



Maryland

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MANUAL

200 WEST BALTIMORE STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21201

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CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MANUAL

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This manual supplies direction for completing applications and other information.

Introduction

Continuing professional development and the resulting Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses, have long been a priority of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). For many years, MSDE has received, approved, and awarded Maryland CPD credit for professional development experiences offered by the local education agencies, independent providers, colleges and universities, and MSDE. Periodically, MSDE revisits the state CPD review process to assure quality and compliance with current state initiatives.

In order to respond to the current standards of excellence recognized by MSDE, the Maryland CPD program utilizes the [Professional Learning Standards \(Learning Forward\)](https://standards.learningforward.org/standards-for-professional-learning/) to guide its work. Those standards may be found at <https://standards.learningforward.org/standards-for-professional-learning/>

To assure the delivery of a common set of outcomes, content-related offerings must align to the [Maryland Career and College-Ready Standards](https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/ELA/MCCR.aspx) (MCCRS) found at <https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/ELA/MCCR.aspx>

For content-related offerings with non-content specific outcomes, course providers should align to a recognized set of standards in field or develop their own for use.

The CPD process requires all providers to align credit-bearing experiences with priorities and goals that are based on student needs and desired outcomes. Regular course offerings are approved for five years with one renewal request possible. Conferences may be approved for one year utilizing the one-year application.

Please note the following related to the CPD process:

- Maryland Legislation requires that all MSDE-approved online courses meet the digital accessibility standards. Information about how to address those issues is provided in this manual.
- MSDE will no longer accept hard copy submissions but will require signatures (which may be digitally encrypted signatures) and scanned applications to be sent to MSDE electronically.
- A single and common CPD application will be used by local education agencies, Maryland's colleges and universities, MSDE, and private providers/vendors.
- Use of MSDE's current application is required by all providers.
- Any application without the required information will be returned without approval.
- Allow 6-8 weeks for processing of CPD applications.
- Courses that offer CPD credit(s) cannot begin until the application has been approved.
- CPD applications can only be submitted by the owner/provider of the content.

Points of Contact

MSDE

General inquiries, questions, and all applications should be directed to Ms. Pamela Darien, Administrative Specialist, Division of Educator Certification and Program Approval, who will forward messages to the appropriate individual or office.

Pamela Darien: Division of Educator Certification and Program Approval
pamela.darien@maryland.gov

Erin E. Senior: Director, Digital Learning and School Library Media
This office supports state and national efforts that transform teaching and learning in a digital world. Questions related to Instructional Technology and may be directed to Erin Senior.
erin.senior@maryland.gov

Brandon Riesett: Web and Content Accessibility Manager
Questions related to accessibility may be directed to Brandon Riesett.
brandon.riesett@maryland.gov

The Application

1. Start of application

Check the appropriate box and write the name of the sponsoring organization or MSDE Division in the field marked “Click or tap here to enter text”.

Do not write in the yellow box with the Approval CPD number and the expiration date. This section will be completed by the MSDE reviewer.

Complete **Title of Course** with identified organizational keyword(s), (e.g., Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness Summer Institute or Computer Science Professional Learning with Physical Computing).

Point-of-contact and cost-to-participant information is to be completed. The contact name, telephone, and email of the person submitting will be entered in the approved course directory.

2. Description of the Experience

In approximately two sentences, describe the proposed experience. The presentation and communication of the content to the participants should be described.

Area and Emphasis of Course

The Area of the Course commonly reflects a content area or broad theme represented by the course. There is a drop-down menu to assist with choices, but course providers may write in their own choice as appropriate.

The Emphasis of the Course can represent one or multiple topics or themes that are more detailed than the above-mentioned Area but succinct to include one or a few words to summarize the course.

Both fields are searchable in the approved CPD course directory and are to be entered on the Completion for Credit form.

Audience – check the appropriate box or boxes for the appropriate audience of this experience.

