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Student Guide:

How to Develop Your PLP

OVERVIEW

Developing your Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) provides you the opportunity to reflect upon your learning and shape your future, and enables the adults in your life to better understand you and support your learning and goals. While the PLP can be seen as a written plan that you have developed, you should think of this as a “living” document that can adapt as your needs and ideas change. Your honesty and commitment to this process will determine how meaningful this plan is to you, and how successful you are at meeting your goals. Throughout your life, both in school and on the job, you will be asked to set goals, make connections, and reflect on who you are as a person and your school or work performance. Often you may be asked to submit portfolios, artifacts or exemplars of your work, or potential employers or clients may request access to your digital profiles (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, personal websites, etc.). It is our goal that this PLP process will provide you with a foundation for future planning in college and/or your career, and that your PLP may be a starting point for developing your future professional profile.

CREATE A STUDENT PROFILE

The first step in developing a Personalized Learning Plan will be for you to build a profile. Your school will identify a process to help you with this. When starting the development process, you might be asked to answer questions such as:

- Who am I? What defines me as a person and member of my community?
- What are my values? What do I value?
- What influences/inspires me? Who influences/inspires me? Why?
- How do I learn? How do I learn best to meet my learning goals?
- What are my skills and interests? What do I like to do and what do I do well?
- What does my future look like? What do I see myself doing? What do I want to do with my life after high school?
- Where do I see myself in the short term (6 months – 2 years) as well as the long term (5 – 10 years)?
- What challenges or barriers will I need to overcome?

You might also be asked to complete a series of activities and tools that will help you learn more about what your strengths and interests might be, and how to use your strengths and interests to consider your future. Your school may choose to use one or more of the following tools in this process: a learning styles inventory; a Myers-Briggs Inventory; and career assessments or interest surveys.

These questions, activities and tools will help you build a list of strengths and challenges that will help you develop short- and long-term goals for your Personalized Learning Plan. It will be helpful to revisit your profile frequently and update as needed.

IDENTIFY GOALS

Considering your interests, values, strengths and skills, you will now work through a process to identify personal and college and career goals. A goal is most helpful if it is something that is important to you, specific, achievable and measurable (i.e., you will know and can show you have met the goal). Questions that might help you form your goals include:

- What are my strengths and abilities?
- What are the common learning expectations of my school?
- What do I want to accomplish? What are my short-term and long-term goals? (e.g., What do I want to accomplish this year? In school? After I graduate?)
- Does this goal challenge me? How does it challenge me?
- Am I willing and able to work toward this goal? Am I committed to it?
- How will I know when it is accomplished?
- What is my timeframe for accomplishing this goal?

Writing these goals should occur with the support of a teacher, advisor or counselor and your family. Once you have set your goals you are ready to write a plan that will help you reach your goals.

DRAFT ACTION STEPS

The Personalized Learning Plan is a guide to help you meet your goals, both short-term and long-term. It is important that you are engaged from start to completion and take primary responsibility of monitoring your goals and progress.

Considering your goals and the common learning expectations set forth by your school, you will want to map out your personal learning plan. From there, you will want to identify choices you have in courses and learning experiences – including flexible pathways such as work-based learning experiences, Early College, or Career Technical Education –

that will help you meet the school's requirements and your goals.

A few questions to consider in this step include:

- Where do I have choice in course selection?
- How might various activities help me meet both my goals and common learning expectations at the same time?
- Have I considered flexible pathways – such as expanded learning opportunities, work-based learning, Dual Enrollment, Early College, Career Technical Education, etc. – to meet my personal and learning goals?
- How might experiences outside of my school help me meet common learning expectations and/or my goals?
- Does this plan describe steps/activities that will help me meet my short and long-term goals?
- How will I know if I have been successful at following my plan?
- When will I have the opportunity to adjust my plan if things change?
- Who or what might I need support from to develop my plan or meet my goals?

Once your plan is developed, it will be important for you to revisit this plan regularly to be sure that you are on track and adjust if/when your goals or interests change.

WORK TOWARD GOALS

Once your Personalized Learning Plan is developed, the real work begins. It is now time for you to begin working on your plan for achieving your goals. Remember to review your plan regularly and utilize the supports you identified as important to your success.

