

FAQs on PDPs in Easton Public Schools

Do I need to submit a form to request PDP's after every workshop that I take? Will they be granted if it is less than 10 hours?

You only need to submit the form after you have accrued 10 or more hours. If you attended several 2-hour sessions on the same topic, for example, you would just list them on one form and then get one certificate for all of them totaled so that the DESE will give you the credit. It isn't that we will "not" grant certificates for less than 10 hours, in fact we "can't" do that. Not only will the Department not accept them, we are responsible for following the directive to NOT give them. Here is the wording from the DESE:

"Can a Registered Provider award PDPs for a 2-hour workshop? No. A Registered Provider must provide and assess at least 10 hours of professional development on a given topic in order to award PDPs. Providers may divide sessions into blocks of time, over a period of time, to total the 10-hour minimum."

This information is located at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/faq.html>

Why would I take classes that are less than 10? Why would they be offered anymore?

You should only take classes that are less than 10 hours all from the same provider so that they can put them all together in one certificate. Anyone offering you "PDPs" needs to be an Approved Professional Development Provider, and if they are not a school system or college, they would have to have applied and been approved by the DESE in order to provide them.

Unfortunately, some places (especially for-profit businesses) will offer "PDPs" and they are not approved by the Department and either they are not familiar with the requirements or they are just using the "PDPs" as incentive for attending. They are rarely offered anymore by Approved Providers. The DESE never offers them at all anymore for this reason. The ones that we offer through Easton University will have follow-up opportunities to earn more in the same content. If you look at the EU brochure next to the Google Docs offering, for example, it says it is worth "6 PDPs (which must be added to a future workshop to get 10)-more will be offered!" This is why it was worded that way.

I still need less than 10 hours to combine with hours from previous years and from previous places. On top of that, I may take things from other institutions and need a few additional PDP's from Easton. Will I be able to do this?

All PDP providers are supposed to collect a "product" that is the culmination of the 10 hours. Again, some places that give less than 10 hours do not require this. That is not helpful to you. We will try to assist everyone who has instances such as this. However, this is the exact reason that we cannot give out less than 10 at a time. We don't want anyone to be stuck with random hours that can't be combined. If you can get the certificates you are talking about together as well as any products created as a result of the offering, we would be happy to go over them with you and suggest what you may be able to combine. This page will give you more information regarding this "product" requirement:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/faq.html?faq=20>

It seems a bit wasteful for all of us to have to fill out a form each and every time we take a course from Easton in order to get PDP's. We already sign in at the class and now we have to do yet another step. This is making more work for us.

You do not have to fill out any forms or get any certificates for PDPs if you are taking a course for graduate credits (whether through Easton University or elsewhere). The transcript is accepted by the DESE for PDPs. It is the non-credit workshops or sessions for which you will need to fill out the form. Unfortunately, only one person completes these certificates for every educator in the district, and it is

wasteful for her to create certificates for every activity when everyone does not need them. The form is quite simply set-up. It asks for the activity, dates/hours, and product. You could literally write:

*"Curriculum writing with grade 4 ELA team
July 10 and 11 from 8-2:30
Total of 12 hours
Product = fiction unit, attached."*

You can also submit this information online if you prefer.

If I take a short workshop that interests me and is beneficial to me, and then a year later, I take another such offering, is it possible I may not be able to combine them?

One of the reasons we have opened up Easton University is to create local opportunities of offerings that will meet these requirements. You will see that the only offering with less than 10 PDPs is the Google Docs class, and it states that there will be future offerings to combine with these 6 hours. We are aware of that and know that this needs to be offered. The Kim Marshall Feature Presentation is 3 hours long. Since we do not have a future offering on the same topic planned, we did not offer PDPs for it. This is strictly for interest and provides an opportunity to ask an expert questions about evaluation and curriculum. We cannot confirm whether or not the Department will accept PDPs from outside vendors that you submit combined.

DESE has always required bundles of 10 and I thought it was up to us to make them compatible.

DESE has not always required 10 hours. Unfortunately, this was a DESE policy change in 2000 and may have contributed to some of the confusion. You are correct, however, that it is up to each educator to be responsible for their own PDPs. It is not the responsibility of the district. You can certainly still attend workshops outside the district for 10 hours, we are just cautioning you that you should be suspect of any organization in this practice and suggesting that you be well aware that the remaining hours will need to be on the same topic and will require a final product that represents 10 hours.

When it comes to in-district offerings, you are correct that we will not offer the certificate until 10 hours (or more) in one topic have been accrued and a product has been completed (and this is what the form is for). They may be done in different years, we simply ask that you request them as soon as it adds up to 10 (or more) hours. Waiting several years after the completion of the 10 (or more) hours creates the possibility that files are lost, etc. and we want to be sure you get everything that you have earned. Again, the 10 hour minimum is a mandate directly from the state, not the district.

Is this for this cycle of renewal? Shouldn't this information with all of the requirements and changes been made available prior to now so that we could have provided better documentation/products?

These policies are from the state. The "product" has been a requirement of the "new" renewal process since it was adopted in 1999. The guidelines are available here:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/recert/2000guidelines/guidelines.pdf>

These guidelines are for educators and not for districts. The DESE does not have districts manage teacher requirements for certification because it is a contract between the educator and the state. We are sending this information because we know these are requirements you need to do and dates you need to meet and we are trying to assist you. However, we do not keep track of teacher PDPs. This is not a recent change of any sort and certainly not anything that is coming as a change from this office. Again, since so many educators are renewing certifications this year, we are simply attempting to be helpful by reminding you of these requirements.

Every educator's certification, education, and situation is unique, so giving blanket advice is difficult. However, if you would like to sit down with whatever you have and ask questions of your situation, we are happy to do that with you. Please understand, though, that we are **NOT** acting on behalf of the DESE,

and any suggestions that we make are just that, suggestions based on our own experiences assisting educators with this process. Everything you do in terms of your licensing **MUST** be confirmed with the DESE by you to be sure that it is correct for **YOUR** situation and licensing requirements.

In the past, at the end of the school year we have received a printout of activities we attended and the amount of hours/PDP's from the Assistant Superintendent's office. Will we continue to receive this?

We do not have a sample of this form, but we will look into it and see what we may be able to provide. It is important that each educator keep this information for themselves as part of their IPDP. A copy of the IPDP template is on the Assistant Superintendent webpage.

I have spoken to a few of my colleagues and they are confused as well.

Feel free to disseminate this information to any colleague with similar questions. Further DESE documentation that you may find helpful can be found here:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/recert/2000guidelines/>

These links and templates are also available on the Assistant Superintendent page of the Easton Public Schools website.