The application is to include the designated names of course instructors and a beginning date for the proposed experience. **It is strongly recommended that the application be submitted at least eight weeks in advance of the beginning date.** This ensures a full review that may include feedback to modify the experience can be communicated before the proposed experience has started.

3. Credits Requested and Total Hours

Adhering to the ratio of 15 clock hours to one CPD credit based on the definition of the Carnegie Unit. The minimum request may be for 0.5 CPD credit demonstrating at least 7.5 clock hours. The maximum request may be for 5 CPD credits demonstrating at least 75 clock hours. If a CPD course is intended to award a range of CPD credits, then select “Other CPD” and provide the range below in “Total Hrs”.

Need for the Course

A rationale (needs statement) for the experience should be included along with research and data to support the need for this professional experience. A minimum of three (3) sources of current research and the relevant citations are required. Also, a description of participants, a statement of potential impact on students, and intended outcomes should be included. Describe major aspects of the experience, including content and learning activities to be conducted consistent with the outcomes identified.

Mode of Course Delivery (face-to-face instruction, blended instruction, online instruction)

Distance and/or e-learning is the overarching term for a variety of learning modalities involving virtual experiences whether they are asynchronous or synchronous. A **Blended Learning Program** is a combination of synchronous and asynchronous teaching and learning.

- **Synchronous learning** – remote learning that happens in real-time with the interaction between the facilitator and students that occurs in a face-to-face environment or in a virtual classroom setting (i.e., access from home via web conferencing).
- **Asynchronous learning** (online) – learning that occurs virtually without real-time interaction by the facilitator.

The percentage of **synchronous** and **asynchronous** content should be noted in the application. Blended courses have 20% or more synchronous hours. The synchronous content has to be in “real time”. Synchronous content can be delivered through web-conference software and does not have to be in person face-to-face. The MSDE digital accessibility team reviews all online courses with further information provided in the “Digital Accessibility” section.

4. Professional Learning Expectations, Outcomes, Activities and Standards

Detail the learning activities and follow-up that will result in participants achieving the desired outcomes. What follow-up will occur, and how will this experience extend learning/practice opportunities (e.g. classroom demonstrations, feedback on mastery of new knowledge and/or new skills, peer coaching and mentoring, opportunities for additional study)? The role of principals and other school leaders should be included here where appropriate. How will this course align with the priorities and goals of the local education agency(s)?

Professional Learning Expectations

Use the table to describe the teaching/learning activities and follow-up that will be included in the professional development and how they are expected to result in participants achieving the intended outcomes. A time block of hours/days along with a determination of synchronous or asynchronous learning is also needed. This section of the plan should also respond to the following three bullet points within the text box above the main table:

- The strategies to ensure full participation in all of the activities.
- The role that school principals and other school leaders will play and how they will be prepared for this role.
- How the professional development is related to other professional development in which they intended participants may be involved.

Outcomes and Indicators

The performance outcomes are statements that emphasize the application of knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions resulting from the CPD experience. Performance outcomes are guided by the following questions:

- What will educators' attitudes and aspirations be as a result of the CPD experience?
- What will educators know and/or be able to do as a result of the CPD experience?
- How will/should those outcomes enhance the learning of students in the local school system and what are the indicators to be applied to the outcomes?
- Estimate when outcomes and/or indicators will be observable (if possible).

Further technical assistance on this topic from a MSDE presentation titled "Evaluating Professional Learning" is available upon request. All five levels of outcome evaluation are not required within a course experience, but it is essential for the design of professional learning experiences for course developers to reflect on one's evaluation plan to make it as effective as possible. The table below provides guidance through an essential reflective question and examples of data regarding key components of each outcome level.

| Outcome Type/Level | Essential question to inform evaluation plan; examples of data |
|--|--|
| Level 1: Execution | Did the activity take place as intended? Ex: Meeting agendas, contracts, sign-in sheets |
| Level 2: Participants' Reactions | Were the participants satisfied with the experience? Ex: Surveys, exit slips |
| Level 3: Participants' Learning | Did participants acquire the intended knowledge and skills? Ex: Assessments, demonstrations, simulations |
| Level 4: Participants' Use of Knowledge in Authentic Setting | Did participants effectively apply what they learned? Ex: Structured interviews with participants and their supervisors, participant reflections, participant portfolios, direct observations |
| Level 5: Impact on Student Outcomes | What was the impact of the initiative on students? Ex: Surveys, Student records, school records, student assessments, structured interviews with students/parents/teachers |

Professional Teaching/Learning Activities

The Professional Teaching/Learning Activities section has five columns that must be fully completed.

