



Continuing Professional Development Manual

Division of Educator Effectiveness

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MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Contents

INTRODUCTION	5
CONTACT INFORMATION	6
APPLICATION GUIDANCE.....	7
GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION.....	7
COURSE DETAILS.....	7
PROFESSIONAL LEARNING EXPECTATIONS, OUTCOMES, ACTIVITIES, AND STANDARDS.....	8
EVALUATION PLAN.....	10
PROFESSIONAL TEACHING/LEARNING ACTIVITIES.....	12
SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS.....	13
DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY.....	13
EXECUTIVE SIGNATURE.....	13
ADDITIONAL CPD INFORMATION.....	14
BUDGET.....	14
CALCULATION OF CREDITS.....	14
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....	14
THE SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL PROCESS.....	16
COMPLETION OF MSDE/CPD CREDIT FORMS.....	16

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INTRODUCTION

The Maryland Continuing Professional Development (CPD) approval process requires all providers to align credit-bearing courses with priorities and goals that are based on student needs and desired outcomes. Regular course offerings are approved for five years.

The Maryland CPD program utilizes the Professional Learning Standards (Learning Forward) to guide its work. Those standards may be found at <https://standards.learningforward.org/standards-for-professional-learning/>.

To ensure the delivery of a common set of outcomes, content-related offerings must align to the Maryland Career and College-Ready Standards (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.

Providers wishing to host courses which award CPD credits are required to submit a completed application, which includes thorough responses to each component and all required signatures.

Please note the following:

- Maryland Legislation requires that all Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)-approved online courses meet the digital accessibility standards. Information about how to address those issues is provided in this manual.
- MSDE strongly encourages electronic submissions and requires signatures (which may be digitally encrypted signatures) on all emailed and scanned applications sent to MSDE.
- A single and common CPD application will be used by local education agencies (LEA), Maryland's colleges and universities, MSDE, and private providers/vendors.
- Use of MSDE's current application (dated May 2024) is required by all providers.
- Any application without the required information will be returned without approval.
- Allow a minimum of 6-8 weeks for processing CPD applications.
- Courses that offer CPD credit(s) cannot give credit to students until the application has been approved.
- Approvals and CPD credits will not be backdated for courses that began prior to MSDE approval.
- CPD applications can only be submitted by the owner/provider of the course content.
- Conferences and workshops meeting certain criteria are already permitted to award professional development points to teacher attendees. Therefore, **conferences and workshops (or similar) need no longer traverse the CPD approval process**. Please see our licensure site for more information on professional development points at the following address: <https://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DEE/Certification/Professional-Development-Points.aspx>

CONTACT INFORMATION

For general inquiries, questions, and application submissions should be directed to:

Pamela Darien
Administrative Specialist III
Division of Educator Effectiveness
pamela.darien@maryland.gov

Questions related to Instructional Technology and may be directed to:

Erin E. Senior
Director, Digital Learning and School Library Media
Office of Instructional Programs and Services
erin.senior@maryland.gov

Questions related to digital accessibility may be directed to:

Brandon Riesett
Web and Content Accessibility Manager
Office of Information Technology
brandon.riesett@maryland.gov

APPLICATION GUIDANCE

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

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 an MSDE reviewer.

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

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

Course Instructor(s):

The application must include the names of all designated course instructors.

Intended Start Date:

Please insert a start date that reflects time for completion of the review. MSDE has established a 6-to-8-week window to review the application, which could include revisions. **It is strongly recommended that the application be submitted at least eight weeks in advance of the course start date.** This ensures time for a full review of the application that could include multiple rounds of feedback.

COURSE DETAILS

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 and include 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.

Description of the Course

In approximately two succinct sentences, describe the proposed course.

Intended Audience

Check the appropriate box or boxes for the intended audience of this course.

Credits Requested and Total Hours

CPD credit offerings adhere 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 1 CPD credit demonstrating at least 15 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 Hours.” It is important to keep in mind that the number of CPD/credit hours should be reflected within the Professional Learning Expectations, Outcomes, and Teaching/Learning Activities.

Need for the Course

A rationale (needs statement) for the course should be included along with research and data to support the need for this professional course. A minimum of three (3) sources of current research and relevant citations using American Psychological Association (APA) format are required that justify the need for this course as it relates to the needs of PreK-12 students and those of the educator.

