

Individual Professional Development Plans

Frequently Asked Questions

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A. What is an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)?

Massachusetts educators who hold a professional license are required to develop an Individual Professional Development Plan in order to meet license renewal requirements. Professional teaching licenses must be renewed every five years, and the recertification process requires all educators to prepare an Individual Professional Development Plan for each renewal cycle. The plan must be consistent with the educational goals of the school and/or District, and enhance the ability of the educator to improve student learning. Educators may need to modify the plan, based on evolving District and school improvement plans/goals.

While the building principal/supervisor must approve the IPDP, the responsibility for developing and completing the plan with documentation of all professional development activities belongs to the individual educator. Likewise, it is the educator's responsibility to monitor and adjust the plan as needed, and initiate a plan review with the principal/supervisor every 1-2 years.

B. How do I develop an Individual Professional Development Plan?

Follow these steps:

1. Review a copy of the current Douglas Public Schools Professional Development Plan.
2. Review a copy of the current District Improvement Plan and Goals.
3. Review a copy of your school improvement plan.
4. Review the required Professional Development Points (PDP's) needed for your license(s).
5. Formulate a set of individual professional growth goals consistent with District and school improvement plans/goals.
6. Choose professional development activities that will help you meet your goals over the five-year licensure renewal cycle.
7. See the Individual Professional Development Module for the IPDP form to draft your professional development plan. (Directions may be found in the General Information section of "DouglasPD.")

8. Share your plan with your building principal/supervisor and secure his/her approval.
9. Complete the professional development activities and keep records.
10. Revisit your IPDP with your principal/supervisor every year to review goals and amend the plan as necessary. You may add appropriate professional development activities as they become available during the five-year cycle.

C. Where can I find a blank IPDP template?

The Massachusetts Department of Education website has sample Individual Professional Development Plans, the IPDP template, and a template for recording professional development activities at this website: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/>.

D. What resources should I use in developing my IPDP?

These documents are helpful, and may be found in the current Professional Development/Teacher Evaluation Handbook or on our District website:

- Douglas Public Schools Mission Statement
- District Improvement Plan and Goals
- District Improvement Plan and Goals Annual Report
- Douglas Elementary School Improvement Plan
- Douglas Intermediate Elementary School Improvement Plan
- Douglas High School Improvement Plan

E. What criteria might the principal use in approving my IPDP?

IPDP's must be approved by the principal or supervisor; or, the principal may delegate this role to a department head. Principals and supervisors may wish to ask the following questions when reviewing and approving Individual Professional Development Plans:

- To what extent are the individual professional growth goals aligned with school and/or District goals?
- How will the proposed professional development activities add to the educator's repertoire of skills and content knowledge?
- How is the plan designed to improve student learning?
- How is the educator participating in a range of meaningful and professionally relevant professional development?

F. What does the approval of my IPDP mean?

Approval of your plan means that 80% of the PDP's in the plan are consistent with the educational goals of the school and/or District, and that the plan enhances the ability of the educator to improve student learning.

G. May I initiate a review of my plan, or amend it to reflect professional development opportunities that may arise after my plan has been approved?

Yes, educators may request a review of their plan anytime during their recertification cycle to reflect new professional development opportunities. Plans may be amended with approval by the educator's principal/supervisor.

H. If I am an educator who has been employed by another Massachusetts school district, and have recently accepted a position in Douglas, do I need to re-align my plan with the Douglas Public School's goals/plans, and have my IPDP approved by my principal?

Yes, educators in this situation need to re-align their plans with their new District's goals, as well as seek approval from their current principal/supervisor within three months of employment. The PDP's previously earned will still count toward recertification.

More Information:

For more information on requirements for educator license renewal, please consult the Massachusetts Department of Education website at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/recert/>.

The Massachusetts Teacher's Association also maintains a Recertification Help page at: http://www.massteacher.org/career/state_cert/recert.cfm.

(This document was prepared utilizing the above-mentioned websites, as well as the Acton-Boxborough School District professional development website: <http://cfweb3.smartedu.net/aab/pd>.