overview of these findings. We did not find any statistically significant differences in educators' perceptions about their districts' supports for professional growth or the summative evaluation items based on district enrollment size.

Table 10: Perceptions of Educators about the Provision of Formative Feedback Based on District Size.

Formative Feedback	District Size		
	n	*M*	*SD*
<500	110	***3.01****	*0.48*
501 – 1000	84	2.87	*0.54*
1001 – 2000	185	2.86	*0.54*
>2000	213	***2.84****	*0.49*
Total	592	2.88	*0.52*

Note: Scale ranges from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*; * $p < .05$

Regarding where districts are located, we used the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) locale classifications codes. Using these codes, we analyzed the survey data by organizing the data into five unique codes, choosing to combine suburb and city as there are so few Maine districts in that category. Table 11 highlights these locale classifications, delineating: a) rural remote; b) rural distant; c) rural fringe; d) town, and e) suburb/city. For each construct of professional growth, summative evaluation, and formative feedback, we tested to see if there were

differences in educators' perceptions among these five groups.

For the first construct, supports for professional growth, there was a statistically significant difference between groups regarding perceptions of professional growth supports as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F(4,494) = 4.310$, $p = .002$). A Tukey post hoc test revealed that rural remote school districts were statistically significantly more positive about providing supports for professional growth than were rural fringe, town, and suburb/city school districts ($p < .05$). As such, rural remote schools are statistically significantly more positive about their perceptions to help teachers professionally grow than most other school districts with larger population bases.

Table 11: Perceptions of Educators Based on NCES Locale Classifications.

	NCES Locale Classification		
Professional Growth	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Rural Remote	65	*3.16**	*0.41*
Rural Distant	159	3.06	*0.39*
Rural Fringe	74	*2.94**	*0.41*
Town	79	*2.96**	*0.37*
Suburb/City	122	*2.96**	*0.43*
Total	499	3.02	*0.41*
Summative Evaluation	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Rural Remote	85	*3.01**	*0.73*
Rural Distant	212	2.95	*0.61*
Rural Fringe	118	*2.74**	*0.61*
Town	107	2.83	*0.62*
Suburb/City	152	2.89	*0.59*
Total	674	2.89	*0.63*
Formative Feedback	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Rural Remote	69	*3.09**	*0.50*
Rural Distant	198	*2.91**	*0.52*
Rural Fringe	98	*2.72**	*0.52*
Town	84	*2.82**	*0.47*
Suburb/City	137	*2.87**	*0.51*
Total	586	2.88	*0.52*

Note: Scale ranges from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*; * $p < .05$

For the second construct, summative evaluation, there was a statistically significant difference between groups regarding perceptions of summative evaluation as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F(4,669) = 3.266$, $p = .011$). A Tukey post hoc test revealed that rural remote and rural distant school districts were statistically significantly more positive about providing

summative evaluation than were rural fringe school districts ($p <.05$). These data highlight the finding that rural remote schools are statistically significantly more positive about their perceptions to provide summative evaluation than rural fringe school districts located closer to larger population bases.

For the third construct, formative feedback, there was a statistically significant difference between groups regarding perceptions of formative feedback as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F(4,581) = 5.629, p < .001$). A Tukey post hoc test revealed that rural remote school districts were statistically significantly more positive about providing formative feedback than rural fringe, town, and suburb/city school districts ($p < .05$). Additionally, a Tukey post hoc test revealed that rural distant school districts were statistically significantly more positive about providing formative feedback than were rural fringe school districts ($p < .05$). Thus, rural remote schools are statistically significantly more positive about their perceptions to provide teachers with formative feedback than most other school districts with larger population bases. Additionally, rural distant schools are statistically significantly more positive about their perceptions to provide teachers with formative feedback than rural fringe school districts located closer to larger population bases.

This report provides a wide-variety and depth of information about the perceptions of rural remote educators, a field that while increasingly popular is still widely understudied and underappreciated. The notion that rural remote educators perceive their ability to help support professional growth, are more positive about summative evaluation, and are more positive about their ability to provide feedback than school districts with larger population bases is profound and a significant research finding. Of equal interest is that rural fringe school districts, in other words, school districts that are neither remote nor located close to a suburb or city, have the lowest perceptions about professional growth, summative evaluation, and formative feedback. We will discuss these implications more in the conclusion section of this report, however, this type of study provides policymakers with powerful data to help make decisions about funding for rural schools. The fact that not all schools labeled as "rural" are perceptually the same, and that human development and investment may in fact look different in rural schools compared to their suburban or city counterparts, is an important consideration for state policymakers (Mette, 2014).

Regarding perceptions of educators based on school grade configuration type, we chose to label schools as either elementary, middle school, high school, or multi-level. We chose these delineations because a) we wanted to test if the literature on cultural differences at various grade levels is true (Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2012; MacNeil, Prater, & Busch, 2009), specifically when

considering issues such as professional growth, summative evaluation, and formative feedback; and b) there has been no data previously about these perceptual differences for the State of Maine. Table 12 provides an overview of these findings.

For the first construct, professional growth, there was not a statistically significant difference in educators' perceptions based on school grade configuration type. For the second construct, there was a statistically significant difference between groups regarding perceptions of summative evaluation as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F(3,667) = 8.705$, $p < .001$). A Tukey post hoc test revealed that educators working in elementary schools were statistically significantly more positive about their districts' PE/PG systems providing summative evaluation than were educators in middle schools or high schools ($p < .05$). Additionally, a Tukey post hoc test revealed that educators in multi-level schools were statistically significantly more positive about their districts providing summative evaluation than high schools ($p < .05$). As such, elementary schools and multi-level schools are statistically significantly more positive about their perceptions to provide summative evaluation than high schools. Additionally, elementary schools are statistically significantly more positive about their perceptions to provide summative evaluation than middle schools.

Table 12: Perceptions of Educators Based on School Grade Configuration.

