

GUIDE TO DEVELOPING AN INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLAN*

What is the Individual Learning Plan (ILP)?

The Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is a personalized document that students develop with their Counselors and other supportive adults throughout each school year. The ILP has four sections:

- Setting Goals
- Identifying Potential Barriers
- Identifying Strategies to Reach Goals
- Preparing for Success Checklists (by grade level)

What is the purpose of the ILP?

The purpose of the ILP is to help students be self-reflective and take ownership of their education. Students use the ILP to develop their own goals and to chart their progress toward reaching them. The ILP is a tool to help ensure each student is on the path to graduation, and to determine what resources they need along the way to be prepared for a successful pathway in life.

How is the ILP accessed and used?

Students access their own ILPs by logging-in to their StudentNet accounts (Counselors provide passwords). Students create their ILPs by making entries and updates directly into the online ILP form in StudentNet. Counselors, Teachers, and other school staff can access ILPs in Schoolnet, and parents have a view-only access to their child's ILP in FamilyNet.

Who helps students with the ILP?

Counselors, Teachers, and other school staff will work with students to guide, facilitate, support them in the process of developing their ILPs, and to ensure students are re-visiting their records in StudentNet and their ILP at key points throughout the school year

Parents/guardians, as well as city and community-based partners who work with students during in-school or after-school programs are also encouraged to help guide, facilitate, and support students' use of StudentNet and development of their ILPs.

How are the ILP and StudentNet related?

StudentNet and the ILP are both designed to empower students by providing information, resources, and direct engagement with counselors and other supportive adults in planning for their success through to graduation and beyond.

StudentNet provides students with access to their own academic record and many other tools and resources that will help them develop meaningful ILPs.

Both StudentNet and the ILP are available to all District students, grades K-12. For the 2010-11 school year, the requirement is that all students in grades 4th through 12th develop an Individual Learning Plan and access their StudentNet accounts on a regular basis with support from counselors, teachers, and others.

How is the ILP formatted?

The first three sections are formatted for open-text response with no word limit or formatting restrictions. Students can write as much as they like and format their entries in any way they desire. The checklists in the grade-level sections are formatted for check-box responses only.

* Translated versions of this document are available at: www.philasd.org/offices/translation.

SETTING GOALS

The Goal Setting component of the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is very important because it provides the foundation for all other parts of the plan. Students and Counselors are encouraged to use the SMART Goals framework, and/or those provided in curriculum such as Career Choices, that help students develop meaningful short and long-term goals. Students should review their academic records in StudentNet, reflect on areas of strength and weakness, and engage in a discussion about setting goals that will help them achieve success in the short and long-term.

Goals are meaningful when they are “SMART”: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant/Realistic, and **T**imed.

Specific: All the goals you set should be very detailed and specific. So, instead of “I want to do well in 7th grade,” you could say, “I want to get at least a B+ in all my classes this year.”

Measurable: SMART goals are measurable so that you know when you’ve succeeded. If you play basketball, instead of saying, “I want to make a lot of points this season,” you could say, “I want to make 150 points this season.” That way you know exactly when you have achieved your goal. That is also an example of a short term goal. A long term goal for basketball could be: “I want to be in the 1,000 point club by the time I graduate.”

Achievable: Your goals should be challenging; we want you to push yourself. However, they should also be reasonable. “I want to graduate high school in 2 years” is not a reasonable goal for most 9th graders. “I want to graduate in June 2013 with honors” is a challenging but much more reasonable goal for a 9th grader.

Relevant/Realistic: In order to stay motivated, your goals should be important to you. Give them some serious thought. What is important to you? What do you value? If music is your passion, then set goals around improving your musical talents. If going to college is something that’s important to you, set goals that will make you ready for college.

Timed: All your goals should have a start date and an end date. Leaving a goal without a time limit could make you less motivated to achieve it. Instead of, “I want to write a song,” you could set a goal to compose a song before you turn 17 years old.

Setting Short and Long-Term Goals

The ILP will be most meaningful when students develop both short-term and long-term goals.

Short-term goals focus on the current school year. Think about two kinds of short-term goals:

- Subject-specific goals (for example, raise grade from a C to a B in math, complete homework on time, etc.)
- Behavioral goals (for example, improve attendance, eliminate tardiness, etc.)

First, review your record in StudentNet and consider your strengths, weaknesses, and interests. Then, based on your record, identify and describe specific goals for success, achievement, and improvement that related directly to the courses, tests, and activities you will be participating in this school year.

