Innovative Program Permission
Frequently Asked Questions

PELSB
1021 Bandana Boulevard East
Suite 222
Saint Paul, MN 55108-5111
PH: (651) 539-4200
PELSB@state.mn.us

3/25/2022
## Table of Contents

Innovative Program Permission ........................................................................................................................................... 2

FAQs on Eligibility .................................................................................................................................................................. 3

Which teachers are eligible for an IPP? ................................................................................................................................. 3

Which subject areas can be taught on an IPP? ..................................................................................................................... 3

Which subject areas cannot be covered with an IPP? .......................................................................................................... 4

Which grade levels are covered under IPP’s? ...................................................................................................................... 4

Is there a limit on the number of IPP’s a teacher can have in their teaching career? .......................................................... 4

When should a district consider applying for an Innovative Program Permission? ............................................................ 4

How long is an IPP valid? ..................................................................................................................................................... 5

FAQs on Delivery Models ..................................................................................................................................................... 6

What are examples of program delivery models for an IPP? ............................................................................................... 6

What are the duties of the teacher using an IPP? .................................................................................................................. 6

Do online programs or purchased curriculums qualify for an IPP? .................................................................................... 6

What qualifies as a State-Approved Alternative Program (SAAP)? .................................................................................... 6

Do assignments in Project Lead the Way (PLTW) apply to IPP’s? ....................................................................................... 7

FAQs on Applying for an Innovative Program Permission .................................................................................................. 8

What process should a district follow in submitting for an IPP? ......................................................................................... 8

Where should a district submit completed applications? .................................................................................................... 8

When can a district submit an IPP for the new school year? ............................................................................................... 8

Does the district have to fill out both forms every school year for a renewal? ................................................................. 8

What does a district do if an IPP application has been denied? ........................................................................................... 9

Definitions ............................................................................................................................................................................ 10
Innovative Program Permission

An Innovative Program Permission (IPP) authorizes a teacher, who holds a Tier 3 or Tier 4 license, to teach multiple fields to a group of students. The permission is intended to help schools address the needs of students that typically cannot be met in standard school settings by allowing an alternative way of teaching by the teachers and an alternative way of learning for the students.

Innovative program means a school within a district that is either a state-approved area learning center or an alternative learning program or provides a school board resolution designating the school as an innovative program, including the reason for the designation.

This document contains frequently asked questions and tips for preparing a request for an Innovative Program Permission.
FAQs on Eligibility

Which teachers are eligible for an IPP?

To be eligible for an IPP, a teacher must hold the appropriate license and be placed in an eligible assignment.

Licensure requirements:

- The teacher must hold a Tier 3 or Tier 4 teaching license.
- The teacher must hold a license other than for a related services professional. A person who holds a related-services license - such as school nurse, speech language pathologist, school counselor, or school psychologist - is not eligible for an IPP unless the individual also holds a Tier 3 or Tier 4 teaching license.

Assignment requirements:

- The teacher must be assigned to teach a subject area that is required for graduation or that uses state academic standards. These subject areas include:
  - Arts (Visual and Performing)
  - Communication Arts/Literature
  - Math
  - Physical Education
  - Science
  - Social Studies
- The assignment must be within a middle school or high school setting (grades 5 through 12) (see “Which grade levels are covered under IPPs?” for more information).
- The teacher must serve as the Teacher of Record

A teacher of record is the teacher responsible for the planning, instruction, and assessment of students in a classroom. The person may also grant credits to students. Refer to the Definitions section to assist you in determining if your teacher meets the rule.

Which subject areas can be taught on an IPP?

The teacher must be assigned to a subject area that is required for graduation or uses state academic standards. Applicable subject areas include: Arts (Visual and Performing), Communication Arts & Literature, Math, Physical Education, Science, and Social Studies.

If the teacher is teaching in only one subject area outside of their licensure field, then the district needs to identify the specific disciplines that the teacher will be teaching, assessing, and issuing credit in.

Example: The school district needs their licensed math teacher to teach science for multiple grade levels. The district would need to list the science courses the teacher will be teaching such as Biology, Chemistry, and Earth and Space Science.
If the teacher is teaching in a traditional school setting and is needed to teach either a single subject area, or multiple subject areas, outside of their licensure area, then an Out-of-Field Permission (OFP) is the appropriate permission to request.

**Which subject areas cannot be covered with an IPP?**

Many subject areas are not eligible assignments for an Innovative Program Permission, including:

- Agricultural Education
- Business
- Career Pathways and CTE courses received CTE funding
- Driver’s Education
- Early Childhood Education
- Elementary Education
- English as a Second Language
- Family & Consumer Science
- Special Education
- Technology
- Work Based Learning
- World Languages

If a district needs to fill an assignment in one or more of these fields, they should consider applying for an Out-of-Field Permission (OFP).