	School Type		
Professional Growth	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Elementary	199	3.05	*0.42*
Middle School	102	3.01	*0.36*
High School	129	2.95	*0.40*
Multi-Level	68	3.10	*0.45*
Total	498	3.02	*0.41*
Summative Evaluation	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Elementary	250	***3.01***	*0.59*
Middle School	140	***2.84***	*0.58*
High School	194	***2.74***	*0.66*
Multi-Level	87	3.01	*0.63*
Total	671	***2.89***	*0.63*
Formative Feedback	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Elementary	230	***2.96***	*0.51*
Middle School	122	***2.86***	*0.43*
High School	159	***2.70***	*0.53*
Multi-Level	73	***3.09***	*0.51*
Total	584	2.88	*0.52*

Note: Scale ranges from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*; * $p < .05$

For the third construct, formative feedback, there was a statistically significant difference between groups regarding perceptions of formative feedback as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F(3,580) = 13.272$, $p < .001$). A Tukey post hoc test revealed that educators in elementary schools and middle schools were statistically significantly more positive about their districts providing formative feedback than were educators in high schools ($p < .05$). A second Tukey post hoc test revealed that educators in multi-level schools were statistically significantly more positive about providing formative feedback than were educators in middle schools and high schools ($p < .05$). Thus, elementary and middle schools are statistically significantly more positive about their perceptions to provide teachers with formative feedback than high schools. Additionally, multi-level schools are statistically significantly more positive about their perceptions to provide teachers with formative feedback than middle schools and high schools.

Part III. Themes of Teachers' Perceptions Implementing PE/PG Systems across Maine

The final section of the survey invited principals and teachers to share their views through typed comments in response to a small number of broad, open-ended questions. Both principals and teachers were asked about what is working well with their districts' PE/PG systems, what the biggest challenges are with their systems, and what further supports were needed to better implement their systems. Principals were also asked to describe one or two big changes their districts had made in these systems. New teachers (in their first or second year in the district) were asked what they wish they had learned during their pre-service preparation programs to be better prepared to engage with the PE/PG process. Most responding principals and teachers did provide some comments in response to the open-ended questions, which provide additional insights to inform state and local education policymakers and teacher preparation programs in higher education. In the sections that follow, we summarize both the major and less frequently mentioned themes in the comments and provide a few representative quotes.

Perceptions of What is Working Well

A total of 186 principals and 310 teachers provided meaningful comments on this first open-ended question (i.e., more of a comment than "nothing" or "no idea"). As described in the methods section of this report, a random sample of one third of all teacher and principal comments were used for coding purposes to capture a representative picture of teachers' views. Selected comments from 103 teachers and 62 principals were coded for their thematic content. Both principals and

teachers described the positive aspects of their PE/PG systems to engage more educators in a formal evaluation process and to provide supports for both evaluation as well as professional growth. Teachers also emphasized their appreciation of support and respect from their principals and their district's emphasis on supporting professional growth over evaluation. These themes are described in the following section.

Broader engagement in a formal evaluation process. On the theme of evaluation, principals commented that their districts' PE/PG systems were engaging all staff in a formal evaluation process using common language and specific, detailed indicators, which they felt led to a focus on teacher growth and increased interactions between teachers and administrators. In some cases, principals and teachers indicated that formal evaluation had not been routinely conducted within their districts in prior years. These positive perceptions about the impact of a more formal and consistent system were also reported in prior MEPRI studies of PE/PG system piloting and implementation (Fairman & Mette, 2017; Mette & Fairman, 2016). Some comments to this effect included the following: "The fact that all teachers are finally [to] be observed and evaluated. This was not always the case for middle and high school teachers." "Teachers interact frequently with administrators and talk about professional growth. The data gives me as the administrator information to help plan inservice and faculty meetings." "Absolutely the best thing this district has implemented for supporting the growth of teachers and administrators." "It is nice for teachers and administrators to have the opportunity to observe classrooms multiple times. It builds relationships and allows for more frequent and meaningful conversations." "The teacher and administrator meet pre and post observation." "Common language around good teacher practice." "There is a system and protocols and everyone knows what they are and how they work." "Consistency from school to school in the district."

Teachers echoed the positive comments of principals about the broader engagement of teachers in a formal evaluation process. Teachers indicated they felt they were more involved in choosing the goals and evidence that is used in their evaluations. Teachers wrote, "The ability for teachers to write goals themselves that best allow them to show evidence of student growth over time." "Teachers are able to make choices in how they demonstrate whether or not they have met their goals." "Teachers can create their own individual goals for their students and can create a team goal with their colleagues. This empowers teachers to feel like they are able to improve based on their strengths and needs."

Supports for the evaluation process and professional growth. Both principals and

teachers provided positive comments about the provision of supports for educators within their PE/PG systems, but they often referenced different types of supports. Principals appreciated supports such as instructional coaches for teachers, district-level committees, and professional development for administrators. Principals' comments included: "District PEPG committee communicating with and supporting administrators and teachers about the process." "We have hired an instructional coach who is helping support new hires and new teachers in education. This is an excellent way to support the cohort Pre-K to 12." "Professional development to more effectively evaluate teaching practice."

Principals also described how the system provided important support to teachers through more frequent feedback. Comments expressing this view included: "Teachers receive a great deal of feedback. They also can individualize the work done through their growth plans." "The feedback that is given to teachers is thorough and provides specific ways to improve their practice." "Teachers are able to apply feedback to their goals and frequently re-assess."

Teachers also shared positive perceptions about how their PE/PG systems included valuable supports. However, teachers' comments most often expressed appreciation for their principal's moral support and respect for teachers as professionals, and their district's emphasis on professional growth over summative evaluation. One teachers commented, "Our building principal is wonderful. She comes into our classrooms in a non-threatening or non-confrontational way. This was not the case with past administrators." Two others mentioned, "Relaxed method of evaluation. Administrative trust in my teaching ability and experience," and "I have two new principals (I work in multiple schools) and both agree that teachers should view our PE/PG systems with a growth mindset. Meaning, we would not 'necessarily' be penalized for giving ourselves a low score in a particular category. Rather we would be identifying something that we realize is an area for growth."

Perceptions about Challenges

A total of 200 principals and 355 teachers provided meaningful comments on the second open-ended question about challenges. One third (118) of teachers' comments and one third (65) of principals' comments were coded. Broadly speaking, teachers voiced more negative views of the PE/PG systems than did principals, across various open-ended questions. Principals were more likely to comment about the positive impacts and progress made in their schools resulting from this initiative, though they also had some concerns.

Overwhelmingly, the most common challenge cited by both principals and teachers was the

substantial time involved in implementing the PE/PG systems and process, and uncertainty about how to prioritize this aspect of their professional work against other important aspects of their duties. Teachers in particular shared the view that time spent on documenting their work was time taken away from efforts to directly improve instruction, and both principals and teachers questioned the role of standardized testing as a basis for educator evaluation and the limitations of their systems to capture effective teaching. Some teachers felt their districts had not provided sufficient professional development to support implementation, and teachers also expressed confusion and challenges with the development of student learning outcomes (SLOs) and selection of assessments. Principals and teachers expressed concerns about negative impacts of the PE/PG systems on their teachers' time and morale. The concerns about insufficient time to implement (particularly the heavy burden on principals' time), uneven availability of professional development, and confusion with SLOs have been recurring themes in prior MEPRI studies of PE/PG systems (Fairman & Mette, 2017; Mette & Fairman, 2016). These themes are presented below.