- **Session**
- **Intended Outcomes (w/standards) - Learning Forward/applicable content standards**
- **Teaching and Learning Activities**
- **Time**
- **Synchronous or Asynchronous**

Complete the table displaying the amount of time spent on intended outcomes and related teaching and learning activities in the course. Delete or add rows to the table as necessary.

The range of CPD credits should have a clear and detailed accounting at the bottom of the Professional Teaching and Learning Activities table.

Alignment to Standards

Explain how the Learning Forward Standards were used in the development of this experience. If this is a content-related course, then alignment to the MCCRS should be demonstrated in this course and explain how the course assists teachers in developing instruction aligned to the MCCRS. For content-related offerings with non-content specific outcomes, course providers should align to recognized set of standards in field or develop their own for use.

5. Evaluation Plan

The evaluation identifies techniques used to assess or evaluate how well the educator has achieved the performance outcomes. Both formal and informal strategies may be used. Evaluation should directly assess the performance of the outcomes and indicators identified for participants and are guided by the following questions:

- How will the educator demonstrate achievement of the performance outcomes?
(should have been addressed in Teaching/Learning Activities table)
- What is the anticipated impact on student learning?
(should have been addressed in Outcomes and Indicators table)
- Were follow-up activities conducted, as described?
- What outcome data will be collected, and who will receive the report?
- What data are collected to indicate any changes that might be indicated in the course itself?

Sample Evaluation Plan

| Outcome | Source of Data Collection | Frequency/Timing of Data Collection |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| ESOL teachers will be trained on scientific-based reading research methods | Meeting agendas Sign-in sheets | Weekly workshops |
| ESOL teachers will analyze classroom data to design literacy instruction | Participant reflections | Bi-weekly (written/video) reflections |
| ESOL teachers will apply analysis of classroom data and scientific-based reading research methods to instruction | Direct observation (in-person or video) Student assessment data (pre and post) | Mid-point and end of course |

Supplemental documents

Conferences and workshops should include an agenda that contains descriptions of available sessions if not previously disclosed in the application. Other course may be asked to provide additional documentation upon request. All documents should be submitted electronically in one file.

6. Digital Accessibility

In accordance with Maryland legislation and regulation, please be advised that online course providers beginning September 2023 must submit an accessibility conformance report (ACR) that includes a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT). Courses must meet current accessibility standards as established in COMAR 13A.06.05.06, [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1 Level AA](#).

Online courses must be reviewed for accessibility by MSDE for accessibility compliance with current standards. Approved courses can continue to be offered for CPD credit pending the accessibility review and will appear in the database as a conditionally approved course.

Providers will have 30 days in which to submit courses for [digital accessibility reviews](#) at <https://forms.office.com/r/JeEXh6cinh>. Course providers will be charged four hundred and thirty dollars (\$430.00) for each accessibility review (local educational agency and state affiliates are exempt from this fee).

- Failure to submit a course within 30 days will result in the expiration of CPD course’s approval status and the deletion of the course from the database of approved courses.
- If the course passes the accessibility review, you will be notified and its status on the CPD database will be changed from Conditionally Approved to Approved Course.

- If the course does not align with WCAG 2.1 Level AA, you will receive a report identifying necessary revisions. MSDE’s Accessibility Specialist will collaborate with you to develop a timeline that addresses necessary changes until compliance is met.

