

Questions and Answers (Q&A)

Guidance on recordkeeping and reporting the professional development completed by teachers and teaching assistants in your schools

- 1. How many hours of professional development are teachers with Professional certificates and teaching assistants with Level III certificates required to complete?**

The State's new certification structure that went into effect in 2004 requires teachers with Professional certificates to complete 175 hours of professional development and Level III teaching assistants to complete 75 hours of professional development every five years for their certificates to remain valid.

- 2. Why is professional development important?**

To help students in New York State achieve high learning standards, it is important that all teaching professionals remain highly qualified throughout their careers. This is consistent with the goals of the Regents 1998 teaching policy. Through ongoing professional development, teaching professionals maintain the knowledge and skills they need to help all students succeed.

One of the ways school districts have been supporting student achievement is through district-wide, focused professional development for their teachers. Through district professional development planning processes, as defined in Commissioner's Regulations Part 100.2 (dd), a great many of you are now providing professional development opportunities in response to identified needs of students in your district.

District recordkeeping responsibilities

- 3. What is a school district's responsibility for maintaining records of professional development that the district provides to teachers with Professional certificates and Level III teaching assistants employed in our schools?**

If you provide professional development to teachers and teaching assistants in your schools, you must maintain a record of professional development completed by district teachers and teaching assistants who are required to complete this requirement. This record must include:

- o certificate numbers,
- o professional development program/event titles, and
- o clock hours completed for individual for each program/event.

- 4. What is a school district's responsibility for maintaining records of professional development that the district approves but does not provide?**

For professional development that you approve but **do not provide**, you must maintain a record of the number of hours of professional development completed by teachers with Professional certificates and Level III teaching assistants in your schools.

- 5. Are there guidelines available to help us decide upon a format and procedures for keeping records of professional development completed by our teachers and teaching assistants?**

The format and procedures for keeping records of required professional development for teachers and teaching assistants in your schools are locally determined. For your convenience, however, a suggested format for recording professional development requirements, Continuing Professional Development, District Planning Form, is attached and also available on the Office of Higher Education's Office of Teaching Initiatives (OTI) website at www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert. Regardless of the recordkeeping system you use, please be sure to keep accurate and up-to-date

records.

6. **When are we required to begin recordkeeping and reporting professional development completed by our teachers with Professional certificates and our Level III teaching assistants?**

A number of certificate holders began their first five year professional development period as early as July 1, 2005. Therefore, plans for tracking professional development activities should be underway.

District reporting responsibilities

7. **What information are we required to report to the New York State Education Department and how frequently are we required to submit reports?**

Annually, you must report to the Office of Higher Education's Office of Teaching Initiatives (OTI) the number of all approved professional development hours completed by each teacher and teaching assistant who is employed by the district and subject to the professional development requirement, regardless of the professional development provider.

8. **Will the number of hours of professional development we report as having been completed by our teachers and teaching assistants become part of their certification records?**

Yes, all hours of completed professional development reported by school districts will become part of the certificate holder's certification record maintained by the Office of Higher Education's Office of Teaching Initiatives. Teachers with Professional certificates and Level III teaching assistants must complete the required number of hours of professional development every five years for their certificates to remain valid.

9. **Can we submit reports of professional development completed electronically to the Office of Higher Education's Office of Teaching Initiatives?**

Yes, school administrators and certain individual certificate holders can now report completed professional development hours on-line directly via the new TEACH computer system (<http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/>). Previously, school districts identified designees who were given access to the TEACH computer system and directions for entering professional development records. The TEACH public school training guide is also available on the Web at <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/teach/resourcesd.htm>. Please see your designated school district user for additional information on submitting professional development reports on-line.

Certificate holder responsibilities

10. **What records of professional development are teachers with Professional certificates and Level III teaching assistants required to maintain and how long are they required to keep them?**

All certificate holders must keep records of all of their approved professional development activities/programs/coursework, regardless of the provider, for seven years.

Additional information

11. Where can I find additional information?

- For additional guidance related to content and delivery of required continuing professional development, please visit the Office of Higher Education's Office of Teaching Initiatives Website at: <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/resteachers/175.htm>.
- For a listing of frequently asked questions and answers related to the professional development requirement, see: <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/faq.htm>.
- For general information on the role of professional development in maintaining a certificate, visit: <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/maintaincert.htm>.
- If you have questions or need other assistance regarding continuing professional development for certification, please contact the Office of Teaching Initiatives Policy Unit at (518) 474-4661.
- If you have questions or need other assistance with district professional development planning, please contact the Office of Planning and Professional Development at (518) 473-7155.

Continuing Professional Development, District Planning Form

This requirement does not apply to individuals teaching under an Initial, Provisional, or Permanent certificate. Additionally, the number of hours of required professional development is reduced for certificate holders who are not employed in public schools for one or more years of the 5-year professional development period.

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