Time Needed to Implement. The challenge of finding sufficient time to fully implement PE/PG systems continues to be the major concern of principals and teachers, and has been reported in prior MEPRI studies of PE/PG systems. Principals described being challenged by competing demands on their time and some felt a struggle to prioritize PE/PG given other responsibilities that they felt may be more important. Other principals commented on how they must shoulder the evaluation work as the only principal of their school or several schools. Some principals indicated that the complex PE/PG systems and process often overwhelms their capacity to implement the all components of these systems with fidelity. Some representative comments from principals included these: "Beyond just the process we have in our district, there are many other pressing issues that force their way to the top of the priority list. . . . These things that directly impact students and teachers, take priority, leaving little time for other responsibilities such as PE/PG." "I am the only principal in the district. Every part of the PE/PG is solely my responsibility as well as all the other duties of a principal. Time is the biggest challenge."

Teachers also cited the challenge of finding time to implement their PE/PG systems. In addition, teachers believe that the time spent on documenting their work would be better spent on more direct efforts to improve instruction. Some teachers used the words "cumbersome", "bothersome", and "jumping through hoops," to describe their PE/PG systems: "This whole process and our evaluation system are cumbersome and take too much of the teacher and

principal's time. We have too much on our plates. Every year more is expected and added without anything ever being taken off our plate." "This is RIDICULOUSLY time consuming. I want to be better at things in my classroom but I have to spend so much time writing about how I want to get better and proving that rather than just doing it." "This has been seen by teachers as nothing but jumping through hoops and they see little value in it improving their teaching." "It takes a lot of time on top of everything else. It can seem confusing."

Teachers' comments that indicated a lack of administrator time to implement the system with fidelity included these comments: "The set up looks great on paper. Finding the time for administrators to actually do what the plan says is and issues [*sic*] in the size of our building." "In order to implement correctly the administrator needs to be in classrooms for MULTIPLE brief observations. . . that is not happening."

Continued Challenges over SLO Development and Use. Some of the comments expressed continued frustration and confusion about the development and use of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) to measure growth, a theme that we have found in prior MEPRI studies of the PE/PG systems (Fairman & Mette, 2017; Mette & Fairman, 2016). One principal wrote, "The student learning objective (SLO) is hard for teachers to grasp. They struggle with their SLO scores being tied into their evaluation." Teachers' shared these comments: "We are still struggling to find the best SLO pre/post-assessment option besides STAR." "SLO's are still tricky as they are tied to near performance and some children do not take it seriously so results may be skewed." "Student learning goals protocol and connection to summative evaluation." "It is difficult to know what my administrator wants, particularly with SLOs."

Insufficient Professional Development Supports. Some teachers expressed the view that their districts were not offering sufficient professional development for teachers to learn about their systems, to develop SLOs, or for other aspects of implementing PE/PG systems. Prior MEPRI studies of PE/PG systems (Fairman & Mette, 2017; Mette & Fairman, 2016) also found administrators were concerned with uneven provision of professional development across districts in the state to support this initiative. Teachers' concerns about the lack of professional development to support PE/PG implementation were more often expressed in districts in rural settings than in urban/ suburban settings. Some comments included these: "Not enough staff development time to work on it, expected to do it on our own time." "Not enough time for us to learn about it." "There is little/ no professional development offered to meet individual needs for teachers." "There are not enough resources to really support new teachers."

Questioning the Reliance on Student Testing and Quantitative Measures. Both principals and teachers expressed concerns about using student testing results as a basis for educator evaluation and the ability of their systems to fairly capture good teaching. A principal commented, "State guidelines do not always show effective teaching. . . . The system attempts to quantify and make objective something which is not always quantifiable. Teachers feel confused and threatened." One teacher wrote, "By using student achievement the results are not taking into consideration those students who refuse to participate to the best of their abilities. (For example, those who refuse to do it all together or who choose random answers without reading either the questions or the answers.)" Another commented, "The use of student growth scores is still questionable in its fairness." Teachers expressed much more ambivalence about the PE/PG policy requirements than did principals, and more strongly questioned the accuracy or fairness of the evaluation criteria and process.

Impacts on Teacher Morale. Some principals and teachers shared their concerns about the negative impact of the evaluation process on teacher morale. Principals made these comments: "State guidelines do not always show effective teaching. . . . The system attempts to quantify and make objective something which is not always quantifiable. Teachers feel confused and threatened." "Teachers are scared of punitive results especially with SLOs and observations." "I personally do not think this is good for morale." (This last comment was a response to a different open-ended question about supports needed.)

Some teachers' comments described a general feeling of disempowerment and skepticism around the process as teachers are unsure about the fairness of the evaluation process or how the evaluations will be used. Teachers commented, "It still feels like they are looking for shortcomings in our teaching. If a teacher loses points because an administrator does not fully understand what transpired, there is no room for the teacher to explain and perhaps gain a better performance goal. This does not feel collaborative." "The performance evaluation is tied to job security (or at least it is thought of that way). It's not associated with a growth mindset, but rather—'this is how you are'." "Teachers feeling stressed about being under pressure to perform. The concern of losing a job over an evaluation." "Our PE/PG system has caused a great deal of stress in our school district."

Changes to PE/PG Systems

Principals received an open-ended question on the survey that asked them to describe one or two big changes their district had made to their PE/PG system since fully implementing it. It

should be noted that while last school year (2017-18) was the first year that the state required districts to fully implement all aspects of their PE/PG systems, some districts had begun to implement parts of their systems in limited ways before that deadline. A total of 153 principals gave meaningful responses to this question. One third (51) were coded. Most principals described efforts to streamline and reduce the requirements of their PE/PG systems, while some principals described new components that were added to their systems or new data management systems.

Streamlining System Requirements. Most of the principal comments indicated that the changes made to local PE/PG systems typically involved modified requirements to streamline the process, such as reducing the number of observations required. This type of change is reflected in these comments: "Reduced the number of observations/points of contact that administrators had to have with each teacher." "Reducing the number of observations for veteran staff who are not on improvement plans." "We have made efforts to streamline the summative evaluation write-ups to make them more effective and less time consuming." "Extended the time between summative evaluations." "We have moved to Marzano's Focused Framework, which is more condensed and manageable."

