RSU 22 Questions from December 2015 K-5 Parent Nights

What is Proficiency Based Education (PBE)?

PBE systems can look very different across the State of Maine, however a few key areas are the same. First, all students must demonstrate mastery of key learning targets (standards) before moving on in their learning. In other words, "failure" is not an option for learners anymore. It is no longer "ok" to not understand key learning because it will no longer "average" out.

Second, the system is transparent and clear about what minimum standards students must meet. In every class, students know precisely what the learning expectations are for the learning experience. These are not kept "secret". Students know precisely where they stand in their learning, what they need to do to demonstrate mastery, and what learning is next after they do.

Third, consistent evaluation methods are used by teachers across the K-12 continuum, and standards are consistent across schools and school systems so that a "3" actually means the same at one school as it does in another school!

Finally, while learning expectations (standards) are fixed, teachers and students have more flexibility in how they learn the required content, how they demonstrate proficiency of the content, and when they demonstrate proficiency. Students may move more flexibly in their learning and not be tied to the "middle" of the classroom where they may either be bored or lost. Within a PBE system, students may move at their own maximum pace.

Will students be able to move up to the next level?

Yes, each learning target is part of a progression of targets. K-5 students may move ahead of their peers to a more difficult level in the continuum of standards.

An example: Addition and Subtraction
~The first level has a proficiency level (3) Knows addition and subtraction facts 0-5.
~The second level with a proficiency level (3) Knows sums of two one-digit numbers.

Do children move up to the next level in the same grade?

They may or they may not. If students are able to be accelerated, they will be given opportunities to continue to move on or to deepen their understanding.

Moving from K-5 to Middle School, there have been some difficulties in moving a 5th grader into 6th grade. Are the standards the same?

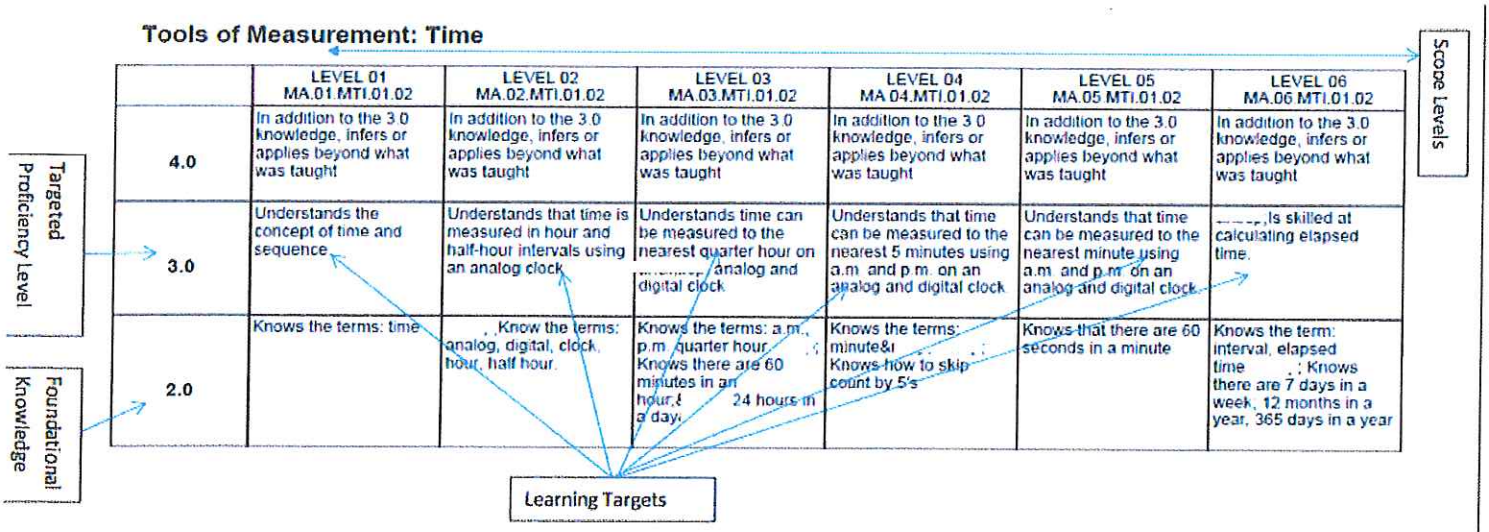
They have the same categories (Measurement Topics) for scoring but the expectations and demonstrations move to a higher level of difficulty and complexity.

Are students able to move up in the standards at the middle and high school level?

They may or they may not. If students are able to be accelerated, they will be given opportunities to continue to move on or to deepen their understanding.

Is 3 essentially an average student?