Important Note: Please be advised that courses offered online will be reviewed by the Accessibility Branch to comply with §7-1002 Maryland Virtual Learning Opportunities Program requiring content review prior to digital accessibility review by MSDE.

If you need more specific information about the accessibility of courses, please send an email to: mdaccess.msde@maryland.gov.

7. Executive’s Signature

A Dean/Vice President/Chief Executive Officer's signature in the last part of the application is required. In higher education institutions, the executive’s signature should be from a Dean or a position equivalent to the Dean's position or higher. For vendors, the signature should be from an executive position, such as an Assistant/Vice President or Chief of Operations. For MSDE, the signature should be from a Director’s position or higher. Electronic and digital signatures are accepted.

Do not write in the yellow box on last page of application. This section will be completed by the MSDE reviewer.

Additional CPD Information

8. Budget

No budget is required. Applications must clearly stipulate whether there is a charge to the participant or if the course is provided free of charge. It is up to the individual educator to make decisions about whether or not the cost of a course is worth the benefit of paying for approved CPD courses.

9. Calculation of Credits

A guideline to apply when requesting credits is one credit is equivalent to at least 15 hours of activity. The concept of “activity” may, in some cases, be expanded to include more than instructional time. Some examples are: assignments which require additional time and implementation after the official end of the experience, mandatory projects requiring additional time, extra field work, required presentations of lesson plans or units made after the activity, etc.

Meal times are not to be considered when calculating hours of activity. Participants might be required to present a lesson plan or unit to a class following the completion of the experience, and submit a self-evaluation to the instructor before credit is awarded.

10. Participants have the following responsibilities:

- 1) Obtain **prior approval** from their employer/local school system to verify that the CPD experience will be accepted for credit.
- 2) Distinguish between those courses for which there is a fee and those which are free. The individual is always responsible for paying for the course unless otherwise indicated in writing.
- 3) Be sure to receive the signed *CPD Completion for Credit Form* upon successful completion of all requirements. The Division of Educator Certification and Program Approval does not keep records of MSDE CPD participants.
- 4) Submit the forms as directed on the *CPD Completion for Credit Form*.

NOTE: If the participant is not employed by a local school district, but holds a Maryland certificate, the participant should retain the credit forms and submit one copy to the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Educator Certification and Program Approval, Certification Branch, when requesting renewal of his/her certificate as directed above. The submission should include a cover letter explaining the request and identifying information such as name, current address, name of school, and social security number. ([Certification Page](#))

It should be noted again that some CPD experiences require that the participant pay a fee. It is the responsibility of the entity offering the course to make that clear when requesting approval. It is the responsibility of the individual taking the course to clarify those costs prior to enrolling for the experience.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

The MSDE recognizes that CPD experiences which are designed at the local school district level are likely to be responsive to the unique and varied needs of individuals, schools, and communities. The MSDE also recognizes that CPD opportunities may originate or be developed by individuals or groups other than school systems (e.g., MSDE, Maryland Public Television, colleges and universities, and vendors). In order to facilitate the development of relevant and responsive continuing professional development, the roles and responsibilities of MSDE and the sponsoring organization are as follows:

MSDE:

- approve CPD experiences originating in local education agencies (LSSs and those not originating from other sponsors;
- maintain registry of approved continuing professional development experiences and CPD course listings are available at [MSDE eConnect](#);
- assign MSDE/ CPD credit number;
- maintain files of approved CPD experiences;
- review all asynchronous courses comply with current accessibility standards;
- conduct statewide meetings of liaisons for the purposes of: clarification, exchange of information; and
- ensure the quality of CPD experiences for Maryland teachers.

Local education agencies:

- identify the assigned CPD liaison;
- create and maintain procedures for local school system review/approval of CPD experiences;
- require that CPD courses are developed by content specialists or curriculum coordinators, where applicable, and that asynchronous courses adhere to minimum accessibility standards, submit the course for review for accessibility by MSDE;
- attend CPD liaison meetings, as appropriate; and
- submit abstracts of approved CPD experiences to MSDE according to the guidelines in this manual.

