



Professional Development Requirement for Certification: A Guide for Schools

The Requirement

- All teachers and school leaders who hold a "Professional" certificate must complete 175 hours of professional development (PD) every 5 years to maintain the validity of their certificate.
- All staff who hold a "Teaching Assistant III" (TA III) certificate must complete 75 hours of professional development every 5 years to maintain the validity of their certificate.

Professional Development Period

- The professional development year is JULY 1 - JUNE 30.
- A certificate holder's first professional development period begins the July 1 *after* the effective date of the Professional or TA III certificate and continues for five years. Note: PD activities completed before this July 1 "begin date" do not count toward the requirement.
- Five-year PD periods are continuous thereafter for as long as the certificate holder wishes to maintain the certificate, regardless of current assignment or employment status.

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The University of the State of New York | The State Education Department

Office of Teaching Initiatives: www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/

Planning Activities

- The district is responsible for planning with the certificate holder and approving the activities that will count toward this requirement, even if the district is not the provider of each PD activity (for example, college coursework). **Check the Office of Teaching Initiatives (OTI) web site for suggested activities.**
- Approval of PD activities should be based upon individual and district needs (in accordance with the district PD plan).
- The district is responsible for assigning hour equivalents for PD activities where not evident (for example, research, mentoring, and curriculum development activities).
- College coursework must be credited at 15 clock hours for each semester hour taken.

Reporting Hours

- Each school year, the district is responsible for reporting the hours completed by each certificate holder employed 90 days or more during that year.
- It is recommended that reporting be done annually, before June 30.
- Reporting is done directly to the TEACH online system, using the web based application or through an electronic file transfer.

Keeping Records

- The district must keep records for seven years, as they are subject to audit. (The certificate holder also must maintain personal records.)

TEACH Official Status

- Official records of each certificate holder's completed professional development and certificate validity are maintained on the TEACH online system. Districts may employ various professional development planning and tracking systems, but the information recorded in these systems does not constitute the official record.

Failure to Meet Requirement

- Any certificate holder who fails to complete the required professional development becomes subject to due process and risks the loss of his or her Professional or TA III certificate(s).
- Adjustments to an individual's required hours may be granted for good cause. The certificate holder must apply to OTI for an adjustment; school districts may not do so on his/her behalf. **Check OTI web site for full details.**
- During audit or due process proceedings, the certificate holder's credential continues to be valid, until a formal determination is made and the school notified.

TO DO List

- ✓ Encourage all teachers to establish individual TEACH accounts. **The OTI web site offers step-by-step directions.**
- ✓ Publicize the name of the person in your district whom certificate holders should contact for planning, approval, and reporting of their PD hours.
- ✓ Determine which staff hold Professional or Teaching Assistant III certificates, regardless of assignment.
- ✓ Meet with each Professional and Teaching Assistant III certificate holder to plan and approve appropriate PD, based upon individual and district needs.
- ✓ Report PD hours to SED through the TEACH system by June 30 of each year.
- ✓ Keep records of all PD reported for 7 years.
- ✓ For assistance with technical problems contact the TEACH Tech Help Line at 518-486-6041; for policy questions contact the Policy Unit at 518-474-4661.
- ✓ Visit the Office of Teaching Initiatives Web site for more information and answers to common questions. From the Home page, go to "Certification", then "Professional Development for Certificate Holders".