Adding or Implementing Components. Other principals indicated their districts added requirements or are implementing planned elements of their original PE/PG plan for the first time. Principals' commented, "We have added a peer review component. We want to encourage our teachers to use each other as the valuable resource that they are." "The district has trained peer evaluators." "Incorporating student achievement data to the evaluation." "Using student learning objectives and reviewing student success towards meeting goals as part of the eval system." "Regular calibration meetings among observers." "Multiple unannounced observations rather than one announced each year."

A few principals also described how their districts have included more staff in the PE/PG system. One wrote, "Added para professionals/ ed techs to the list of those requiring multiple observations and summative evaluation." Others described expanding the domains of practice they used within the professional practice models they elected to use for teachers. A principal wrote, "We have opened up more elements for teachers to choose from in the Marzano domains."

Data Management Systems. Some principals described their district's efforts to make the use of data more manageable and efficient, through the adoption of software systems or online platforms to help educators and evaluators collect, store, share and review documentation. One principal explained, "We are using a software program that collects and maintains all of the

documents required by the system." Another commented, "iObservation makes the process doable on a yearly basis and allows teachers to focus on several elements at a time." "Moving toward secure electronic forms easily accessible to teachers and administrator." A teacher commented in response to another open-ended question, "We just converted to Google Forms instead of RANDA [a performance management system]."

Additional Supports Needed

Both principals and teachers were asked to describe what further supports districts need to better implement PE/PG Systems. A total of 143 principals and 262 teachers provided meaningful comments to this question. One third of the principal comments (48) and teacher comments (87) were coded. Broadly, both principals and teachers agreed that three categories of support are needed at this time to facilitate the implementation of PE/PG systems. These supports include the provision of time, resources of funding for additional staffing and professional development, and changes in the state policy.

Time. As reported above in the section on challenges, both principals and teachers made frequent reference to the challenge of finding sufficient time to implement their PE/PG systems, particularly for principals who shoulder most of the responsibilities for observing and evaluating teachers. Some principals have larger school staffs than others do, and some principals in smaller, rural schools systems may serve as administrators in multiple schools or have teaching duties in addition to administration. Principals commented on their struggle to find time to meet with and observe teachers, as in these two comments: "Time to carry out the process well." "It's a time-consuming process. Many principals struggle to get into those classrooms for walk-throughs because they are dealing with discipline problems or the sort."

Teachers also reported they struggle to find time to develop their growth plans, compile the required documentation for evaluation, and help develop other parts of the PE/PG system. Teachers felt this work was added to their already demanding workload and without compensation for the additional time they invest. Some of their comments were: "There needs to be time allowed for teachers to develop the plans. These are demanding exercises that take away from our actual jobs." "Time, and fewer administrative mandates that take up time."

Resources. The availability of needed resources to implement PE/PG systems was another obstacle described in the challenges section above and mentioned as a support that is needed. Principals and teachers indicated that resources are needed to fund adequate staff and professional development to support this effort in their schools. The request for more personnel relates to the

challenge of insufficient time for some principals and teachers to manage the additional workload posed by the PE/PG system. Principals' comments about resources emphasized the need for personnel and professional development: "We need to be able to fill positions with qualified individuals, so that we don't have to take on those additional responsibilities." "More administrative support. I could use a dean of students or assistant principal to deal with student issues so I could deal more with the guidance of teachers and teaching." "Appropriate PD for our size and teacher/student population." "Regional professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators in best instructional and management practices so that we can access some quality training to improve our staff's effectiveness." "Orientation for Superintendents regarding the job responsibilities of a principal, which require a balanced approach or adequate resources designed to respond to some management demands. Without such, the principal is less able to implement the PE/PG with fidelity."

Teachers' comments about needed resources focused mostly on time and funding for training and professional development. "Money to provide training. Our district is very poor and trainings are limited for that reason." "We lack resources to cover teachers if they wish to attend professional development and also resources to provide personalized professional development, mostly due to lack of funds and remote location." "More time and professional development to be able to implement the peer observation piece." "We need to find funding for peers to observe peers—nonevaluative—simply for education and bettering each other's practice." Some teachers also suggested more funding is needed for personnel to help with the evaluation work or support instruction in the classroom. "They need funding to hire people to just be in charge of evaluation." "A broader range of support to include all (ed techs, support staff, specialists)."

Changes in State Policy. As reported in prior MEPRI studies of PE/PG systems (Fairman & Mette, 2017; Mette & Fairman, 2016), administrators have shared mixed levels of support for the state policy initiative, and also described teachers' ambivalence and skepticism. Overall, few principals or teachers suggested in their recent survey comments that the state policy should be changed in a major way or terminated. Rather, they called for more time and resources to support implementation, and continued development and refinement of local PE/PG Systems. Some suggestions for policymakers from principals included: "Time, patience, and some local control. DOE needs to let an initiative live for a while and not always be looking for the next best thing coming down the road. . . . Taking the long view would be a nice approach." "Just continued patience with the teachers and administrators as they work to understand the best methods of

utilizing this system to improve instruction in our classrooms."

Teachers' suggestions more often expressed the desire to let teachers focus more of their time on teaching than on documentation, and a desire for more training and involvement of other teachers in peer observations and feedback. Some teachers also stressed the need for consistency in state education. Comments included: "They need to allow teachers to teach and not constantly be worried about what they aren't doing, should be doing, etc." "Maybe take something off the plates—lessen the responsibilities of admin and teachers. Let's get back to basics—why are there so many initiatives?" "A wider variety of people to observe—teacher leaders would be wonderful." "I wish we had a more formal PLC program where teachers formally observed one another several times a year and then met off campus to discuss lessons and successes/ areas of concern for those lessons." "Teachers should be paid for additional PD days to create those reports and discuss team goals with other teachers." "The state needs consistency with programs and expectations of educators. It seems as though a lot has changed over the years and I am not sure it has helped student achievement."

Preparing Pre-Service Educators for PE/PG

Teachers who indicated they had been teaching in their district for five years or less received an open-ended question asking what they wish they had learned during their teacher preparation program to be better prepared for the PE/PG process. A total of 57 teachers wrote comments in response and all were coded. A majority of the comments indicated that these teachers felt they were not adequately prepared in their teacher preparation programs to participate in the PE/PG process. They pointed to deficiencies in three areas: obtaining an overall explanation of PE/PG systems, information about specific elements of the PE/PG process, learning about student assessments, how to give peer feedback, and becoming prepared to manage challenging classroom behaviors. The following comments reflect these views and suggestions for pre-service training programs in Maine: "I learned nothing about the PE/PG process at my university and I think I would have really benefitted from a whole semester long class about the process." "I was not aware of this process at all. So any information would have been beneficial." "How to do growth plans and to be more prepared to be observed so I am not so nervous when it happens." "More about peer observations and giving constructive feedback to peers." "I wish I had learned more in depth knowledge and strategies related to assessment." "Creating student portfolios that are self-monitored so the students can track their own progress." "I wish I would have learned (and have been able to practice) more effective methods of teaching and ways in which students learn

best, but there was little discourse about behavioral concerns we might face."