After you decide upon your short-term goals, be sure to review them on at least a weekly basis and use StudentNet to check your progress along the way. If you need help achieving a certain

goal, make plans to get help. For instance, if you set a goal to earn a B+ in Algebra 1, but during the 2nd marking period, it doesn't look like you'll reach that goal, make plans for a tutor or just meet with your teacher after class for more explanation. Reviewing your goals frequently will help you achieve them.

Long-term goals focus on your future beyond high school graduation.

First, review your record in StudentNet and consider your areas of strength, weakness, and interests. Then, based on your record, identify and describe specific goals for what you want to be and do in life—immediately after high school and beyond.

After you decide upon your long-term goals, be sure to review them periodically throughout the year. Use StudentNet to review your academic record, including credit accumulation, grades, attendance, test scores, etc. Determine how well you're doing and seek out help if you are falling off-track towards achieving a certain goal. Reviewing your goals frequently will help you achieve them.

Short-term Goal Focus Question: *What will I do to improve my academic record this school year?*

The following are examples of some short-term goals you may use or change to create your individual plan:

I will pass all of my classes.

I will raise my grade from a ____ to a ____ on the next report card cycle, in _____ class.

I will earn a _____ as a final grade in _____ class by the end of the school year.

I will improve my GPA (Grade Point Average) from a ____ to a ____ by the end of the school year.

I will graduate high school this year.

I will get a Satisfactory or better in Effort in all of my classes on my report card.

I will get a Satisfactory or better in Behavior in all of my classes.

I will improve my Reading PSSA to Basic/Proficient/Advanced.

I will improve my Math PSSA to Basic/Proficient/Advanced.

I will improve my Reading level at least one grade level by the end of the year.

I will get to every class on time.

I will attend school regularly and miss no more than one day a month (with good excuse).

I will do what I can to contribute to a positive climate in my classroom and school.

I will get involved in an extra curricular activity.

I will improve my decision making skills and get 5 or less demerit points a month.

Other:

Long-term Goal Focus Question: *What do I want to be and do in life beyond high school graduation?*

The following are some examples of prompts you may use to help develop your long-term goals:

My career goal(s) is/are

My personal goal(s) is/are

I would like to give back to my community in the following way(s)

I will attend a two-year/four-year college after high school to study and pursue a career in

I will attend a technical school after high school to pursue a career in

I will join the military after high school to study and pursue a career in

I will enter the workforce after high school to develop a career in the field of

Other:

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL BARRIERS

In this section of the ILP, identify barriers that may prevent you from reaching your goals. Be sure to address specific barriers to both the short and long-term goals identified in the Setting Goals section of the ILP.

Short-Term Barriers Focus Question: *What are the challenges I face to reaching my short-term goals?*

The following are some examples of barriers related to short-term goals you may use or change to create your individual plan:

I do not understand what is required to get a passing grade in my class(es).

I do not understand what is required to graduate from high school.

I need to recover credit in _____ subject(s).

I cannot hear the teacher.

I cannot see what is on the board.

I am sitting near students who distract me during class.

I have family responsibilities in the morning that make it hard to be on time.

There is no one at home who can help me with my homework.

I stay up late and oversleep in the morning.

I do not know what extra curricular activities are available in my school or community.
My elementary/middle/high school does not offer supports that I need.

Other:

Long-Term Barriers Focus Question: *What are the challenges I face to reaching my long-term goals?*

The following are some examples of barriers related to long-term goals you may use or change to create your individual plan:

There is no one in my family who can help me navigate the college admission process.

My family cannot provide financial support for college.

My friends are putting pressure on me to drop-out of school.

My elementary/middle/high school does not offer programs of study connected to my interests.

Other:

IDENTIFYING STRATEGIES TO REACH GOALS

In this section of the ILP, identify strategies for achieving your short and long-term goals, and how you will overcome the barriers identified in the Potential Barriers section. Be as specific as possible. Consider all of the resources available to you in your school, community, city, region, etc. There may be some barriers that are not in your control to change, or that you will need help from others to overcome. Focus on the barriers that you CAN do something about and stay positive about achieving your dreams.

Strategies for Achieving Short-Term Goals: *What specific actions will I take to achieve my short-term goals and to overcome any barriers to doing so?*

The following are some examples of strategies related to short-term goals you may use or change to create your individual plan:

I will talk to my teacher(s) about what is required to receive a passing grade.

