

Frequently Asked Questions

Professional Development Points (PDPs)

for Tennessee School District Administrators

[Educator Licensure Policy 5.502](#) describes the use of professional development points (PDPs) for educator licensure advancement or renewal. Once educators staffed in Tennessee school districts enter their PDPs into TNCompass, appropriate district staff approve or deny PDPs based on state guidelines.

Earning PDPs

1. *What qualifies as acceptable activities for PDPs?*

To earn PDPs, an activity **must** be related to improving educator effectiveness by:

- a. developing content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, or pedagogical content knowledge; **or**
- b. enhancing educator effectiveness (e.g., world language courses for those working with students for whom English is a second language, or coursework that supports understanding and use of data).

The following table provides information about how PDPs may be earned and identifies acceptable PDP options, number of PDPs awarded, and required documentation.

Option	PDPs Awarded	Required Documentation
Professional Learning	1 clock hour = 1 PDP	Certificate, transcript, or verification signed by the director of schools (or authorized district personnel)
Professional Learning	1 micro-credential earned through a state-approved provider = 5 PDPs	Digital certificate provided by state-approved micro-credentials provider
Continuing Education	1 continuing education unit (CEU) = 5 PDPs	Certificate or transcript
College/University Coursework	1 semester hour credit = 10 PDPs	Transcript
Overall level of effectiveness rating (approved TN model)	Overall Score of 5 = 20 PDPs Overall Score of 4 = 15 PDPs Overall Score of 3 = 10 PDPs	Information is maintained by the department. No additional documentation is required; points may be accrued annually.
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) Certification	Initial Certification = 30 PDPs Renewal Certification = 15 PDPs	Official documentation from NBPTS

2. *When can educators earn PDPs?*

To be valid for renewal or advancement of a Tennessee license, PDPs must be earned during the validity period of the license. For example, if a license is valid from Sept. 1, 2015 to Aug. 31, 2021, only PDPs earned during that time can be used to renew or advance the educator license. If an educator submits PDPs earned prior to the validity period of the license, the district must deny the PDPs in TNCompass.

3. Can educators earn PDPs while attending professional learning activities (i.e., conferences) for which they receive compensation?

Yes, educators can receive PDPs for attending learning activities for which they receive compensation as long as the activities are related to improving educator effectiveness (see question 1).

4. Can educators earn PDPs by attending required trainings (e.g., blood-borne pathogens, suicide prevention, bullying prevention, child abuse awareness training, TN Promise mentoring training)?

While these are very important activities, in most cases they are not related directly to most educators' effectiveness and therefore do not qualify for PDPs.

5. Can educators earn PDPs while attending activities that are part of the required 30 hours of in-service per contract year?

Yes. If the topic of the in-service activity is related to improving educator effectiveness, the in-service hours may be used for PDPs.

However, such activities **may** qualify for PDPs for **school services personnel** (e.g., school counselor, school social worker, school psychologist) if the approving administrator determines that participation will enhance educator effectiveness based on current job duties.

6. Can educators receive PDPs for presenting at a conference or other learning event?

No. Time spent presenting at a conference, at school or district in-services, or other learning events cannot be used to earn PDPs.

7. Can educators receive PDPs for micro-credentials?

Yes. Educators can receive PDPs for micro-credentials as long as the PDPs are earned through a state-approved [micro-credentials](#) provider (i.e., Digital Promise, Teaching Matters). Micro-credentials documentation must be issued by the state-approved micro-credentials provider.

Tracking and Approving PDPs

8. What can educators use as documentation for PDPs?

The type of documentation required varies by the type of activity used to accrue PDPs (see table in question 1). Districts can choose whether to track PDP documentation locally or to have educators upload all PDP documentation in TNCompass. By approving PDPs, district administrators are indicating that official documentation has been submitted and retained locally or in TNCompass.

9. How are PDPs submitted into TNCompass?

Educators may submit their PDPs in [TNCompass](#). Instructions are located [here](#). PDPs can be entered into TNCompass at any time, but must be submitted prior to the expiration date of the license.

10. How are PDPs issued based on evaluation scores?

PDPs earned from evaluation scores will be issued automatically in TNCompass once the level of overall effectiveness (LOE) for the educator is finalized in TNCompass. For the purpose of advancement or renewal, educators should not rely on evaluation scores for PDPs in the last year of the validity period of a license because the LOE will likely not be finalized before the end of August. Note that all licenses are set to expire on Aug. 31 of the expiration year.

11. How does the district approve PDPs?

District staff designated to approve PDPs have a **PDP Work Queue** in [TNCompass](#). Once an educator submits PDPs in his/her account, authorized district personnel must approve or deny the PDPs through TNCompass. Instructions on how to do this can be found in the *TNCompass Licensure Administrator Guide*, found on the [TNCompass](#) homepage.

Using PDPs for Licensure

12. How may PDPs do educators need to advance to a professional license?

To advance to a professional license, educators must have

- [three years of acceptable experience](#), and
- one of the following:
 - a recommendation of the director of schools **or**
 - 30 PDPs earned during the validity period of the license.

Educators may apply to advance the license as soon as requirements are met.

13. How many PDPs do educators need to renew a professional license?

To renew a professional license, educators must submit 60 PDPs during the validity period of the license.

14. How can individuals not working in a Tennessee public school (e.g., retired teachers, teachers working in a non-public school) maintain an active license?

Individuals not staffed in a Tennessee public school at the point of advancement or renewal must submit PDPs and corresponding documentation in TNCompass. The department will evaluate the documentation and issue PDPs based on policy requirements. District administrators may provide opportunities to accrue PDPs by allowing those individuals to attend school or district professional learning activities, as appropriate.

15. Are faculty and staff who are working in TASL-mandated positions required to submit 60 PDPs in order to maintain an active teacher or school service personnel license?

Administrators in a TASL-mandated positions or serving as directors of schools may use this experience in lieu of submitting PDPs to renew the professional teaching or school services personnel license. When submitting the application in TNCompass, educators should indicate in the *Submission Notes* section that they are serving in a TASL-mandated position.

16. How does an educator with an active administrator license who is not in a TASL-mandated position maintain an active teaching or school services personnel license?

Educators with an active administrator license who are not in a TASL-mandated position must submit 60 PDPs to renew the professional teaching or school service personnel license.

17. Who do I contact for more information?

For more information or with questions, contact Educator.Licensure@tn.gov or call (615) 532-4885.