Seven comments from teachers specifically indicated that they felt well prepared by their pre-service preparation programs to engage in the PE/PG process. These comments share that positive view: "I think my student teaching experience did a good job preparing me for the PEPG portfolio process." "I feel like my training prepared me better for the PE/PG process than it prepared me for actually teaching." "I believe I was taught everything I needed to know, the best advice the professors were giving was to self-evaluate constantly, adjust lesson plans as needed, and try to come up with a good hook for the lesson." "My program prepared me well."

Conclusions

Based on the survey responses from principals and teachers who represent schools and districts from across the state, we can make some broad observations and conclusions about the ways that PE/PG systems area currently being implemented and how they have continued to evolve and change since the deadline for full implementation last year. Districts have continued to make significant and positive progress in their implementation efforts and continued development of their PE/PG systems. However, districts and schools continue to struggle to find adequate time and personnel to handle the added workload for principals and teachers, and to provide needed professional development around this work.

The results also reveal some important gaps—one being a significant difference in opinion between administrators and teachers about how systems are being implemented and whether or not teachers are provided with various types of support and formative feedback to improve their practice and professional growth. Another gap revealed in the data are significant differences in perceptions about implementation and supports based on the size and locale of school districts. In fact, these findings were somewhat surprising, revealing that educators in some smaller, more rural school districts felt more supported in their professional growth and with formative feedback than in larger and less rural districts. We describe some of the broad conclusions from this study here.

Perceptions of Progress

Principals and teachers reported important areas of progress in their districts' implementation of PE/PG systems. They reported their districts have more formal, consistent systems for evaluation that are involving a broader range of staff. Districts have added or implemented more components to their systems, such as a broader range of sources to inform evaluation, but have also streamlined their systems to make them more manageable. Educators see positive work happening with common language and concepts of professional practice. Both

principals and teachers indicated their districts provide supports for PE/PG such as instructional coaches and various forms of professional development. Educators are receiving feedback from peers and other stakeholders (staff, students, parents) in addition to feedback from administrators.

However, this study also reveals some important gaps. First, the data indicate that principals were more positive about their districts' implementation and supports and feedback for teachers' professional growth than were teachers. Second, the data also indicate more positive views about professional supports and feedback in smaller, more rural districts than in larger districts. Third, educators in elementary schools are more positive about professional supports and feedback than educators in high schools. These findings have implications for policy and practice that we address in a separate section of this report.

Perceptions of Challenges

This study confirms that the resources of time and personnel continue to be major challenges for principals and teachers in implementing their PE/PG systems fully and with fidelity. Principals struggled with observations and feedback for teachers, and teachers struggled to document their work and further develop their PE/PG systems. Less emphasized challenges included continued confusion over SLO and assessment development and a need for professional development time to support SLO and assessment work as well as implementation generally. The data also reveal continued concerns about the stress and negative impacts for teachers as they cope with the additional workload but also feel less positive about the provision of supports and feedback from their districts or principals.

Adjustments Districts Made

This study found that districts have continued to revise their PE/PG systems over the past two years, in part to streamline the process to meet the time and staffing constraints that are challenging, but also to expand their systems to add or implement components as specified in their PE/PG system plans. Reductions in evaluation work to cope with time and personnel constraints included: fewer observations of teachers, shorter observations, staggered cycles for teacher evaluation across multiple years, and focusing on fewer domains from their professional practice model. Expansion or new efforts to implement planned components included: engaging and training more district and school personnel in the process of observation and evaluation, such as peer observation of principals and teachers (confirms quantitative results); including a broader range of staff in evaluation (e.g., educational technicians and para-professionals); expanding the

focus on a broader range of domains in the professional practice models; continuing or adding more training on systems and calibration for observation and evaluation; and adding or selecting different data management systems for PE/PG documentation and communication.

Range of Data Sources Used for Evaluation

Based on survey data, this study suggests some changes in data sources used in both teacher and principal evaluation. Regarding teacher evaluation, announced observations and walkthroughs remained the most common sources of data, a theme consistent from previous MEPRI reports (Fairman & Mette, 2017). However, portfolios were perceived to be used to a lesser extent than reported two years ago, while peer feedback and videos of classroom instruction as sources informing evaluation were cited more often in the current survey. Additionally, educators shared that data from local district assessments are used more frequently than data from the Maine State student assessments, a theme consistent with another recent MEPRI report (Fairman et al., 2018). Districts continue to use parent, student and staff surveys to inform principal and teacher evaluation. Regarding principal evaluation, observation of leadership remained the most common source of data informing principal evaluation, as was also indicated in a MEPRI review of PE/PG plans two years ago (Fairman & Mette, 2017). However, principals also indicated there is increased use of student and staff surveys to inform principal evaluation, particularly in larger districts (2000 or more students).

Staff Included in Evaluation

This study also documents that districts are engaging a range of personnel in observation and evaluation for PE/PG. Districts are increasingly using trained teachers (sometimes department heads or teacher leaders) for peer observation, review and feedback to support professional growth and inform evaluation. Principals are also being observed and have feedback from other principals as well as from district administrators. Some districts have broadened the scope of personnel who are involved in PE/PG by adding educational technicians and para-professionals.

Use of Peer Observation

One way to help reduce time constraints and reduce pressure on personnel might be to increase the use of peer observations to help drive professional growth improvement efforts and increase the frequency of formative feedback. While peer evaluation should likely remain stratified based on formal teacher leadership positions (i.e., department chairs or grade-level team leaders), increased use of peer observation to promote increased formative feedback to help drive

professional growth seems like a valuable use of teachers' expertise, especially to promote the human resource development of teachers. Peer observation is something that can be explored, especially in niche subject areas where peer teachers likely have much greater pedagogical content knowledge about instruction than the principal. Despite changes in the law and rules that sought to more clearly distinguish between peer support or formative feedback and evaluation or summative feedback, teachers may still be confusing the two forms of feedback, and PE/PG systems may not have clear boundaries between the two components.

