



New Professional Development Regulations: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

www.nj.gov/education/profdev

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap9c.pdf>

Background and Resources

Q: How were New Jersey’s Standards for Professional Learning developed, and where can I find them?

A: New Jersey has adopted the revised standards for professional learning developed by a consortium convened by Learning Forward (formerly National Staff Development Council). The new definition of professional development focuses on teacher and school leader effectiveness and provides guidelines for related professional learning strategies and activities. New Jersey’s revised standards focus on connecting educator learning to student learning. The standards describe elements of high-quality professional development that lead to effective teaching practice and supportive leadership practice. The professional learning standards and definition, set forth in *N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-3.2* and *3.3*, are posted at www.nj.gov/education/profdev.

Q: How can my school/district get a copy of the New Jersey collaborative professional learning toolkit?

A: The *Collaborative Professional Learning in School and Beyond: A Tool Kit for New Jersey Educators* is a resource for supporting educators who are implementing job-embedded, collaborative professional learning in schools and districts. The toolkit contains surveys, articles, planning templates, and other tools for use by teachers, facilitators, administrators, coaches, and consultants who support collaborative professional learning in New Jersey. All teaching staff and administrators should have a personal copy of the toolkit. To obtain a link to download the toolkit, email TeachPD@doe.state.nj.us and include your name and the name of your district.

Planning Requirements

Q: Are teachers and supervisors required to create individual teacher Professional Development Plans as they have done in the past?

A: As in the past, each teacher must develop an individualized PDP in consultation with his/her supervisor; this is typically done at the end of each school year. For teachers new to a district, the PDP must be created within the first 30 days of their assignment.

Q: Who reviews the Professional Development Plan for Chief School Administrators?

A: The local board of education will review the Professional Development Plan for CSAs.

Q: Do the professional development requirements for principals include all supervisors and administrators (such as director of curriculum)?

A: The professional development requirements for principals include “all active school leaders serving on a permanent or interim basis whose positions require possession of the chief school administrator, principal or supervisor endorsement in accordance with *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-11*.” (*N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-3.1*) Hence, a director of curriculum, for example, holding a supervisor certification would fall under this provision.

Q: How many professional development hours are required for nurses in the first 3 years of employment?

A: In the first three years of employment, nurses must complete 20 hours of professional learning in one of three designated areas of study, as required in *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-12.3* and *12.4*. All three designated areas of study must be completed by the end of the first three years of employment.



Q: Will the school Professional Development Plan be submitted to the district office?

A: As in the past, school Professional Development Plans will continue to be submitted to the district office for incorporation into the district plans. The superintendent or his/her designee will review all school-level plans, or plan summaries, and include a narrative on school-level professional learning needs in the district Professional Development Plan.

Q: Will the district Professional Development Plan be submitted to the Department?

A: District Professional Development Plans are no longer submitted to the Department for review. Beginning with the 2013-14 school year, the superintendent will oversee the development and implementation of the district plan and the local board of education will review the plan for fiscal impact. The district's Professional Development Plan will be retained on file in the district and can be used as documentation for the district's Quality Single Accountability Continuum review.

Plan Development and Support

Q: Will the Department provide Professional Development Planning templates for districts to use this year in developing their plans?

A: The Department has developed *optional* plan templates to assist educators in planning professional development that meets the new regulatory requirements. These plan templates are **not** mandated. Rather, districts may elect to use or modify any of the templates provided by the Department or they may create their own templates. Please visit <http://www.nj.gov/education/profdev/ipdp/> to find the following:

- Individual teacher Professional Development Plan (PDP) and Corrective Action Plan (CAP)
- Individual principal Professional Development Plan
- Superintendent Professional Development Plan

Please visit <http://www.nj.gov/education/profdev/sdpdp/> to find the following:

- School Professional Development Plan
- District Professional Development Plan

Q: May superintendents maintain the Local Professional Development Committee to assist in developing the district Professional Development Plan?

A: The superintendent is responsible for the development of the district Professional Development Plan and may designate staff and create or keep existing structures for managing the district planning process. For example, the superintendent may (a) maintain the Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC); (b) re-purpose the District Evaluation Advisory Committee (DEAC); or (c) create new structures to oversee professional development. Note: election of LPDC members is no longer required.

Q: May principals increase the number of members on the School Improvement Panel?

A: At the principal's discretion, the School Improvement Panel (SciP) may be expanded or other staffing structures may be used to support the SciP in fulfilling its responsibilities – as long as teachers comprise at least one-third of the total membership. For example, principals may (a) maintain the existing school professional development committee (SPDC) to support the work of the SciP; (b) maintain the SPDC and appoint qualified members to serve on the SciP; or (c) use SciP in place of the former SPDC. Note: election of SPDC members is no longer required.