Vendors/colleges and universities/MSDE:

- submit proposals for review and approval according to the guidelines in this manual;
- require that CPD courses are developed by content specialists or curriculum coordinators, where applicable, and that asynchronous courses adhere to minimum accessibility standards, submit the course for review for accessibility by MSDE;
- when appropriate, seek local endorsement for the proposed CPD experience.

Note: The MSDE does not share CPD course content, but when possible, will share the contact information of the developing entity. Developers are welcome to request that content be shared, but owners of the content are under no obligation to share content.

12. Professional Development Options

A commitment to continuous professional growth and development requires that educators seek new knowledge, skills, and understanding through engagement with content research, best practice, and expert opinion. Courses offered by colleges and universities, local education agencies

themselves, and qualified vendors, are viable options toward achieving that goal. However, the pathways of this growth vary, depending upon the needs and career stages of individual educators. All options should reference the impact of the experience on student learning.

Courses: units of study offered by local education agencies, colleges and universities, or independent agencies

Courses which foster the continuing professional development of educators may be developed. These courses should emphasize performance outcomes and answer the questions, “What will the educator know and/or be able to do as a result of completing this course?” and “How will this enhanced or new knowledge enable the educator to positively impact student learning?” and “What follow-up will occur, and how will this experience extend learning/practice opportunities?”

Institute: a short, intensive, uninterrupted experience on a specific subject; e.g., 2 day institute, 5 day institute

Institutes which foster the continuing professional development of educators may be developed. Contact hours must meet the minimum of 7.5 hours for one-half credit. These institutes should be designed to provide a more thorough understanding of a single topic. Institutes should emphasize performance outcomes and answer the questions, “What will the educator know and/or be able to do as a result of completing this institute?” and “How will this enhanced or new knowledge enable the educator to positively impact student learning?” and “What follow-up will occur, and how will this experience extend learning/practice opportunities?”

Symposium or conference: a focused meeting for discussion of some topic or several related topics

A symposium or conference which fosters the continuing professional development of educators may be developed. At least 7.5 hours of contact or follow-up activities must occur in order for one-half credit to be awarded. This symposium or conference should emphasize competent practice and expert opinion and be designed to provide a more thorough understanding of a single topic or several related topics. Proof of attendance is not sufficient for this experience to yield credit. To be approved for credit, a symposium or conference should require performance outcomes, as exemplified in a product such as a lesson or unit plan that is evaluated by the symposium or conference administrators, or by school system

administrators before credit is given. These experiences should emphasize performance outcomes and answer the questions, “What will the educator know and/or be able to do as a result of completing this symposium or conference?” and “How will this knowledge enable the educator to positively impact student learning?”

13. Local Education Agencies and MSDE Credit Options

The following CPD experiences appear in the Registry as *Generic Courses* with an MSDE approval number which can be assigned only by local education agencies and MSDE. These experiences are eligible pending approval of the local education agency or MSDE personnel in charge to be repeated within the certification/recertification period. If an experience is repeated once during the same certification/recertification period, then an A can be assigned on the Credit Completion Form following the MSDE/CPD number (ex: 19-00-04A). If an experience is repeated twice during the same certification/recertification period, then a B can be assigned on the Credit Completion Form following the MSDE/CPD number (ex: 19-00-04B) and so on. This practice is only applied for Generic Courses. For a full listing of Generic Courses, please contact Pamela Darien at pamela.darien@maryland.gov

With the exception of any Generic Course that originated out of the Code of Maryland Regulations, a local education agency is not required to adopt a Generic Course. A local education agency may also establish further parameters and outcomes associated with a Generic Course provided it exceeds the minimum standard for the experience.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

Some professional development activities may be more appropriate for renewal of the Advanced Professional License only. The following CPD options may be adopted by local education agencies and **do not require an MSDE CPD approval number.**

Educational Travel (variable credit)

Educational travel may be undertaken to gain knowledge, to enhance curricula or to develop new programs, e.g., a new unit on the origin of percussion instruments might be researched in a few African countries where native instruments may be gathered and interviews conducted with tribal experts. **Clear goals and objectives should be decided upon, written, and approved prior to departure.** A copy of the written agreement facilitating the credit should be submitted with the credit request and maintained in EIS with the educator’s file.