I will review the School District of Philadelphia graduation and promotion policy on StudentNet.

I will recover the course credits I need by enrolling in a credit recovery program.

I will read at home for my own enjoyment 4 or more days a week.

I will copy down my homework assignments and complete at least 80% on time.

I will ask for help if I don't understand something.

I will help another student if he/she needs help.

I will ask the teacher to move to a seat that is closer to the board.

I will talk with the teacher about moving to another seat so that I am not distracted by classmates.

I will see the school nurse about getting a hearing/vision test.

I will study for each test and/or quiz at least ½ hour.

I will raise my hand at least once a week when I know the answer to a question from the teacher.

I will get information (from my counselor, advisor, StudentNet, etc.) about and take the steps necessary to get involved in an extra curricular activity that will help me grow and learn new things.

I will set an alarm clock or arrange to have someone call me so I can get to school on time.

I will talk to my Counselor about resources and supports that can help my family.

I will use StudentNet and/or after-school tutoring.

I will take the following steps to be on time/ in attendance (see Attendance and Truancy Elimination Contract).

I will use StudentNet and contact the Re-Engagement Center to research and identify a school that has the flexibility I need to finish high school while working and/or caring for children.

I will seek transfer to an elementary/middle/high school that has the supports I need to succeed.

Other:

Strategies for Achieving Long-Term Goals: *What specific actions will I take to achieve my long-term goals and to overcome any barriers to doing so?*

The following are some examples of strategies related to long-term goals you may use or change to create your individual plan:

I will research and identify schools that will be a good fit for me.

I will take the steps necessary make a strong application to selective elementary/middle/high school(s).

I will seek transfer to a school that has programs of study related to my interests.

I will seek out an adult who will serve as a Graduation Coach to provide mentorship and support for my academic success (see www.phillygradcoach.org)

I will challenge myself academically by taking an Advanced Placement (AP) and/or Dual Enrollment class in order to earn college credit.

I will challenge myself academically by taking advanced courses (Calculus, Physics, Spanish 4, etc).

I will participate in a leadership program.

I will seek out help to improve my study skills.

I will research at least three different careers and identify the education/training needed for each.

I will identify professionals in the careers I'm researching and schedule time to talk with them so I can learn more about these professions.

I will research opportunities to go to college after high school.

I will research opportunities to start a career after high school, i.e. through an entry-level job, apprenticeship, internship, civil service, City Year, etc.

I will research opportunities to receive post-secondary education through the military.

I will attend financial aid workshops to learn how I can pay for college.

I will use the Scholarship Clearinghouse to learn about grants and scholarship opportunities.

I will complete the FAFSA in order to qualify for financial aid to attend college.

Other:

PREPARING FOR SUCCESS CHECKLISTS

This section provides a series of checklists, separated by grade band, focused on action steps that students can take, with the support of their family, school, and community, to lay the foundation for success. The purpose of these checklists is to ensure that critical decision areas are on every student's "radar."

This section of the ILP is formatted for check box responses only. If needed, more detailed responses to any of these items can be provided in other sections of the ILP. Students should review and respond to all items in their grade band. Students can revise their responses in this section at any time.

ELEMENTARY (K-5)

I participate in extracurricular activities focused on (check all that apply):

- Athletics
- Academics
- Arts
- Community Service
- Leadership Development
- Other
- None
- I will talk to my Counselor and others, and will visit StudentNet, to find out what extracurricular activities are available

How I'm staying on track (check all that apply):

- After-school tutoring
- Attending summer school for promotion
- Attending summer school for enrichment
- Reading on my own
- Visiting StudentNet regularly to review my academic record and explore other resources
- Reviewing my ILP regularly to check progress, determine if I need help, and make updates if necessary
- Other

My next steps after high school (check all that apply):

- College

- Technical school
- Military
- Employment
- Other

MIDDLE (6-8)

I participate in extracurricular activities focused on (check all that apply):

- Athletics Academics
- Arts
- Community Service
- Leadership Development
- Other
- None
- I will talk to my Counselor and others, and will visit StudentNet, to find out what extracurricular activities are available

How I'm staying on track (check all that apply):

- After-school tutoring
- Attending summer school for promotion
- Attending summer school for enrichment
- Reading on my own
- Visiting StudentNet regularly to review my academic record and explore other resources
- Reviewing my ILP regularly to check progress, determine if I need help, and make updates if necessary
- Other

