

Guidelines for Reviewing, Approving, and Endorsing Individual Professional Development Plans

Standards for Approval

Approval of the plan means that 80% of the proposed PDPs in the plan are consistent with the educational goals of the school and/or district and that the plan is designed to enhance the ability of the educator to improve student learning. Supervisors do not have the authority to reject individual plans that are consistent with school and/or district educational goals and are designed to improve student learning.

The following standards must be applied when reviewing and approving Individual Professional Development Plans:

- Proposed activities in the plan are designed to improve student learning.
- Proposed activities in the plan are consistent with and aligned to school and/or district goals.

Approval of an individual professional development plan shall not be unreasonably withheld. A supervisor is obligated to approve an individual plan if the goals and proposed PDPs meet the standards for review and approval as outlined in the previous section. A supervisor cannot reject a plan because in the supervisor's opinion another activity would best meet the identified needs of the school or district. In other words, supervisors may not require an individual educator to participate in a specific professional development activity unless the activity is identified through collective bargaining. In addition, if the activities in an individual professional development plan are legitimately aligned with one school and/or district goal, the supervisor cannot reject the plan because the supervisor believes that the teacher should focus on another school and/or district goal.

A supervisor must grant or deny approval of a plan within 30 days of receipt of the plan. Denial must be accompanied by a written explanation for the failure to approve the plan. If a supervisor fails to act within 30 days, the educator may seek additional review provided by the regulations. Administrators providing additional local review must grant or deny approval of a plan within 14 days. If no decision has been made after 14 days, the educator may seek additional review from the department.

In the event that a plan is rejected by a supervisor, teachers and other educators who report to the principal may seek review of the denial from the superintendent of schools, principals may seek review from the school committee chairperson, and superintendents may seek review from the Department. An educator may then seek additional review from the Department, according to the provisions of 603 CMR 44.11.