Allocation of PD Hours

Q: Has the requirement for 100 professional development hours over 5 years changed?

A: The former 5-year cycle of 100 hours of professional learning for teachers has been changed. Beginning July 1, 2013 teachers must earn *at least* 20 hours of professional development *each year*, in accordance with *N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-3.4*. The 20 hours will be prorated in a given year depending on individual circumstances. For example, a teacher who works 50% of the day/week must earn 50% of the required 20 hours, or 10 hours; a teacher who is out for an entire year is not required to earn any hours during the time away. Guidance on developing the individual teacher Professional Development Plan is available at www.nj.gov/education/profdev.

Q: Since teachers are now required to earn at least 20 hours of professional development per year, what happens to hours a teacher has already earned as part of the former 100-hour, 5-year cycle?

A: The former 5-year, 100-hour cycle has been eliminated (*N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-3.4*). Beginning July 1, 2013, teachers are required to earn a minimum of 20 hours annually. Even if a teacher has already accumulated 100 hours in advance of the end of the previous 5-year cycle, that teacher is expected to complete 20 hours of professional development during the 2013-14 year and in subsequent years. However, during this transition year, teachers having a multi-year professional learning goal (such as completing a college course of study) should work with their supervisors to determine how the multi-year plan will be transitioned to a year-to-year plan.

Q: How will districts determine the number of hours required for teachers working part-time or who are on leave for part of the school year?

A: A part-time teacher is defined as one who is employed on a regular basis for the school year, but for less than the full school day or week. The supervisor must prorate the hours required for a teacher working part-time or on leave for part of the school year. The hourly requirement is prorated depending on individual circumstances. For example, a teacher who works 30% of the day/week must earn 30% of the required 20 hours. A teacher who works half the year must accrue 10 hours, and a teacher who is out for an entire year is not required to earn any hours for the time away. The principal should work with the teacher to develop a plan that is reasonable for the individual's circumstances.

Q: How many PD hours are awarded for completion of a college course?

A: The number of hours for undergraduate or graduate courses is calculated by seat time. Hence, a teacher will typically earn 45 professional development hours (15 weeks x 3 hours per week) for completion of a 3-credit course.

Q: How many PD hours should be awarded to a cooperating teacher who works with a student teacher?

A: The school and district administration may exercise discretion in determining the number of hours awarded to a cooperating teacher who is working with a student teacher. The Department will not issue a state-wide policy in this matter because we believe districts need to consider their local contexts in making this decision.

Q: May districts count training in the teacher evaluation instrument as part of a teacher's 20-hour professional development plan (PDP)?

A: As a regulatory requirement, training in the evaluation instrument would be included in the 20 hours of teacher professional development; however, the 20 hours is only a *minimum*. It is important to ensure that all the other requirements for the individual teacher PDP are addressed as well. Please note that each teacher's improvement and/or growth needs, as identified through the evaluation process,



must be addressed through the teacher's individual professional development plan (PDP) pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-3.4(c). All professional learning opportunities must be aligned with the NJ Standards for Professional Learning and the definition of professional learning located at <http://www.nj.gov/education/profdev/regs/pddef.pdf>.

Q: May teachers receive PD hours delivered online as part of the annual, minimum 20-hour requirement for professional learning activities (e.g, training, college courses)?

A: Online professional learning may be included in the annual, minimum 20-hour requirement for educator professional development if approved by the educator's supervisor. It is the responsibility of providers to document an individual's completion of professional learning for administrators who approve professional development activities. A sample PD certificate, located at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/profdev/pd/teacher/pdcert.shtml>, reflects the *information* that must be documented for each participant, even if a provider uses an alternative documentation format.

Q: Is the professional development requirement for ethics, law, and governance still in effect?

A: All PD plans for active school leaders serving on a permanent or interim basis whose positions require possession of the CSA, principal or supervisor endorsement must continue to complete appropriate training on school law, ethics and governance pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:26-8.2 and other statutory requirements related to student safety and well-being. Whereas in the past, the regulations were very specific about the details of the training, the revised regulations stipulate that the specific training needs of each school leader will be reviewed annually and determined individually as part of PDP development.

For More Information

- View professional standards, guidance materials, PDP and CAP plan templates and tools at www.nj.gov/education/profdev/.
- Access AchieveNJ resources on professional development and support at <http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/scip/>.
- To share questions or comments, please email TeachPD@doe.state.nj.us.