

PLP

~ Frequently Asked Questions ~

➤ **What is the goal of a PLP?**

The goal of the PLP is to put into place a process for supporting all students as they develop reading proficiency.

➤ **Will all PLPs look the same?**

No, PLPs will vary from district to district. However, they must all include the required elements. Additionally, if a district has different forms at the various levels, elementary, middle, high, they all need to include the required elements.

➤ **Will there be a single document for K-12 or will separate ones be accepted?**

Districts have had and will continue to have the liberty to create separate documents for various grade levels/spans within a school district. However, every PLP within the district must contain all the required elements.

➤ **Will RIDE require one PLP form to be used by all?**

No. While RIDE does supply a state sample PLP form for districts to use, it is up to the individual district to decide which form they would like to use (their own or the state voluntary form).

➤ **Who is responsible for actually writing the PLP?**

At the elementary level, the classroom teacher in consultation with other professionals will write the PLP. At the secondary level, a certified reading specialist and/or a specially trained literacy teacher will take responsibility for writing the PLP in consultation with content teachers, administrators and others. For students with disabilities who receive all their services in the area of literacy outside of the general education setting, special educators will be primarily responsible for developing and carrying out PLPs.

➤ **What is the role of the special education teacher in this process?**

Special education teachers have a responsibility to work with elementary classroom teachers as PLPs are developed, carried out, and revised for students with IEPs. At the secondary level, they are responsible for working with the certified reading specialists, as PLPs are developed, carried out, and revised for students with IEPs. Special Educators also have the responsibility to work with the specially trained literacy teachers who service the targeted intervention groups. For students with disabilities who receive all their services in the area of literacy outside of the general education setting, special educators would be primarily responsible for developing and carrying out PLPs.

➤ **Once a PLP has been resolved, what happens to the documentation?**

The district should devise a system to maintain the documentation for possible future reference.

➤ **When a student transfers to another district within RI, how will the receiving district be alerted that the student has a PLP?**

If the student currently has a PLP, the current PLP document must be sent to the receiving district to ensure that the intervention plan continues. A Student Literacy Record (Refer to Appendix D) may also be sent to provide a student's PLP history.

➤ **How long does a student require a PLP?**

Once the interventions provided have proven successful and lead to a student reading at grade level, the student will no longer require a PLP. PLP documentation should remain in the student's file for future reference.

➤ **If a student has a PLP at the elementary level, what will happen when the student transitions to a new school?**

The PLP shall continue until the student is reading at grade level. Districts are responsible for the development and implementation of a K-12 PLP system that includes explicit and consistent provisions for students' transitioning from grade to grade, building to building, or district to district.

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➤ **Does a PLP for a student continue if they enter the secondary level and they are not**

reading on grade level? Does it continue if they move out of district?

Yes. Once a student is placed on a PLP, the student continues their PLP until they are reading at grade level; regardless of whether they go from elementary to secondary levels within a district or go to another district within RI or a charter school. The classification of reading “3 or more years” below grade level was established to help all secondary schools build capacity for servicing their students. Therefore, by the year 2011 all students K-12 not reading at grade level will have a PLP.

➤ If a student has a PLP, can they graduate with a diploma from High School under the new PBGR system?

Yes, if they have met the grade 9-10 Grade Span Expectations (GSEs) required for graduation by the PBGR system. Under the Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements (PBGR) system, all students must be proficient in the 9-10 GSEs in order to graduate.

➤ Can any indication of Special Education services be identified on PLP documents?

Students **can** be identified on their PLP as having an IEP, as long as it is listed among one of many student categories (For example: Title I, Literacy, Reading Recovery, 504 Plan, ELL, IEP, Speech). If this information were included on this document, just like any other student record, it would be considered and maintained as confidential in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99).

➤ Will a PLP carry the same legal weight as an IEP? Can parents refuse these services?

The Board of Regents regulates PLPs for grades 6-12, while state law mandates PLPs for grades K-5 [RI General Law 16.1-7 (a-c)]. Therefore parents/guardians may not decline a PLP, but they may refuse/decline to participate in a home component.

➤ When is a PLP necessary for a student who already has an IEP?

