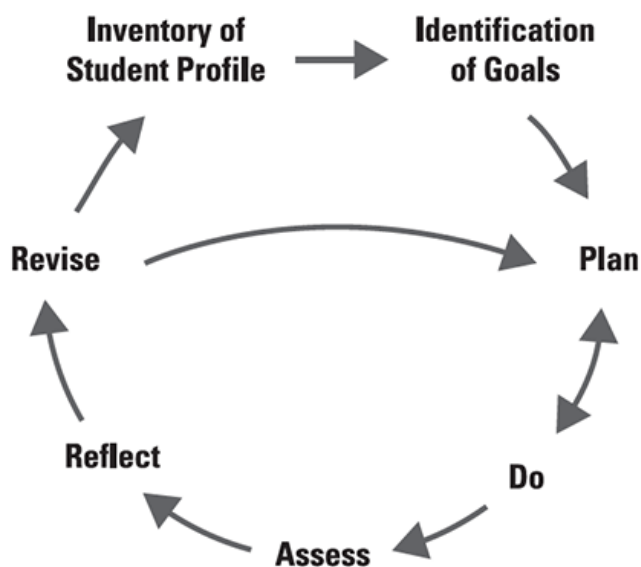


OVERVIEW

Creating Personalized Learning Plans provides students the opportunity to reflect upon their learning and future, and enables the adults in your school to better understand each student as a unique person with both common and different learning goals and a variety of learning strengths and areas of concerns. However, the actual documentation of the PLP—either in paper or electronic—is only as good as the process that supports the development and use of the document. This framework outlines a process much more so than a product, even though a clear and thoughtful product is key to ultimate success. The PLP should clearly be seen as a “living” document that can change as student needs and ideas change. The honesty and commitment to this process demonstrated by students, and the care and diligent use of the PLP by teachers and advisors, will determine the ultimate value of the Personalized Learning Plan process.



STUDENT PROFILE

The first step in developing a Personalized Learning Plan is for each student to build a profile. Each school should identify a series of common questions for students to think through (and certainly engage students in thinking through unique and personal questions regarding themselves). Such questions could include the following:

- Who am I? *What defines me as a person and member of my community?*
- How do I learn? *How do I learn best to meet my academic goals?*
- What are my skills and interests? *What do I like to do and what do I do well?*
- What is my future path? *What do I want to do with my life after high school?*

Schools may choose to give students the opportunity to complete a series of activities that will help them learn more about how to use their strengths and interests to help them consider their

future path. School may choose to use one or more of the following activities: a learning style inventory; a Myers-Briggs Inventory; career assessments, or interest surveys.

From these activities, students will build a list of strengths and challenges.

IDENTIFICATION OF GOALS

Considering their interests, values, strengths and skills, each student will then identify personal and post-secondary goals. A goal is most helpful to students if it is something that is important to them (personal interest or required), specific, and measurable. Questions that might help students form their goals include:

- What do I want to accomplish?
- Am I willing and able to work toward this goal?
- 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 the student's family. Once students have set their goals and believe that they are achievable, they can write a plan to attain them.

PLAN

The Personalized Learning Plan is a guide to help students meet their goals. It's important that they are engaged from start to completion and take primary responsibility of seeing that the goals are being achieved.

Considering the student's goals and the common learning expectations set forth by your school, students will want to map out their academic plan identifying how they will meet both their unique and personal goals as well as the common learning expectations that have been identified for all students at your school.

A few questions for students to consider in this step include:

- What learning expectations are common for every student at my school?
- 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?
- How might learning experiences outside of my school help me meet common learning expectations and/or my 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?

Once students have developed a Personalized Learning Plan, it will be important they revisit this plan regularly to be sure they are on track, and as necessary, making adjustments as plans or interests change

DO

Once students have developed their Personalized Learning Plan, the real work begins. It is now time for students to begin working on their plans and achieving their goals. Students should review their plans regularly and utilize the human resources they have identified as important to their success. Communication between students and their advisors will be crucial to achieve success in meeting their goals.

You may want to share the following tips for success with students:

- Your plan is a road map to success. Meeting your goals as written will ensure success; be sure to take the action steps necessary to complete 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 or school advisor to access resources that may help resolve them, allowing you to continue moving forward.

ASSESS

As students review their goals on a regular basis, advisors will need to support them to figure out which goals to extend, revise, or remove and which goals they have met.

This step requires students to review their progress and provide evidence of their accomplishments. It might be helpful to assess the PLPs in small parts, rather than as a whole. As students consider their accomplishments, advisors should press students to provide evidence that supports their claims.

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

Questions students might consider when assessing progress include:

- Which goals have I met?
- How do I know that I've accomplished my goal or am making progress?
- Where in my academic 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?

Reflect

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

Students should have an opportunity to review their progress and reflect on the overall experience. Teachers, advisors, or counselors may help them in this process. A student's family or peers can support his/her reflection and provide feedback, which may help the student in the annual revision of their Personalized Learning Plan.

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

Questions students may want to consider as they prepare their reflections include:

- What did I learn from the assessment portion of the Personalized Learning Plan 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 goal setting?
- Was there any unexpected learning? What was it?
- How could I use this experience to revise and/or make my next plan?

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

REVISE

In this step of the cycle, students are expected to revise their 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 the student, his or her advisor or teacher or counselor, and a parent or guardian. This process must happen annually, although it could be helpful for students to review their plan each marking period. Schools should establish a process where students can make changes in their plans outside of the official revision period.

The reflection process should be a joint effort between everyone who was originally involved in the development of the PLP. Everyone should engage in the reflection process and the visitation of goals and the plan. Changes in the plan should include documentation as to why these changes are being made and should outline changes in actions steps to achieve these changed goals.

Questions for students to consider during the revision process include:

- In looking at my reflection, what has encouraged me to change my goal?
- What level of effort did I put into meeting my previous goals and actions?
- Were my goals realistic given my motivation and effort?
- How are my new goals more in line with my future plans?