Participating districts must have already developed a coherent and high quality set of K-12 competencies, mapped to the State graduation competencies, and the organizational capacity to participate effectively in the pilot. They also must be well on their way to having a comprehensive performance assessment system.   
  
**How will student proficiency be measured in the pilot districts?:**

School districts participating in the PACE pilot will be required to report the number and percentage of students at each grade level who are meeting both locally defined, but state (and peer) approved definitions of proficiency and competency.

NH DOE will require the PACE districts to anchor their annual determinations of proficiency (competency) to the Smarter Balanced ALDs for the respective grade level and subject area.

In addition, to ensure that all students are held to the same set of college and career ready expectations, the state has adopted college and career readiness standards and state model competencies that describe the knowledge, skills, and work study practices that all students are expected to master before they exit the K-12 system. All districts, regardless of the assessment system in use, must demonstrate the alignment of their systems with these standards and model competencies.

The Task Bank contains tasks for which there exist approved New Hampshire Competencies: ELA, mathematics, science, and work-study practices.

<http://education.nh.gov/assessment-systems/documents/pilot-overview.pdf>

The PACE option will have multiple components, but performance assessment will be a central feature.

PACE will include common performance tasks that have high technical quality, locally designed performance tasks with guidelines for ensuring high technical quality, regional scoring sessions and local district peer review audits to ensure sound accountability systems and high inter-rater reliability, a web-based bank of local and common performance tasks, and a regional support network for districts and schools.

**Student-as-worker, teacher-as-coach**

* 1. The governing practical metaphor of the school should be “student-as-worker”, rather than the more familiar metaphor of “teacher as deliverer of instructional services.” Accordingly, a prominent pedagogy will be coaching students to learn how to learn and thus to teach themselves. <http://essentialschools.org/common-principles/> From: <http://www.ccebos.org/netsinits.html#bqpai> From: <http://education.nh.gov/assessment-systems/documents/guide.pdf> There are discussion boards there  
     also, for questions, comments, and sharing of success and solutions.  
     The Center for Collaborative Education, the state’s professional  
     developers for Quality Performance Assessment, will also provide a  
     bi-monthly newsletter of information and examples to assist  
     implementers.   
       
     **How would the assessments be benchmarked or validated against state assessments?**

Districts participating in the PACE initiative will be required to administer state summative assessments (Smarter Balanced) in will be required to be administered at least once during each grade span (e.g., grades 4, 8, and 11). This requirement will serve as both an internal and external audit regarding school and district performance. Local districts will be expected to reconcile the results of the SBAC with the results reported from the local assessment system.

* 1. In addition, prior to being selected to participate in the PACE initiative, districts will be required to submit their locally-designed systems of performance-based assessments to NH DOE for vetting through a peer review process. The peer review process would utilize a state-designed rubric to ensure high quality; alignment with state standards, model competencies, and performance expectations; comparability with other tasks or measures requiring similar knowledge or skills; and consistency and accuracy of scoring.  
       
     **How would the assessments be comparable across districts?**

While 100% comparability across districts administering different systems of assessment cannot be assured – nor is it expected– NH DOE is taking important steps to ensure that students in pilot districts receive a high-quality education that exceeds the expectations for non-pilot districts held to the same high expectations; that students deemed proficient in a particular knowledge or skill likely would be deemed proficient regardless of the type of assessment used; and that students moving from one district to another will have transferrable credentials.  
  
Peer review will be structured to provide support and technical assistance to districts to ensure that local systems maintain high quality. However, is a district fails to meet peer review requirements after being provided support, the district’s permission to participate in the pilot in subsequent years may be revoked.

The state will expect PACE districts to draw from these common tasks as part of the MOU to participate in the cohort, and will also provide common protocols for creating and validating other locally-designed performance tasks.

* 1. NH DOE will require all PACE pilot districts to demonstrate how their assessment tasks are aligned and comparable to other tasks or measures of similar knowledge and skills.  
       
     Lastly, NH DOE is taking steps to ensure scoring comparability by promoting reliable scoring of performance assessment tasks across classrooms, schools, and districts. NH DOE will sponsor Professional Development Institutes, including summer and school-year Quality Performance Assessment institutes on assessment literacy, competencies and designs for teaching them (knowledge, skills, and dispositions  
       
     Regional task validation sessions will be conducted to assist districts in fine-tuning assessment tasks to ensure they measure target knowledge, skills, and dispositions  
       
     **What capacity does the state have to validate locally-developed assessments?**

NH DOE will enlist the assistance of expert practitioners as well as other national assessment expertise to support a peer-review validation process for locally-developed systems of assessments

Additionally, as described below, student learning objectives (SLO), **which are required for NH’s educator evaluation system**, will be used for documenting and reporting student progress within each year.

* 1. **How would student growth be measured in the pilot districts?**

1. Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) document the percentage of students meeting specific, locally-defined learning targets for each teacher. This method is currently used as part of the statewide educator evaluation system, and will provide coherence among school/district and educator accountability systems since the assessments used to evaluate student learning of the competency in PACE districts will be the same assessments used to evaluate educators’ contributions to student learning as part of the SLO process.

Competency or learning trajectory-referenced growth documents students’ growth against a pre-defined learning trajectory toward mastering college and career ready graduation competencies. Note, this approach is still several years from being defined well enough to be implemented.

FAQ

We know that true psychometric comparability (i.e., “interchangeability”) across districts administering different systems of assessment cannot be assured. In fact, we know that it is not expected. However, NHDOE is taking important steps to ensure that students in pilot districts receive a high-quality education that meets or exceeds the expectations for non-pilot districts held to the same high expectations. For example, students deemed proficient in a particular grade or content area likely should be considered proficient regardless of the type of assessment.   
  
We argue that comparability efforts should not be focused on individual assessments administered throughout the year, rather the focus of comparability must be on the annual determinations. NHDOE has proposed an approach to do just that. The Smarter Balanced Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs) are the basis for establishing cut scores on the Smarter Balanced Assessments (this process was recently completed). The ALDs serve as the narrative descriptions of performance and the role of the standard setting panelists is to match the narrative descriptions with actual performance on the test. Therefore, NHDOE has decided to require all of the PACE districts to anchor their annual determinations of proficiency (competency) to the Smarter Balanced ALDs for the respective grade level and subject area.   
  
Of course, it is one thing to use common descriptors, but having assessment evidence to evaluate against these descriptors is another critical component of comparability. Therefore, all PACE

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districts have agreed to participate in a common standard setting process based on thoughtfully- identified set of summative competency assessments administered throughout the year along with the common summative PACE performance assessment. Participating in a common standard setting process, where student work is compared with the ALDs will allow for comparably rigorous achievement standards to be established in all PACE districts. http://education.nh.gov/assessment-systems/documents/pilot-proposal.pdf