

# **I-PLAN CERTIFICATION RENEWAL PROCESS**

## **1.0 Preamble**

In November 1999, the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, in response to concerns expressed by educators, initiated a five-year pilot program to explore the benefits of a goals-driven individualized professional development plan as the means by which Rhode Island educators could renew their professional certificates. Experience with these plans has shown that this approach to certification not only encourages educators to engage in more consistent and ongoing professional development, but it also links that development to the needs and initiatives of schools and school districts, thereby benefiting the entire learning community.

## **2.0 Purpose**

The purpose of these regulations is to establish the Individual Professional Development Plan (I-Plan) process as the means to renew Rhode Island professional educator certificates. The process is designed to provide Rhode Island educators with a more meaningful and relevant way to renew the certification that they are using in their current professional assignment. I-Plans allow educators to plan their own professional development at the beginning of the 5-year renewal cycle and to engage in professional development activities during that period that reflect the personal professional aspirations of each educator.

## **3.0 Authority**

These regulations are promulgated by the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education pursuant to R.I.G.L. 16-60-4(9)(ii).

## **4.0 I-Plan Criteria**

4.1 Duration. An I-Plan covers the 5-year period of the professional certificate(s) being used by the educator in his/her public school assignment. The plan shall be written at the beginning of the 5-year period.

4.2 Goals. An I-Plan is goals-driven. The 5-year I-Plan includes three or four goals. At least one goal must be appropriately connected to the certification area(s) being renewed. One goal must align with the school improvement plan or the district's strategic plan. A goal may address more than one certification area. Each goal must identify skills or knowledge to be acquired by the educator and specify how the new skills or knowledge will be applied in the educator's professional practice.

4.3 Self-Study. An I-Plan is informed by self-study. Each goal in the plan must be supported by a rationale that reflects the educator's personal professional aspirations. The rationale for at least one goal must connect to the initiatives of the school or school district.

4.4 Professional Standards. An I-Plan is grounded in professional standards. Each goal in the plan must be aligned to one to four appropriate professional standards; goals must align with indicators, where available. The professional standards include the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards, the Interstate Leadership Licensure Consortium Standards, and other specialized professional standards as approved by the Department of Education.

4.5 Professional Development Plans. An I-Plan is a proposed plan of professional development. Each professional development activity in an I-Plan must correspond to one of the professional development categories specified by the Department of Education. At least two categories must be identified for each goal. One professional development category is sufficient for an advanced degree or additional certification/endorsement. To be approved, I-Plans should average a minimum of 30 hours of professional development per year, and must total 150 hours of professional development activities during the 5-year period.

## **5.0 I-Plan Approval**

5.1 I-Plan Review Panels. Proposed I-Plans are submitted to I-Plan Review Panels comprised of Rhode Island educators. Review Panel members are nominated by superintendents, principals, current review panelists or by self-nomination. The Department of Education shall train potential Review Panel members. Panel members shall be selected by the Department of Education based upon their ability to accurately and consistently review proposed I-Plans. Panel members' reviews shall be monitored for accuracy and consistency.

5.2 Review Process. Proposed I-Plans shall be reviewed for completeness and timeliness. Review panels shall be convened by the Department of Education as needed. Each proposed plan shall be reviewed by a pair of panel members. Discrepant ratings shall receive additional review. The Department of Education shall report to the educator whether the proposed plan is acceptable or needs modification. Plans needing modification shall be resubmitted to the Review Panel. Assistance to educators shall be available throughout the review process.

## **6.0 I-Plan Implementation**

6.1 Professional Development Activities. The educator shall participate in professional development activities that are consistent with his/her approved I-Plan. The activities must align with the plan's goals, comport with the category and duration designations, and affect the educator's professional practice in a positive manner.

6.2 Verification. The educator shall compile appropriate verification of the professional development activities he/she completed.

6.3 Reporting. The educator shall electronically report professional development activities on an annual basis to the Department of Education. The educator shall submit a final summary of verified professional development to the Department of Education between January 1 and August 31 of the year in which his/her certificate expires.

6.3 Amended I-Plans. In the event of a change in employment that affects either the job description or the school/district goals in the approved I-Plan, the educator must submit an amended I-Plan for review and approval by the Review Panel.

## **7.0 Verification of Professional Development Activities.**

To receive final verification, an educator's professional development activities must be aligned with the approved I-Plan goals, meet the time and verification requirements for each professional development category, and be accompanied by a professional analysis of the educator's I-Plan experience. The analysis shall detail the skills and knowledge acquired by the educator in completing the I-Plan, explain how the acquired skills and knowledge were applied in the classroom, school or district settings, and describe the impact that the application of the acquired skills and knowledge had on student learning, student behavior, or school and district improvement. The educator's self-analysis may serve as the basis for the development of preliminary goals for the next renewal cycle's I-Plan.

## **8.0 Renewal of Certification.**

Once the professional development activities are verified by the Department of Education, the educator will be notified. Successful completion and acceptance of the I-Plan makes the educator eligible for recertification. The renewal process is completed by filing a certification application with the Department of Education. Upon completion of all certification requirements, the Department of Education shall issue a certificate of renewal. Upon issuance of the renewed certificate, the educator must within 90 days develop a new I-Plan for review by a Review Panel.

## **9.0 Appeals.**

If a Review Panel rejects an I-Plan proposal or determines that an approved I-Plan was not satisfactorily implemented, the matter shall be referred to the Director of the Office of Teacher Certification at the Department of Education. The Director shall meet with the educator and a representative of the Review Panel. Each party shall present its position to the Director who will issue a written decision. The educator may appeal the decision of the Director to the Commissioner of Education who will arrange for a hearing under R.I.G.L. 16-39-1.