Supports for New Teachers and Principals

This study clearly highlights a large percentage of teachers – regardless if they are new or not – are unsure about the sources used to evaluate teachers as part of their respective PE/PG system. As such, new teachers likely would benefit from clear, concise information about how they may be evaluated to ensure a fair and balanced evaluation process. Principals likely would benefit from additional support structures, perhaps in the form of peer observation teams who could help focus and target professional growth opportunities and formative feedback. Additionally, principals would likely benefit from reduced time constraints of the PE/PG system in order to focus on individualized support for teachers who need it most.

Other Supports Needed

Based on the responses from principals and teachers to an open-ended question, as well as the identified gaps in principals' and teachers' views on implementation found in the quantitative survey data, this study found that schools and districts may need additional funding or other resources to support more time, personnel and professional development to implement their PE/PG systems fully and with fidelity. Principals in larger schools may struggle more to handle the work of teacher observation and evaluation. Teachers in smaller, rural districts indicated they felt better supported in their professional growth than teachers in larger districts in response to some survey questions, but the same group of teachers also described in their comments that they were not receiving enough professional development to understand some aspects of the PE/PG system (SLOs, assessments) and time to continue developing their systems.

Educators predominantly called for consistency in the state and local policy or to "stay the course", but noted more time and supports are also needed for this initiative. They generally feel they are making positive progress and there are positive changes from this policy.

Pre-service Preparation for PE/PG

Based on teachers' responses to an open-ended survey question, this study found that teachers do not feel that their pre-service preparation programs included information or prepared them to engage in the PE/PG process. Overwhelmingly, responding teachers who had been recently hired (within past five years) by their districts expressed disappointment that their pre-service training did not help them learn about the PE/PG process. A few teachers felt their student training experience gave them some preparation for PE/PG. Teachers recommended more attention in pre-service training on topics including: components of the PE/PG system, how to document student learning through assessments and other ways, how to document professional growth and practice, and classroom management.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Drawing on a large and representative sample of principals, assistant principals, heads of schools and teachers from across the state of Maine, this survey study provides substantial data evidence of both progress and challenges in efforts to implement PE/PG systems at the district and school levels. Many of the challenges persist from prior years of piloting these systems, such as time, personnel, and training to support the effort. With the expectation of full implementation last year, districts made some decisions about streamlining and focusing their PE/PG systems to accommodate the time and staffing challenges and to align more closely with their desire to focus more on supporting the professional growth of educators than on summative evaluation. Both state and local education policymakers can draw on the findings of this study to reflect on ways to overcome the challenges and support the important work happening in schools. We describe here some potential implications for policy and practice based on the survey findings.

Policy:
- Principals and teachers generally felt positive about the improvements made in their evaluation process and the majority of comments indicated support to maintain the state policy or "stay the course". They called for consistency and an effort to minimize changes in the policy at the state or local levels. Educators noted that time and patience is needed for these systems to be fully developed and implemented.
- Challenges of time, personnel and training to support this effort continue to be significant obstacles and have negative impacts for administrator and teacher workload, stress and morale, all of which could inadvertently contribute to the state's shortage in teachers and high turnover rates among administrators and teachers. State and local policymakers will need to find ways to both make these systems manageable as well as to fully fund the time, personnel and training necessary to support them.
- State policy initiatives could be used to fund regional collaboratives that share training and resources to support both principal and teacher professional development on aspects of PE/PG systems including: SLO and assessment development, peer observation and formative feedback, and using a variety of ways to document both student learning and teaching practice. Some districts continue to use facilitators to support their work and find this helpful, as indicated in educators' comments.
- In looking for ways to support districts and educators, the state will need to recognize that a

"one size fits all" approach won't address the varied needs across the state. Small, rural and larger, less rural districts have different capacities and needs. Principals in larger schools may need more assistance to conduct observation and give feedback to teachers which could mean adding additional trained evaluators. Teachers in smaller, rural schools may lack access to training on PE/PG systems that more urban schools can access. Similarly, district leaders may need to examine the different capacity and needs of their schools and grade levels.

- Districts have de-emphasized their use of the state assessment and have chosen to rely more on local assessments to inform evaluation. Given the continued concerns and lack of support to use the state's learning assessment as a source to evaluate educators, changes in the state policy may need to be made to reflect the reality in practice.

Practice:
- The survey results indicated higher levels of uncertainty among teachers than principals about what sources of evidence can be used for teacher evaluation in their districts. This finding indicates a lack of communication within districts to help teachers understand their evaluation systems.

- The survey results also indicated that a significant portion of teachers (about a third of responding teachers) disagreed that their teacher evaluation systems allow principals and evaluators to accurately evaluate teachers, and to evaluate teacher effectiveness. This finding indicates a lack of confidence in both teacher evaluation systems and in administrators to conduct teacher evaluation accurately and for evaluations to capture teaching effectiveness with the measures used. More work is needed at state and local levels to address these concerns.

- This study revealed that teachers feel less positive about the supports they receive for professional growth and formative feedback. Principals and district leaders will need to examine their practices to address this gap. More time or personnel may be needed to ensure that observations and feedback to teachers happen. More training may be needed in giving formative feedback to teachers to ensure feedback is specific and helpful.

- Data also identified gaps and confusion between formative and summative types of feedback. Districts may need to provide more intensive training around these concepts and best-practice models for principals and teachers to observe and give feedback to others.

Districts could partner with other districts, higher education, or regional collaboratives to build their capacity and effectiveness in this important area.

- Some districts provide instructional coaches to support teachers' professional growth and improved practice, while other districts may struggle to fund coaching positions. Principals noted the addition of instructional coaches has been helpful. The need for instructional coaches across content areas and equitable access to instructional coaching across districts in the state is a need that may be addressed through both policy and practice.

- Teachers overwhelmingly stated in their written comments that their pre-service preparation programs had not included information on the PE/PG process or prepared them for this process. Higher education institutions in the state that provide these programs may need to examine their courses and programs to ensure that both principals and teachers have opportunities to learn about the components of PE/PG and are ready to engage effectively in that process.

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Author Information

Ian M. Mette is an Assistant Professor in Educational Leadership in the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Maine. Dr. Mette is the founding editor of the *Journal of Educational Supervision* and has played instrumental roles in developing numerous partnerships to develop educational leaders across the State of Maine. His research interests include teacher supervision and evaluation, school improvement policy, and bridging the gap between research and practice to inform and support school improvement efforts. Specifically, his work targets how educators, researchers, and policymakers can better inform one other to drive school improvement and reform policy.

