

Frequently Asked Questions

How are technology plans created and entered into ePeGS? The ePeGS planning tool helps districts develop effective CSIPs and tie all other DESE-required plans to district CSIPs. Ideally, a district would enter its CSIP into ePeGs prior to entering its ed-tech plan. However, it may be necessary for a district to enter and submit the ed-tech plan before or at the same time as the CSIP (and/or other plans).

The online process begins with the district Mission Statement, a single text box entry that will serve as the mission statement for ALL district plans entered in ePeGS. Next is Needs Assessment, a single field for entering assessment findings which, again, will serve all other ePeGS-created plans. Then the district signifies one to seven overarching (CSIP) Goals, by selecting from the list of five DESE-suggested goals and/or entering up to two district-created goals. Once goals are identified, Objectives and Strategies (and Action Steps, if needed) are entered. **It is at this point where districts can tie specific objectives, strategies, and actions to one or more specific plans, such as the “Education Technology Plan.” Most districts won’t begin entering tech-related information until they get to objectives or strategies.** Note that examples of ed-tech objectives and strategies are provided in the planning tool (and are posted on Instructional Technology’s district technology planning website). Also note that a good number of plans, including the ed-tech plan, require “additional elements” before they can be submitted.

Following is an outline of the **ePeGS planning elements** with special notes or requirements regarding **Ed-tech Plans**.

- **Mission Statement** – enter the district’s mission statement (needs only to be entered one time).
- **Needs assessment** – enter major needs assessment findings.
Ed-tech Plan: Make sure the assessment process [if not the actual findings] address the technology focus areas (TFAs). Reviewers should find proof of appropriate data collection and analysis in the specific objectives and strategies.
- **Goals** – select one or more of the five suggested goals and/or add two district-created goals.
Ed-tech Plan: Most districts likely will opt for the five suggested goals. There is no requirement for a technology-specific goal.
- **Objectives, Strategies, and Action Steps** – enter/select at least one objective per goal and at least one strategy per objective, and connect the objective and strategy to the appropriate plan(s).
Ed-tech Plan: The ePeGS screens for objectives, strategies, and action steps will walk districts through the necessary elements, such as connection to MSIP standards, desired outcomes and annual targets, begin and end dates, person(s) responsible, and funding source(s) – all those elements that were required of paper plans before ePeGS. As with previous paper plans, the objectives and strategies need to address all five technology focus areas (TFAs) to be approvable.
- **Additional Elements** – many DESE-required plans have additional elements that must be completed prior to submission.
Ed-tech Plan: Complete the two Education Technology Plan “additional elements” that include a narrative description of how the plan will be monitored and evaluated, and an

assurances check box that the plan meets the five key elements required by the FCC for the E-rate program.

- **Preview, Print, Submit Plan** – all plans can be previewed and printed from the summary page screen. Plans may be revised at any time, even after a plan has been submitted. The intent is for districts to periodically review and update plans, at least once a year.

Ed-tech Plan: Review the plan to make sure appropriate objectives and strategies (and action plans as appropriate) have been assigned to the ed-tech plan as intended. Once the plan is final, submit the plan via the ePeGS submit button AND print two copies (one for district records and one for DESE). Note that users can copy and paste the print view into a word document.

When does the technology plan need to be created? Creation of a technology plan must begin before filing E-rate forms, since the plan should form the basis for the services a district is seeking on its Form 470 and the services ordered on Form 471. Note that the plan does not have to be in its final version at this time (i.e., the version to be approved next spring) or have to be entered into ePeGS before filing E-rate forms. Rather, the plan should be far enough along in its development that it can reasonably support the E-rate discounted services that are/will be requested. Following is a suggested timeline for meeting E-rate and state approval requirements and deadlines.

Following is a sample technology planning timeline:

August - November, 2008

- Get ePeGS access/privileges, and convene planning committee(s)
- Review present plan and conduct need/gap analysis (date “working plan” for E-rate purposes)

October - December, 2008

- Draft goals, objectives, strategies, action steps, and evaluation

November 2008 – February 2009

- Finalize plan

February – March 2009

- Present final plan for school board approval
- Enter plan in ePeGS

April 2009

- Complete ePeGS entry (as needed) and submit plan for state approval by April 15

When and how should technology plans be submitted for state approval? Education Technology Plans, both electronic and paper versions, must be submitted by April 15, 2009. 1) Submit the plan via the ePeGS submit button. 2) Copy and paste the print view of the ePeGS-created plan into a word document, and adjust the font, if needed, to a size that is readable for reviewers [Arial 11 or equivalent]. 3) Keep one print copy on file for annual review and E-rate program purposes. 4) Send the other copy to DESE Instructional Technology via USPS mail, along with a completed Request for Technology Plan Approval cover sheet which can be accessed on the Instructional Technology tech-planning website.