My plan is to attend a high school that is (check all that apply):

- Neighborhood
- Neighborhood (in another zone)
- Citywide Admission
- Special Admission
- Charter
- Parochial
- Home schooling
- Other
- Don't know yet, but will seek help from my Counselor and others, and will visit StudentNet to research District schools

My next steps after high school (check all that apply):

- College
- Technical school
- Military
- Employment
- Other

HIGH SCHOOL (9-12)

I am on-track to graduate

- Mid-year (February)
- At the end of this school year (June)
- At the end of summer school (July)
- In two years
- In three years
- In four years
- In more than four years
- Not sure and will seek help from my Counselor

How I'm staying on track (check all that apply):

- After-school tutoring
- Attending summer school for promotion
- Attending summer school for enrichment
- Reading on my own
- Visiting StudentNet regularly to review my academic record and explore other resources
- Reviewing my ILP regularly to check progress, determine if I need help, and make updates if necessary
- Working with a Graduation Coach to provide mentorship and support for my academic success (see www.phillygradcoach.org)
- Other

I participate in extracurricular activities focused on (check all that apply):

- Athletics
- Academics
- Arts
- Community Service
- Leadership Development
- Part-time Job
- Other
- None
- I will talk to my Counselor and others, and will visit StudentNet, to find out what extracurricular activities are available

I will take an alternative pathway to graduation (check all that apply, or select last box if none apply):

- Accelerated High School
- GED Program
- Gateway to College
- Educational Options Program (EOP)
- Oasis Program
- Other
- I will talk to my Counselor and/or visit a District Re-Engagement Center to find out what options are available and best suited to my needs
- I will NOT take an alternative pathway to graduation

My next steps after high school (check all that apply):

- College (two-year)

- College (four-year)
- Technical school
- Military
- Civil Service
- Apprenticeship
- Internship
- Service program (City Year, etc.)
- Employment
- Other
- Don't know yet, but will seek help from my Counselor and others, and will visit StudentNet to learn more

Steps I've taken to pay for post-secondary education (check all that apply):

- Participated in a financial aid workshop
- Completed the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
- Used the School District's Scholarship Clearinghouse and StudentNet to research scholarship and grant opportunities
- Submitted applications for scholarship and grant awards
- Not yet taken any of these steps, but will seek help from my Counselor and others, and will visit StudentNet to learn more

Steps I've taken to learn about college and career pathways (check all that apply):

- Visited the campus of two and/or four-year college(s)
- Visited the campus of accredited technical schools
- Researched at least three colleges or universities
- Participated in a job shadowing day
- Participated in a career fair
- Researched at least three different careers and the education/training needed for success in each
- Spoken with professionals in the careers I am interested in
- Worked in a summer and/or part-time job after school
- Completed an internship program
- Not yet taken any of these steps, but will seek help from my Counselor and others, and will visit StudentNet to learn more

Post-secondary exams I've taken (check all that apply):

- PSAT
- SAT
- ACT
- NOCTI (for Career and Technical Education students)
- No exams yet taken, but will ask my Counselor and others for information, and will visit StudentNet to learn more

Advanced/College credit-bearing courses I've taken (check all that apply):

- Advanced Placement
- Dual Enrollment
- International Baccalaureate
- Summer enrollment on college campus
- No college credit-bearing courses taken
- No courses yet taken, but will ask my Counselor and others for information, and will visit StudentNet to learn more

Steps I've taken take gain admission and/or employment (check all that apply):

- Applied for admission to a range of colleges and universities that are a good fit for me
- Applied for admission to technical school(s) that fit my career interests
- Applied for employment opportunities such as an apprenticeship, internship, civil service, community service programs
- Applied for admission to the military
- No applications made yet, but will seek help from my Counselor and others
- It is too early to make applications (students in grades 9-11)

STUDENT WORK/OTHER EVALUATIONS

This section provides a place for students to upload documents that are relevant to their goals and plans. Any type of file can be uploaded with space for up to 1 MB per student per year. To save file space, multiple files (especially those that are part of a portfolio or associated with a single project) can be compressed and saved together as a “zip” file.

Here are just a few examples of files that students may want to upload in this section of their ILP:

- Personal statement/essay written for scholarship and college applications
- Samples of exemplary work for inclusion in a portfolio, service learning project, and/or a senior project
- Photos and film clips of performing arts projects
- An Attendance and Truancy Elimination Contract