Mode of Course Delivery (synchronous, blended, or asynchronous)

Distance and/or e-learning is the overarching term for a variety of learning modalities involving virtual courses whether they are asynchronous or synchronous.

- **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/online classroom setting (i.e., access from home via web conferencing).
- **Blended Learning Program** is a combination of synchronous and asynchronous teaching and learning.
- **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 must 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.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING EXPECTATIONS, OUTCOMES, ACTIVITIES, AND STANDARDS

Detail the learning activities that will result in participants achieving the desired outcomes (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. *Note:* If submitted by an LEA, describe how this course aligns with the priorities and goals of the LEA.

Professional Learning Expectations

Use the table to describe the teaching/learning activities 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:***

- Describe the strategies that will be used to ensure participants are fully engaged in all teaching/learning activities.
- Describe the strategies that will be used to remediate issues with participants who are unable to fully participate in all teaching/learning activities.
- If the course contains outcomes that will be implemented in a Prek-12 school, please describe the role that school principals and/or other school leaders will play and how they will be prepared for this role.

Outcomes and Indicators

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

- What will educators' attitudes and aspirations be as a result of the CPD course?
- What will educators know and/or be able to do as a result of the CPD course?
- 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 an 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 on the following page 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
Level 1: Execution	Did the activity take place as intended? <i>Ex: Meeting agendas, contracts, sign-in sheets</i>
Level 2: Participants' Reactions	Were the participants satisfied with the course? <i>Ex: Surveys, exit slips</i>
Level 3: Participants' Learning	Did participants acquire the intended knowledge and skills? <i>Ex: Assessments, demonstrations, simulations</i>
Level 4: Participants' Use of Knowledge in Authentic Setting	Did participants effectively apply what they learned? <i>Ex: Structured interviews with participants and their supervisors, participant reflections, participant portfolios, direct observations</i>
Level 5: Impact on Student Outcomes	What was the impact of the initiative on students? <i>Ex: Surveys, Student records, school records, student assessments, structured interviews with students/parents/teachers</i>

EVALUATION PLAN

The evaluation identifies techniques used to assess or evaluate how well the educator has achieved the performance outcomes identified in the Professional Teaching/Learning Activities table. 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 questions below.

Provide direct responses to each of the questions below based on the outcomes (listed in Professional Teaching/Learning table).

- How will the educator demonstrate achievement of the performance outcomes? (*should address the outcomes in Teaching/Learning Activities table*)
- What is the anticipated impact on student learning?
- 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

When completing the table make sure to provide brief but relevant information that establishes a clear connection between the outcome and data collection.

EXAMPLE – Alignment established

Outcome(s)	Source(s) of Data Collection	Frequency/Timing of Data Collection
ESOL teachers will be trained on scientific-based reading research methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher reflections on their knowledge and preparedness to use reading research methods 	Weekly Discussion Board Posts
ESOL teachers will analyze classroom data to design literacy instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checklist – lesson plan development 	Bi-weekly (written/video) reflections
ESOL teachers will apply analysis of classroom data and scientific-based reading research methods to instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson observation (in-person or video) Rubric - Student assessment data (pre and post) 	Mid-point and end of course

The elements included in this aligned example are:

- 1) an outcome that states expectations and is measurable,
- 2) data collection measures that include how (i.e., reflections) participants will be evaluated and what (i.e., use of reading research methods) participants will be evaluated on while making a direct connection to the outcome, and,
- 3) clear identification regarding when in the course that data will be collected.

EXAMPLE – Alignment **not** established.

Outcome(s)	Source(s) of Data Collection	Frequency/Timing of Data Collection
ESOL teachers will be trained on scientific-based reading research methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting agendas Sign-in sheets In Session Collaborative Work 	Intersession Week
ESOL teachers will analyze classroom data to design literacy instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participant reflections Evaluation 	Intersession Week
ESOL teachers will apply analysis of classroom data and scientific-based reading research methods to instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with participant activities 	Intersession Week

PROFESSIONAL TEACHING/LEARNING ACTIVITIES

This section of the application should be completed to proportionally reflect the number of CPD credits/hours being requested. Applications requesting higher numbers of CPD credits/hours should include a more robust and relevant set of outcomes and learning/activities.