If a district believes there are extenuating circumstances that make one or more of these fields appropriate for an IPP, and not an OFP, the district must provide detailed rationale on the permission request at the time of submission.

Note: A district may have its own graduation requirements that differ from state graduation requirements. Only subjects required by the State for graduation can be covered by an IPP.

**Which grade levels are covered under IPP’s?**

A teacher can provide instruction in multiple subject areas under an IPP to students in middle school (grades 5-8) and/or high School (grades 9-12) settings. Please note that the delivery model is the main qualifier for an IPP and should be the focus for applying for the permission (see “FAQs on Delivery Models”).

**Is there a limit on the number of IPP’s a teacher can have in their teaching career?**

No, the number of IPP’s for a teacher is unlimited.

**When should a district consider applying for an Innovative Program Permission?**

A district should consider applying for an Innovative Program Permission when the district has a non-traditional program where students would benefit from a single teacher providing instruction in multiple subject areas in order to meet academic standards or state graduation requirements.
Note: While this permission was originally created by Minnesota Statute 123A.05 and Minnesota Statute 123A.06 for State Approved Alternative Programs (SAAP), not every SAAP setting needs, requires, or may qualify for an IPP.

**How long is an IPP valid?**

The permission is valid for one academic school year and expires on June 30 unless indicated at time of submission that it is needed to cover a summer school program or is part of a year round program. In summer school or year round situations, the IPP expires no later than August 31st.
FAQs on Delivery Models

What are examples of program delivery models for an IPP?

Secondary self-contained classroom taught by one teacher, project-based learning, competency based learning, purchased curriculum, and online programs may qualify.

What are the duties of the teacher using an IPP?

The teacher must be responsible for designing, delivering, and assessing the curriculum.

Do online programs or purchased curriculums qualify for an IPP?

Online programs or purchased curriculums that utilize a vendor or third party can be used if the curriculum is aligned with Minnesota Academic Standards and Benchmarks and if the Teacher of Record is providing the instruction and issuing the credit. Districts will need to clearly explain in the permission application what the role of the teacher is in working with the online or purchased curriculum, the number of students the teacher is responsible for, who is awarding credit, and what scope of content the teacher has that qualifies them to work in this situation.

The teacher needs to be providing meaningful, teacher-initiated interactions with online learners. Students should not be interacting primarily with a digital curriculum with no one providing feedback, teaching concepts, or correcting misconceptions (other than the computer algorithm). Having teachers only “available” to answer questions or holding office hours for students to contact them is not a model that would be approved for an IPP.

An individual working in an online program or using purchased curriculum could qualify for an IPP, if the following are all true:

- Holds a MN Tier 3 or 4 teaching license
- Creates, delivers, and assesses the curriculum required for graduation, and
- Is the teacher of record and is issuing the credit required for graduation

What qualifies as a State-Approved Alternative Program (SAAP)?

State-Approved Alternative Programs include:

- Alternative Learning Programs
- Alternative Learning Centers
- Contract Alternative Schools
- Care and Treatment Centers
- Correctional Facilities
- Chemical Dependency Programs

Please go to the Definitions section of this handout for more information about SAAPs.
It is important to note that qualifying as one of these programs does not necessitate needing an IPP and, in some situations, an Out-of-Field Permission is more appropriate. For more questions on this, please email us at special.permission.PELSB@state.mn.us or reach out to our Licensing Compliance Specialist at katherine.anthony-wigle@state.mn.us.

**Do assignments in Project Lead the Way (PLTW) apply to IPP’s?**

Some may. Districts need to identify the specific PLTW assignments and explain how the assignment is cross curricular to be considered. Districts can contact us by reaching out to the Licensure Compliance Specialist at katherine.anthony-wigle@state.mn.us or emailing us at special.permission.PELSB@state.mn.us to determine licensure requirements of Project Lead the Way courses. Please note, if the PLTW courses are a part of a state approved and funded CTE program, you will need to have the appropriate CTE license as required by MDE.
FAQs on Applying for an Innovative Program Permission

What process should a district follow in submitting for an IPP?

The district must complete and submit two forms. Both forms will go before the PELSB Licensing Committee for review and decision. Both forms need to be submitted by the school or program and not the individual teacher(s).

The first form is the Verification of Innovative Program Delivery Model. In this form, the district needs to describe all of the following in detail:

- The specifics of the delivery model
- How the teacher is qualified to teach multiple subject areas outside of their license
- What the interactions between the teacher and the students involve, and
- Who is designing, delivering, and assessing the curriculum

Districts need to fill out and submit one Verification of Innovative Program Delivery Model form per program, school, or setting. If approved by the Licensing Committee, this form does not need to be filled out again for three years unless something changes within the program.