No. If a student receives a 3, it means that she has demonstrated proficiency. He has met the required expectation



	LEVEL 01 MA.01.MTI.01.02	LEVEL 02 MA.02.MTI.01.02	LEVEL 03 MA.03.MTI.01.02	LEVEL 04 MA.04.MTI.01.02	LEVEL 05 MA.05.MTI.01.02	LEVEL 06 MA.06.MTI.01.02
4.0	In addition to the 3.0 knowledge, infers or applies beyond what was taught	In addition to the 3.0 knowledge, infers or applies beyond what was taught	In addition to the 3.0 knowledge, infers or applies beyond what was taught	In addition to the 3.0 knowledge, infers or applies beyond what was taught	In addition to the 3.0 knowledge, infers or applies beyond what was taught	In addition to the 3.0 knowledge, infers or applies beyond what was taught
3.0	Understands the concept of time and sequence	Understands that time is measured in hour and half-hour intervals using an analog clock	Understands time can be measured to the nearest quarter hour on analog and digital clock	Understands that time can be measured to the nearest 5 minutes using a.m. and p.m. on an analog and digital clock	Understands that time can be measured to the nearest minute using a.m. and p.m. on an analog and digital clock	Is skilled at calculating elapsed time.
2.0	Knows the terms: time	Know the terms: analog, digital, clock, hour, half hour.	Knows the terms: a.m., p.m. quarter hour. Knows there are 60 minutes in an hour; 24 hours in a day.	Knows the terms: minute&i Knows how to skip count by 5's	Knows that there are 60 seconds in a minute	Knows the term: interval, elapsed time ; Knows there are 7 days in a week, 12 months in a year, 365 days in a year

Above is a sample of a Measurement Topic: Tools of Measurement: Time -- this would be under the content area of Mathematics. A measurement topic is an area of the content that the student needs to learn about. The Scope Levels are indicated across the top and this particular measurement topic has 6 levels that students must demonstrate in his/her progression of learning. The scores on the left side are the Proficiency Scores.

Is this going to be used up through high school (the 1-4 scale)?

It already is. Currently middle schools and the high school report out the traditional grades as well as the standards that have been met.

How do you compete when it comes to college admissions?

Colleges and Universities have been dealing with various types and forms of transcripts for decades now. Students from private institutions, home schooled students, or international students all have different transcripts (that) colleges and universities must sort through, read, analyze, understand, and then use to make admissions decisions. PBE transcripts will be treated no differently than all these other forms of transcripts. The key is to make sure that the transcripts are clear, succinct and best represent what the student has demonstrated for skills. If anything, a PBE transcript will be much more clear than just the 100 point scale. For example, a college never knew if a calculus grade of a 98 from one school meant the same as a 98 from another school. In addition, it was not clear whether the student even knew how to successfully complete calculus at all.

Should we expect to see 4's before high school?

You may if the student demonstrates deeper skills and understanding on a learning target.

Parents do not understand the system (1-4 scale)

K-5 has always used a 1-4 scale. We now have specific learning targets and rubrics available for every learning target.

1 - the student is working on the foundational knowledge and can do it with help from the teacher.
2- the student has demonstrated the foundational knowledge for the learning target.
3- the student is proficient on the level of knowledge for the learning target.
4- the student has demonstrated knowledge that goes beyond the level of expectation for proficiency for the learning target.

Science example below...

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Description	Taxonomy Level	The Learner is able to:
4.0	In addition to the 3.0 knowledge, infers or applies beyond what was taught.	Analysis	sort pictures or objects into groups of living and non- living and give reasons why.
4.0	In addition to the 3.0 knowledge, infers or applies beyond what was taught.		
3.0	Understand the basic characteristics of living organisms.	Comprehension	* explain how we know why certain things are considered living and others are nonliving (e.g., grows, responds to environment, reproduces, uses energy). * sort pictures or objects into groups of living and non- living and give reasons why.
3.0	Understands the basic characteristics of living and non- living things (e.g. growing, responding to environment, changing, reproducing).	Comprehension	explain how we know why certain things are considered living and nonliving.
2.0	Knows the basic needs of living things (e.g., food, water, waste removal, shelter, space, air.	Retrieval	from a group of pictures identify which are living and non-living things. state the basic needs of living things.

How will parents know what is expected at each level of progression?
All grade level standards are listed on the RSU 22 web site under Curriculum and Assessment.

How many states instituted this (proficiency based education) and how long has this been going on?

We are the only state to have required proficiency-based systems. However, many districts and schools across the nation have implemented proficiency-based systems.

Some Maine schools have been working on this since 2012. RSU 22 began PBE work in the spring of 2013.

The report card is still confusing. Can you provide a little more detail?

Yes, please continue reading…

Geometry: Measurement	Prg
MA.01.GME.01.02: Is skilled at finding the perimeter of a polygon	3.0
MA.02.GME.02.03: Is skilled at finding area by counting unit squares Is skilled at finding area of a polygon with all right angles by decomposing them into non-overlapping rectangles	3.0

Each content area (math, science, social studies, English Language Ats, etc.) is divided into strands. So, for example, looking above you can see that the content area is mathematics and the strand focuses on geometry. It specifically drills down to measurement in the geometry strand.

The letters/numbers that you see MA.01.GME.01.02: are the codes to link the standards to the reporting software. This particular code means: MA = Math, 01 = 1st level, GME = Geometry Measurement, 01.02 = second revision

The words: ***Is skilled at finding the perimeter of a polygon*** = defines what the student needs to know and be able to do.

Referring to the previous science example above, you will see what is called a rubric. A rubric breaks down a skill or strategy to clarify exactly what a learner is expected to do. Rubrics clearly describe the expectations of the skill or strategy as it becomes more difficult. The rubric you see above clarifies the content and the taxonomy (level of difficulty) expected at each level.

Thank you for forwarding your questions. We will continue to do our best to answer them.