Professional Conference (variable credit)

Professional conferences may serve a variety of continuing professional development. They may address educational concerns by improving knowledge and skills and by providing activities that motivate and renew educators. Local education agencies may award continuing professional development credits for a range of activities within this category, from attendance to presentation to conference planning and coordinating. **Clear goals and objectives should be decided upon, written, and approved prior to conference.** A copy of the written agreement facilitating the credit should be submitted with the credit request and maintained in EIS with the educator's file.

Additional Information

- Frequently, the MSDE is asked if an educator in one local education agency is allowed to register for a course or experience that is listed under the sponsorship of another local education agency. Similarly, course providers may share approved CPD courses with one another provided that the course maintains fidelity to its approved activities. These are local school system decisions.
- A number of local education agencies have developed CPD courses that fulfill the reading requirements for teachers at the early childhood, elementary, and secondary levels. Please note that the secondary courses, now titled [Literacy in the Content Areas Parts I and II](#), have been revised.

14.The Submission and Approval Process

The MSDE will not review a course if one of the following is not met:

- Submission is presented on current application
- Required signatures are in place, including the person identified as the contact for the local school system or for the course
- All required responses are completed
- Calculations are accurate for the credit hours requested
- Accessibility requirements are addressed for online courses

Submission

All CPD applications must be submitted Pamela Darien at pamela.darien@maryland.gov

The review of the CPD application typically takes approximately six to eight weeks to complete. Once a submitted course/experience has been approved, the course information is entered into the CPD database. A copy of the approved CPD with the MSDE/CPD approval number is then

forwarded to the local school system liaison or the contact person for the college or university, the vendor, or the MSDE.

The MSDE/CPD numbers are valid for a five-year period (unless designated as a one-year conference) and expire on December 31st of the final year. The approved course/ experience may be offered repeatedly during that time. However, a certificate holder may not repeat the same experience for duplication of credit. In some instances, an experience may have a Part I or a Part II, which would require the sponsor to submit an additional application and acquire a second approval number.

Approval Numbers

The approval number is a six or seven-digit code, e.g., 17-30-10. The following explains the code:
17 - The year of approval. The course/ experience will expire five years from the year of approval.
30 – Indicates the originating school system or agency.
10 – Indicates that this is the 10th submission from that school system or agency in the current year.

If the approval number is 17-30-10C. “C” indicates the course has been conditionally approved and is subject to the digital accessibility review, which is described on page 10 and 11 of this manual.

The two-digit middle numbers of the approval number

- 00 = Maryland State Department of Education
- 01 thru 30 = Local education agencies (each one has an assigned number)
- 66 = Independent Organizations
- 67 = Colleges and Universities
- 68 = Vendors

Completion of MSDE/CPD Credit Forms

Once the CPD course/experience has been fulfilled, an MSDE/CPD credit form must be completed. This form requires two signatures: 1) the instructor of the CPD course/experience, and 2) the CPD liaison or nonpublic school official. Blank CPD credit forms are emailed to the sponsoring agency once the CPD experience has been approved. Local education agencies may use their own credit form as long as it contains the information found on the MSDE/CPD credit form. This form is to be completed **after** the participant has successfully completed all the requirements for the experience. The form may bear an electronic signature, or the hand-signed form may be scanned and emailed.

When completing the CPD credit form, **Instructors/Coordinators** must:

- 1) Verify that all requirements, as described in the approved application, have been

completed successfully.

- 2) Complete a “CPD Experience Credit Form” for each participant ensuring that all necessary information has been provided.
- 3) Give each participant two original signed copies of the forms. Participants should make and retain a copy for their records.