Janet C. Fairman is an Associate Professor in the College of Education and Human Development, University of Maine, and co-Director of MEPRI. Dr. Fairman holds a doctorate degree in education policy and has expertise in the areas of education policy analysis, program evaluation, and qualitative research methodology. Her research includes a focus on STEM education, innovative and reform practices in education, and teacher leadership.

Patricia L. Lech is a Senior Research Associate in the College of Education and Human Development, University of Maine. Dr. Lech has expertise in quantitative research methods and statistical data analysis.

Maria C. Frankland, M.S., M.S.C., NCC, is Guidance Director at Narraguagus Jr/Sr High School and a graduate student in Educational Leadership Ph.D. Program at the University of Maine. Her research interests center around institutional barriers to rural student success, the impact of trauma on rural students and teachers, and ways in which trauma-informed approaches may support the academic, career, and personal/social development of rural students.

Appendix A: Survey Instrument (October 2018)

MEPRI Study of Maine Performance Evaluation/Professional Growth Systems

Demographics

Q1. Which job role best describes your current position?
_____ Principal/Head of School
_____ Assistant Principal
_____ Teaching Principal
_____ General Education Teacher: English, math, science, social studies
_____ Teacher: Art, music, PE/health, modern languages
_____ Technical Education Teacher
_____ Special Education Teacher
_____ ELL (English Language Learner) Teacher
 Other (please describe)_____

Q2. Which grade level(s) best describe your current job assignment (check all that apply):
_____ Elementary
_____ Middle School
_____ High School

Q3. Total number of years you have worked in your current job role <u>in this district</u>:
_____ new to role in this district
_____ 1-2 years
_____ 3-5 years
_____ 6-10 years
_____ 11-15 years
_____ 16-20 years
_____ 21 or more years

Total Experience as a Principal (Teacher)

Q4. Total number of years you have worked in your current job role <u>in any school district:</u>
____ new to role in any district
____ 1-2 years
____ 3-5 years
____ 6-10 years
____ 11-15 years
____ 16-20 years
____ 21 or more years

District characteristics

Q5. Please indicate which enrollment band your district falls into for total district enrollment:
____ under 200
____ 201-600
____ 601-1200
____ 1201-2000
____ 2001-3000
____ over 3000

Q6. Does your district include secondary grades?
____ Yes
____ No

Q7. District county location:
____ Androscoggin
____ Aroostook
____ Cumberland
____ Franklin
____ Hancock
____ Kennebec
____ Knox
____ Lincoln
____ Oxford
____ Penobscot
____ Piscataquis
____ Sagadahoc
____ Somerset
____ Waldo
____ Washington
____ York

School locale

Q8. Which area best describes your school location?
____ City of Suburb: area population > 50,000
____ Town: area population 2,500-50,000
____ Fringe rural: area defined as rural within 5 miles of nearest 2,500 or greater population
      area
____ Distant rural: area defined as rural that is 6-25 miles from the nearest 50,000 or greater
      population area or is 6-10 miles from the nearest 2,500-50,000 population area.
____ Remote rural: area defined as rural that is more than 25 miles from the nearest 50,000 or
      greater population area and is more than 10 miles from the nearest 2,500-50,000
      population area.

Who Evaluates Teachers in Maine

Q9. In my school district's PE/PG system, the following professionals evaluate teachers:

	Yes	Unsure	No
Only a building administrator evaluates teachers and provides summative feedback on teacher performance.	o	o	o
Only a district administrator evaluates teachers and provides summative feedback on teacher performance.	o	o	o
Both building and district administrators evaluate teachers and provide summative feedback on teacher performance.	o	o	o
Trained teachers evaluate teachers and provide summative feedback on teacher performance.	o	o	o
External evaluators (from out of district) evaluate teachers and provide summative feedback on teacher performance.	o	o	o

Sources Used to Evaluate Teachers in Maine

Q10. My school district's PE/PG system uses the following sources to evaluate teachers:

	Yes	Unsure	No
Portfolios			
Announced/planned classroom observations	o	o	o
Unannounced classroom observations	o	o	o
Videos of classroom lessons/instruction	o	o	o
Parent surveys	o	o	o
Student surveys	o	o	o
Maine state student assessment results (e.g., eMPowerME, SAT)	o	o	o
Local student assessment results (commercially developed, e.g., NWEA, etc.)	o	o	o
Course-based or teacher developed student assessment results	o	o	o
Observations and feedback from other teachers	o	o	o
Other (please specify):_____	o	o	o

Teacher Observation (teachers only)

Q11a. How many times were you observed teaching by peers last school year for performance evaluation purposes? _____

Q11b. How many times were you observed teaching by a principal/ evaluators for performance purposes? _____

Q11c. If you observed other teachers in your school for their performance evaluation last school year, how many teachers did you observe? _____

Sources Used to Evaluate Principals/ Assistant Principals in Maine (Principals/Head of Schools, Assistant Principals)

Q11. My school district's PE/PG system uses the following sources to evaluate principals/ assistant principals:

	Yes	Unsure	No
Portfolios	o	o	o
Observations of faculty meetings or other leadership activities	o	o	o
Staff climate surveys	o	o	o
Student climate surveys	o	o	o
Parent/ family surveys	o	o	o
360 evaluation tool	o	o	o
Maine state student assessment results	o	o	o
Local student assessment results	o	o	o
Observations and feedback from other principals	o	o	o
Other feedback from staff	o	o	o
Other feedback from parents/families/community	o	o	o

Supports for Professional Growth

Q12.My school district's PE/PG system supports my professional growth in the following ways:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Formal peer mentoring program	o	o	o	o
Peer observations	o	o	o	o
Professional learning communities (PLCs)	o	o	o	o
Individualized growth plans	o	o	o	o
Funding to pursue advanced coursework	o	o	o	o
Funding & time to attend professional conferences and trainings	o	o	o	o
Training for new principals on the district's PE/PG system	o	o	o	o
Training for new teachers on the district's PE/PG system	o	o	o	o
Fewer requirements for PE/PG for new teachers	o	o	o	o

Summative Feedback for Teacher Evaluation

Q13. My school district's PE/PG system allows administrators and/or evaluators to:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Evaluate teachers accurately	o	o	o	o
Evaluate the effectiveness of teachers	o	o	o	o
Address areas to improve teacher instruction	o	o	o	o
Evaluate teachers using a variety of evidence	o	o	o	o
Evaluate teachers using multiple observations	o	o	o	o