The second form is the Innovative Program Request. The district submits one of these forms for each teacher in the program, school, or setting. The district needs to submit a completed request form with all fields filled in. The more detail and specifics the district can provide to the committee about the qualifications of each teacher, the role of the teacher, and explain how they will be supporting the teacher, and ensuring the teacher has the resources to allow them to teach and answer questions about content outside of their area of licensure the faster the permission(s) can be processed. These forms need to be submitted each year by the district for each teacher.

Where should a district submit completed applications?

Submit completed IPP’s to: special.permission.PELSB@state.mn.us.

When can a district submit an IPP for the new school year?

Districts can submit for the upcoming school year on or after July 1st.

Does the district have to fill out both forms every school year for a renewal?

Not necessarily.

The district must submit the individual IPP Requests for each teacher each year, but with a renewal of a teacher’s assignment, the district is only required to fill in Sections 1, 2, 3, and 5.

The Verification of Innovative Program Delivery Model form only needs to be filled out every 3 years by districts unless a change has taken place in the program or in its delivery model.
What does a district do if an IPP application has been denied?

IPP applications are first reviewed by PELSB staff and then go before the PELSB Licensing Committee. If the district has not provided enough detail or specifics about the program and/or qualifications of the teacher, then applications may be returned to the district requesting additional information.

If the committee denies the IPP application, the district can consider applying for an OFP for each assignment the teacher seeks to hold. Other options include reaching out to us at special.permission.PELSB@state.mn.us to discuss in further detail the specifics of the school, program, or setting to help determine possible next steps or options. A district may re-apply for an IPP if initially denied by the Licensing Committee especially after speaking with the Special Permissions staff and/or the Licensure Compliance Specialist at katherine.anthony-wigle@state.mn.us.
Definitions

Area Learning Center (ALC): Category of State-Approved Alternative Programs that are characterized by the following:

An area learning center must provide comprehensive educational services to enrolled secondary students throughout the year, including a daytime school within a school or separate site for both high school and middle school level students. (Minnesota Statute 123A.05).

- Must be established in cooperation with other districts and must serve the geographic area of at least two districts (with the exception of Minneapolis, St. Paul and Duluth). (Minnesota Statute 123A.05).
- All students must have a Continual Learning Plan (CLP).

Alternative Learning Program (ALP): Category of State-Approved Alternative Programs that are characterized by the following:

- Typically tied closely to one school district, serving a defined grade-level population
- Has the option of serving students only from within the district the program is located
- Students must meet the at-risk criteria (Minnesota Statute 124D.68)
- May make program hours and calendar optional
- All students must have a Continual Learning Plan (CLP)

Approved Online Provider: Online learning provider is a school district, an intermediate school district, an organization of two or more school districts operating under a joint powers agreement, or a charter school located in Minnesota that provides online learning to students and is approved by the department to provide online learning courses. All online courses offered through department-approved programs are:

- Taught by Minnesota licensed teachers
- Meet or exceed state academic standards
- Transferred to other public school districts
- Applied toward high school graduation

Project-Based Learning: Settings where a teacher functions as a facilitator of a group of students who self-direct the meeting of content standards through active, often community-based, projects. The district will need to provide evidence of trainings or experience of the teacher(s) project-based pedagogy and provide content experts across licensure areas to support student learning and evaluate attainment of content standards of benchmarks.

State-Approved Alternative Program (SAAP): includes State-Approved Area Learning Centers, Alternative Learning Programs, Middle Level/Junior High, Targeted Services, including after school and summer school programming, and Contracted Alternative Programs. Each requires separate approval.

Teacher of Record is the teacher responsible for the planning, instruction, and assessment of students in a classroom. The person may also grant credits to students. The below definitions can assist in determining if the teacher meets the rule.
“Assessment” means the teacher is responsible for examining the work completed by the student(s), providing feedback to the student(s), and awarding credit and/or a grade to the student(s). Correcting of assignments may be done in many ways, but only the Teacher of Record should be examining and determining the mastery of instruction by the student(s). While some programs may provide grades based on work completed, the Teacher of Record will have direct control over how that is determined (this could include reprogramming of the assessment tool or the ability to allow students to complete assignments or quizzes multiple times).

“Delivering instruction” means the teacher is presenting subject matter material, interacting with students and answering questions by students, and monitoring student progress. The teacher needs to be presenting material to the students and not just monitoring work supplied by a purchased, or online, instructional service.

“Planning curriculum” means the teacher is responsible for developing or adjusting the curriculum being delivered to the student(s). For example, if the district uses a purchased curriculum, the Teacher of Record has the ability to adjust the purchased curriculum to meet required standards by the state and district or may change assignments to meet the individual needs of the student(s).