

*How to Write Your IPDP
(Individual Professional Development Plan)*

How do you know if it's time to write your IPDP?

If you are a new teacher, you must write your IPDP within the first year of teaching. All other teachers must have their IPDP's submitted by January 15 of the first year of a new certificate or license.

Because you need approval from the Local Professional Development Committee before any activity which you expect to use toward licensure or certification, it is to your advantage to do the IPDP as soon as possible.

Remember, you must have an IPDP in order to get coursework approved by the LPDC!

What do I do first?

Your first step is to get a copy of the district's approved IPDP form. This form asks for some basic information and provides a space for the actual IPDP. The form asks you to "List educational goals as related to student needs, professional growth, building goals, and district goals."

What should the IPDP include?

Your IPDP should first describe your goals, both short-term and long-term, then suggest classes or workshops you might take or projects you might be involved in that would help you meet these goals.

Your goals should focus on improving one of four areas: student learning, teaching skills, meeting building goals, or meeting district goals. For example, a short-term goal all teachers have in common is to improve their teaching skills. Other common short-term goals might be to improve students' performance on proficiency tests, to improve the atmosphere of the school or to help the district fulfill the continuous improvement plan. Long-term goals fall more in the area of career development. For example,

you may want to become an athletic director, guidance counselor, district administrator, or county administrator.

When you submit a coursework/activity proposal to the LPDC, the committee will look to see if that proposal supports your professional development. So remember when listing goals and activities that it is best to be as general as possible so that any activity you may become involved in will fit under the IPDP.

Any other tips?

The LPDC will not be giving you a grade on creativity, so don't worry too much about being original. Look at some IPDP's that have been approved to get an idea of what is expected. Once you think you are finished with the IPDP, have someone read it to check for errors. You can even have a member of the LPDC review it before you turn it in.

If you are really stuck, use the pattern below to get started and add your own personal touches later.

I have two goals for my professional development. My short-term goal is to improve _____ by taking classes in _____. I also plan to be involved in activities such as _____ to help me meet this goal. My long-term goal is to become _____. To meet this goal, I will try to take coursework dealing with _____. Some activities which will help toward achieving this goal are _____. I believe this plan will make me a more effective educator and improve both my building and district.