The Professional Teaching/Learning Activities section has six (6) columns that must be fully completed.

- Session
- Intended Outcomes (*should be the same or similar to those included in Evaluation Plan*)
- Professional Standards (i.e., NCTM, NAEYC, CEC, MCCRS, NCTE)
- Teaching and Learning Activities
- Time
- Mode (Synchronous or Asynchronous)

Below are some key considerations for completing the Professional Teaching/Learning Activities Table (Sample Below)

- Ensure a consistent alignment between each of the columns.
- Identify standards that align with the intended outcomes and note them in the appropriate column. **Remember: content-related outcomes must be aligned to MCCRS**
- Outcomes/standards should have an explicit and direct connection to the concepts, content, expectation, skill, etc. used when detailing teaching/learning activities, which should include a reasonable time and instructionally appropriate time allocation.

Professional Teaching/Learning Activities

Session	Intended Outcome	Standard(s)	Teaching and Learning Activities	Time	Mode

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 professional content standards are aligned, in detail, to the outcomes and teaching/learning activities identified in the Professional Teaching and Learning Activities Table. If this is a content-related course, make sure to describe how it aligns to the MCCRS. If no professional content standards exist, please use current [Learning Forward Standards](#). All standards that are described here should be aligned in the Professional Teaching/Learning Table in the third column and this narrative.

SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS

Applicants may be asked to provide additional documentation upon request. All documents should be submitted electronically in one file.

Include sample evaluation measures in this section (i.e., rubrics, checklists, pre/post tests, assignment descriptions).

DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY

Online course providers 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 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: Courses offered online will be reviewed by the Accessibility Branch to comply with MD Code, Education Article [§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.

EXECUTIVE 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. Digitally encrypted signatures are accepted.

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

ADDITIONAL CPD INFORMATION

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 the cost of a course is worth the benefit of paying for approved CPD courses.

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 course, 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 course and submit a self-evaluation to the instructor before credit is awarded.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Participants:

- Obtain **prior approval** from their employer/local school system to verify that the CPD course will be accepted for credit.
- 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.
- Be sure to receive the signed *CPD Completion for Credit Form* upon successful completion of all requirements. The Division of Educator Effectiveness does not keep records of MSDE CPD participants.
- 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 license, the participant should retain the credit forms and submit one copy to the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Educator Effectiveness, Licensure Branch, when requesting renewal of a license 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.

Some CPD courses 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 course.

MSDE recognizes that CPD courses 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.

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). To facilitate the development of relevant and responsive continuing professional development, the roles and responsibilities of MSDE and sponsoring organizations are as follows:

MSDE:

- Approve CPD courses 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 courses;
- Review all asynchronous courses comply with current accessibility standards;
- Conduct statewide meetings of liaisons for the purposes of clarification and/or exchange of information; and
- Ensure the quality of CPD courses for Maryland teachers.

Local education agencies:

- Identify the assigned CPD liaison;
- Create and maintain procedures for local school system review/approval of CPD courses;
- 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 courses to MSDE according to the guidelines in this manual.

Vendors/colleges and universities:

- 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; and
- When appropriate, seek local endorsement for the proposed CPD course.

Note: 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.

THE SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

The following conditions must be met for MSDE to accept a CPD application:

- 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 has been approved, the course information is entered into a CPD database maintained by MSDE. A copy of the approved CPD with an 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 MSDE.

The MSDE CPD numbers are valid for a five-year period and expire on December 31st of the final year. The approved course may be offered repeatedly during the five-year period. However, a license holder may not repeat the same course for duplication of credit. In some instances, a course may have a Part I or a Part II. This would require the sponsor to submit a separate application and acquire approval numbers for each part.

COMPLETION OF MSDE/CPD CREDIT FORMS

Once the CPD course has been fulfilled, an MSDE CPD credit form must be completed. This form requires two signatures:

- the instructor of the CPD course, and
- the CPD liaison or nonpublic school official.

Blank CPD credit forms are emailed to the sponsoring agency once the CPD course has been approved. Local education agencies may use their own credit form if 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 course. 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:

- Verify that all requirements, as described in the approved application, have been completed successfully.
- Complete a “CPD Course Credit Form” for each participant ensuring that all necessary information has been provided.
- Give each participant two original signed copies of the forms. Participants should make and retain a copy for their records.