Communication will be important if you are to achieve success in meeting your goals. The people who helped you develop this plan will be a great resource to you as you move forward.

Tips for success:

- Your plan is a road map to successfully meeting your goals. Be sure to follow your plan and take the action steps necessary to complete your goals! This might include adapting or changing them. Pay attention to deadlines and make sure you are meeting them.
- In the event of challenges or barriers to your success, be sure to talk with your parents, teachers or school advisor to access resources that may help resolve them, allowing you to continue moving forward.

ASSESS PROGRESS

You have identified your goals, mapped out your plan, and are working through your action steps. Now you need to check on your progress. As you review your goals on a regular basis, you will figure out which goals to extend, revise, or remove and which goals you have successfully met.

This step requires you to review your progress and provide evidence of your accomplishments. It might be helpful to assess your plan in small parts, rather than as a whole. As you consider your accomplishments, you will want to provide evidence that supports your claim. You may also discover that you haven't met some of your goals, and that the steps to meeting those goals, or the goals themselves, may need to be revised. Reflecting on why you did or did not meet your goals will be as important as revising or developing new goals.

This step can be done through a self-evaluation; discussions with your family, school staff, and peers; and possibly with the support of members of your community.

Questions you might consider when assessing progress include:

- Which goals have I met?
- How do I know that I am making progress toward my goal or have accomplished my goal? Why or how did I accomplish this goal?
- Did I need support in accomplishing my goal?
- What strengths am I currently using and/or building?
- What recent achievements have I made?
- Where in my learning plan am I feeling challenged?
- How do I know that I am challenged?
- What kinds of information do I need to show that I have made progress?
- How will I display or share this information with others?

Continue this process with each area of your PLP. Upon conclusion, you will have a snapshot of your accomplishments and an idea of what to do next.

REFLECT ON EXPERIENCES

The nature of goals – short-term or long-term – requires assessment and reflection at various points along the way. The process of setting, assessing, and reflecting on goals exists in a continuous cycle. Reflection helps you consider your role in the learning process and guides you in the next steps of your Personalized Learning Plan.

You will have an opportunity to review your progress and reflect on the overall experience.

Your teacher, advisor, or counselor may help you in this process. Your family or peers can support your reflection and provide feedback, which may help you in the annual revision of your Personalized Learning Plan.

Reflection and feedback are important components of the learning process. It is important that you reflect and gain feedback on your PLP at least once a year in a formal way. Informally, you may stop and reflect on your progress and the experience at any time throughout the year – with or without the support of your team. Reflections can come in various forms and may include a journal entry, a dialogue, a presentation, a video, or a format that you and your school staff find suitable.

Questions you may want to consider as you prepare your reflection include:

- What did I learn from the assessment portion of the personalized learning planning process?
- What have I learned about myself thus far?
- What went well? How do I know?
- What do I wish had gone differently?
- What did I have control over?
- What do I better understand about my own learning and goalsetting?
- How was I able to make gains in learning? How can I apply these strategies to areas where I might need more work?
- Was there any unexpected learning? What was it?
- How does what I have learned connect to my future short-term and long-term goals?
- How could I use this experience to revise and/or make new goals for my plan?

The reflective process and the feedback you receive will help you in revising your Personalized Learning Plan to be sure it reflects who you are and what you want to achieve.

REVISE

In this step of the cycle, you are expected to revise your plan based on the reflective process and changes in goals, interests, and circumstances. Reasons for goal revisions should be documented in the plan.

The revision process occurs between you, your advisor or teacher or counselor, and a parent or guardian. This process must happen annually, although it could be helpful to you to review your plan each marking period. If you know that you want to make changes in your plan before the official revision period, please request a meeting with your teacher, advisor, or counselor.

When you meet, everyone should review the reflections and feedback. Together, you will

then revisit your goals and plan. If you choose to make changes, you should document the reason for those changes and adjust the action steps that will be taken to meet any new goals.

Questions to consider during the revision process include:

- In looking at my reflection, what has encouraged me to change or enhance my goal(s)?
- What level of effort did I make to meet my previous goals and actions?
- Were my goals realistic given my schedule, my interests, and/or my motivation and effort?
- How are my new goals more in line with my future plans?
- Do I need support or input from others in order to meet my new goals? How can I enlist others' support?
- How do my new short-term and long-term goals relate to each other