When a student’s reading level indicates that a PLP is needed, the guidance is the same for a student with or without an IEP. IEPs set out annual goals and intermediate objectives (often quarterly) and are not intended to focus on specific instructional procedures. In contrast, PLPs are intended to provide short-term, tailored instructional interventions whose effectiveness is measured frequently and which are revised regularly based on students' responses. PLPs help focus the work of both general and special education teachers on interventions that should help students make progress toward their IEP objectives and annual goals.

➤ Are districts expected to use the student’s independent level or instructional level when determining if he/she needs a PLP?

Districts may use either independent or instructional level when determining a student’s reading level. Depending on the screening tool and other sources of information that each district is using to determine eligibility for a PLP, districts will decide which level they will use. For example: a student in 6th grade at the beginning of the school year should be reading independently at a 5th grade level and instructionally at a 6th grade level to be considered reading at grade level.

Note of caution: For districts using Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) 4-8, it is based on a student’s independent level. However, a level 60 (grade 6 passage) has comparable text to many 5th grade appropriate stories. Therefore, it is written for independent reading at grade 6 and a current 6th grade student at the beginning of the year should be given this level. If the DRA assessment is used at the end of the school year, a current 6th grade student should be reading independently at the 6th grade level and instructionally at the 7th grade level. Therefore, a level 70 (grade 7 passage) should be used.

Not all screening instruments have been developed in this manner. It is important that a district has a clear understanding of the analysis for the screening instrument that they have selected.

➤ Are the types of support at the secondary level flexible?

Yes, they are flexible and should allow students to move among the different facets based on their progress monitoring/outcomes results. Students may also be included in targeted groups and receive intensive instruction simultaneously. It should be noted however, that once a PLP is established for a student, the student does not exit from the PLP until he/she is reading at grade level even as he/she moves among the different facets.

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➤ What is the difference between tiers at the secondary level and expanding circle of support?

The supporting documentation in high school regulations includes the terminology of “tiers” to refer to the levels of support secondary students will receive. Every student at the secondary level receives Tier 1 support from every content area teacher. It is the school-wide discipline-specific literacy instruction that is explained in detail within the High School Regulations document. Tier 2 (targeted intervention) is additional support needed by some students who are reading 1-2 years below grade level. Tier 3 (intensive intervention) is for a few students who are reading 3 or more years below grade level. Whereas, the expanding circle of support refers to the personnel within a school community who may assist in the development, implementation or progress monitoring of a PLP for students at the elementary and secondary levels. Please refer to pages 15-16 of this document for more details on *Expanding Circle of Support*.

➤ **Which district is responsible for students who require targeted or intensive literacy support if they participate in a vocational program in another district?**

Commonly, the school/center where the student receives his/her academic instruction will be responsible for assessing, planning, implementing and monitoring targeted and/or intensive literacy support for their students, unless other arrangements have been made.

All content area teachers, whether they are in a high school or technical school/center are required to: employ school-wide discipline-specific literacy instruction; differentiate instruction for all students as needed so they can read and acquire information in every subject; provide ongoing assistance in navigating content, concepts, text structure, and vocabulary encountered in texts read by the students; and familiarize themselves with and use the information documented on every student’s PLP that is relevant for their classroom instruction.

➤ **Why do districts need to submit a District Report for their Personal Literacy Plans?**

The Rhode Island General Assembly and the Board of Regents imposed law and regulations to require a focused, concerted effort to improving the reading ability for all students not reading at grade level. To this end, RIDE is using the District Report form to account for all students by asking the superintendent to identify the number of students reading at or above grade level, below grade level and the number of students with a PLP.

➤ **Are districts required to fill out a District Report in the spring of each year?**

No, presently RIDE is requiring that each district submit their District Report by December 1st of each year. However, in the future RIDE may require submission semiannually or change the date of submission. Districts may want to collect information in the spring for reports to school board/committee, parents, community members, etc. It should be noted that an additional column has been added to the district report beginning in December 2005. It will require information on the number of students at each grade level that were discontinued from the PLP process by the end of the previous year.

➤ **When is the District Report due to the Department of Education?**

Currently, the District Report for PLPs is due to the Department by December 1.

➤ **Where should the reports be sent?**

The district reports should be sent to:
Lisa Vieira, Office of Instruction
Rhode Island Department of Education
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903