

Renee Harris • Executive Director of Human Resources
Office of Human Resources and Labor Relations

25 Corporate Park Drive • P.O. Box 396 • Hopewell Junction, NY 12533 • (845) 298-5000 x40116 • Fax (845) 896-1286

Memo To: WCT Unit Members

Re: Inservice Credit

This memorandum will summarize ongoing efforts by the administration to address staff complaints regarding the approval process for inservice credit requests and will offer guidelines for you to follow in order to expedite the approval process in the future.

All inservice requests for District teaching staff are submitted via MyLearningPlan.com (MLP). When you submit an inservice request, your supervising administrator(s) serve as MLP first-stage approvers. Your supervisors' role is to evaluate your inservice requests based on their knowledge of your individual professional development needs, keeping in mind District inservice rules and guidelines and District professional development goals.

The MLP system requires that one District-level administrator serve as the final approver of all inservice requests. I serve in that role, which means that I am reviewing inservice requests submitted year-round on a daily basis by more than 900 teachers and 200 teaching assistants. My role in the approval process is to assure that organizations offering inservice activities have complied with District inservice rules and guidelines – including, but not limited to, identifying the proper audience for each activity, determining clock hours, scheduling, meeting District standards for online offerings, etc. -- and also to assure that first-stage approvers have exercised proper administrative due diligence when evaluating each individual inservice request.

Since we found that many requests were reaching my MLP approval queue that should have been denied at an earlier stage in the approval process, all District administrators recently underwent training in these rules, guidelines, and approval criteria, all of which are designed to meet audit requirements and to assure that the focus of professional developments is on the ultimate goal of improving student performance. As a result, you may now expect to be notified of denials earlier in the approval process than was the case in the past and you may experience an increased level of scrutiny by your first-stage approvers as they comply with District expectations for administrative due diligence. In some cases, your approvers may return a request to you for additional information. When that occurs, respond via MLP in order to return your request to the approver's MLP queue. When a request is denied, administrators have been asked to provide you with a brief reason for the denial in the Comments section of the request form.

The MLP system assures that inservice requestors have submitted their requests no later than the starting date of the activity. Submitting your request well in advance of the starting date improves the likelihood that your request will be approved or denied in a timely manner. However, keep in mind that your requests must be approved by one or two first-stage approvers before reaching my MLP queue for final approval and that the volume of inservice requests received -- especially by principals of large schools, coordinators of large departments, and by me -- may often mean that we have to give precedence to considering requests submitted by your colleagues for activities with an earlier starting date.

Nevertheless, be assured that the administration is committed to improving the timeline for inservice approval. In order for that effort to be successful, your cooperation is necessary, primarily by limiting

your requests to activities that are in compliance with applicable District rules and guidelines and by using appropriate professional judgment when submitting requests.

It is essential that all MLP inservice requestors read and follow the rules and guidelines given in the MANDATORY READING news items listed under the News & Info section of your MLP Learning Plan page. Check the News & Info section regularly for updates. Limit your requests to activities that comply with District rules. For example:

- if you neglect to specify “Inservice” as Type of Activity and Purpose when submitting your MLP request, the request will not be routed for necessary approvals and your request for inservice credit cannot later be approved;
- if the dates and times of all sessions of an activity do not take place outside your work day, your request for inservice credit cannot be approved;
- for after-school activities, if the end time of your official work day does not allow for reasonable travel time in order for you to arrive at the activity on time, your request for inservice credit cannot be approved;
- if the description of an online activity does not verify the activity meets District online standards, your request for inservice credit cannot be approved.

It is also essential that requestors read the full activity description in the MLP catalog. Limit your requests to activities that comply with District approval criteria. For example:

- if you are not included in the intended audience as may be indicated in the activity description, your request for inservice credit cannot be approved;
- if the activity is below your skill level, your request for inservice credit cannot be approved;
- if you have not completed prerequisites, your request for inservice credit cannot be approved;
- if the activity involves use of technology to which you do not have immediate and regular access, your request for inservice credit cannot be approved;
- if the activity is not relevant to your current assignment and/or your supervisors do not anticipate you will implement the provided training in the workplace, your request for inservice cannot be approved;
- if the activity duplicates previous training you’ve attended, your request for inservice credit cannot be approved.

Finally, if you submit a request and then later decide not to attend the activity, please immediately drop the request in MLP in order to remove the request from the MLP queues of your approvers at the earliest possible stage. Besides the effect of expediting the approval process, dropping a request as soon in advance as possible will allow your colleagues who may be on a waiting list to attend the activity.

Questions regarding the above may be directed to me. If at any time you need assistance with the inservice process or with an individual request, please contact MLP.Admin@wcsdny.org.

cc: All Administrators
Personnel Associate
MLP Administrator

July 2024