Formative Feedback to Improve Instruction

Q14. My school district's PE/PG system allows administrators and/or evaluators to:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Provide formative feedback to help teachers grow	o	o	o	o
Provide formative feedback that is not tied to summative evaluation	o	o	o	o
Distinguish the difference between formative feedback and the summative evaluation	o	o	o	o
Provide teachers with individualized professional development	o	o	o	o
Provide teachers with instructional coaching to meet individualized needs of teachers	o	o	o	o

Areas of Staffing Challenge (Principals only)

Q15. For my school it is a significant challenge to recruit and hire qualified teachers in some areas.
___Strongly Agree
___ Agree
___ Disagree
___ Strongly Disagree

Q16. My school currently has the greatest challenge in recruiting/ hiring qualified teachers in the following areas: (check all that apply) (only participants who checked they work at school that includes middle and secondary grades)

___language arts
___mathematics
___science teachers
___technology teachers
___engineering
___ world languages
___social studies
___special education teachers
___career and technical education
___ art
___ music
___ physical education
___ ELL (English language learners)
___ other: (please describe) _____

Q16. My school currently has the greatest challenge in recruiting/ hiring qualified teachers in the following areas: (check all that apply) (only participants who checked they work at school that only has elementary grades)

___technology teachers
___special education teachers
___ regular education
___ art
___ music
___ physical education
___ ELL (English language learners)
___ other: (please describe) _____

Q17. For my school it is a significant challenge to retain qualified teachers in some areas.
___Strongly Agree
___ Agree
___ Disagree
___ Strongly Disagree

Q18. My school currently has the greatest challenge in retaining qualified teachers in the following areas: (check all that apply) (only participants who checked they work at school that includes middle and secondary grades)

___language arts
___mathematics
___science teachers
___technology teachers
___engineering
___ world languages
___social studies
___special education teachers
___career and technical education
___ art
___ music
___ physical education
___ ELL (English language learners)
___ other: (please describe) _____

Q18. My school currently has the greatest challenge in retaining qualified teachers in the following areas: (check all that apply) (only participants who checked they work at school that only has elementary grades)

___technology teachers
___special education teachers
___ regular education
___ art
___ music
___ physical education
___ ELL (English language learners)
___ other: (please describe) _____

Overall Reflections on PE/PG

Q19. What is working well with your school district's PE/PG system?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Q20. What are the biggest challenges with your school district's PE/PG systems?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Q. Briefly describe one or two big changes your school district has made to the PE/PG system plan since fully implementing it. (principals only)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Q21. What further supports do school districts need to better implement the PE/PG initiative?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Q22. What do you wish you had learned during your teacher preparation program to better prepare you for the PE/PG process? (teachers checking 1-2 years of experience in this school)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you for your participation in this survey. The aggregate results (no individually identifying data) will be shared by Maine Education Policy Research Institute (MEPRI) with state policy makers. To submit your answers please go to the next page.

For those new to their role in their current district

You do not meet the inclusion criteria for this survey as you indicated that you are new to your role in your district. If you have any opinions on the PE/PG process in Maine that you would like Maine Education Policy Research Institute (MEPRI) to share with state policy makers please write them below. Aggregate results will be presented and no individually identifying information will be disclosed. Thank you for your interest in this survey.

_____
_____
_____

Thank you for completing this survey

Appendix B: Information on Study Sample

This appendix includes more information describing the overall sample obtained by the statewide principal and teacher surveys. Table 1 shows the distribution by district enrollment grouping for schools that responded to this survey, while Table 2 shows similar information for the participating teachers and principals.

Table 1. Enrollment Size of Participating Districts

SAU size	Districts	
less than or equal 500	77	47.0%
501-1000	26	15.9%
1001-2000	35	21.3%
2001 and over	26	15.9%
Total	164	

Table 2. District Enrollment Size for Participating Teachers and Principals

SAU size	Teachers		Principals	
less than or equal 500	84	15.1%	67	24.1%
501-1000	73	13.1%	44	15.8%
1001-2000	171	30.8%	82	29.5%
2001 and over	228	41.0%	85	30.6%
Total	556		278	

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has classified the locations of schools into 12 categories based on key concepts that the Census Bureau uses to define an area's urbanicity. Since there are no urban areas in Maine schools that fit the NCES criteria, most Maine school district can be represented in nine of the twelve NCES categories. The town, fringe rural, distant rural and remote rural areas were classified by the same standards as the NCES used. The city and suburb locations were combined. Approximately 100 Maine schools are in each classification. Table 3 describes the survey sample in terms of locale and what percentages of teachers and principals participated in the survey within each locale category.

Table 3. Locale for Participating Teachers and Principals

NCES Location	Teachers		Principals	
City Suburb	126	22.70%	60	21.60%
Rural Fringe	113	20.40%	33	11.90%
Town	101	18.20%	43	15.50%
Rural Distant	160	28.80%	101	36.30%
Rural Remote	53	9.50%	37	13.30%
Total	555		278	

The level of teacher experience by geographical location indicated one third of participating teachers (35%) had five or fewer years of experience in their current district. The distribution of teachers by level of experience in their current district appeared fairly even with the exception of teachers with less than five years of experience in the district accounting for 47% of the teachers in distant rural districts.

Table 4. Participating teacher experience by locale.

NCES Location	1-5years		6-10 years		11-15 years		16-20 years		21 or more years	
City Suburb	39	35.8%	18	16.5%	12	11.0%	23	21.1%	17	15.6%
Town	22	27.8%	15	19.0%	7	8.9%	10	12.7%	25	31.6%
Rural Fringe	26	27.4%	17	17.9%	18	18.9%	11	11.6%	23	24.2%
Rural Distant	65	47.4%	15	10.9%	13	9.5%	16	11.7%	28	20.4%
Rural Remote	13	26.0%	10	20.0%	7	14.0%	10	20.0%	10	20.0%
Total	165	35.1%	75	16.0%	57	12.1%	70	14.9%	103	21.9%

NCES location	1-2 years		3-5 years		6-10 years		11-15 years		16-20 years		21 or more years	
City Suburb	14	12.8%	25	22.9%	18	16.5%	12	11.0%	23	21.1%	17	15.6%
Town	11	13.9%	11	13.9%	15	19.0%	7	8.9%	10	12.7%	25	31.6%
Rural Fringe	8	8.4%	18	18.9%	17	17.9%	18	18.9%	11	11.6%	23	24.2%
Rural Distant	25	18.2%	40	29.2%	15	10.9%	13	9.5%	16	11.7%	28	20.4%
Rural Remote	8	16.0%	5	10.0%	10	20.0%	7	14.0%	10	20.0%	10	20.0%
Total	66	14.0%	99	21.1%	75	16.0%	57	12.1%	70	14.9%	103	21.9%